

News from Los Angeles Mission

CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

July 2019



"I saw God was
here and that
gave me hope!"

— Todd,
Army veteran

**Todd's toughest battles came
after he served his country.**

Thanks to you, he's now ready for whatever the future holds . . .

**Thank You,
Veterans!**



Dear Caring Friend,

Every July, Americans pause to celebrate and give thanks for our freedom. This is also a time when I'm especially grateful for your generosity. You make it possible for Los Angeles Mission to help veterans who have sacrificed so much on our behalf, only to return home to terrible hardships. Like Todd, who is pictured on the cover of this issue of *Crossroads*, veterans bravely face the unknown when they enlist. And when adversity following their service unravels their lives, they face, with equal courage, the long journey of rebuilding.

Please continue your support so Los Angeles Mission can meet the unique needs of our veterans and so many other individuals who bear unseen scars from the past. Struggles with PTSD and other mental health issues are extremely difficult to navigate without support. But the stigma that asking for help is a sign of weakness prevents many from reaching out.

Thanks to your continued generosity, everyone who arrives at our door feeling hopeless and alone will find the care, shelter and opportunity for change they need

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Herb Smith".

Herb Smith
President/CEO

Veteran Finds Hope and Help

*"This place is a beacon
for Christ in a very dark
place in the world!"*



Todd hoped that joining the Army would help him escape the alcohol, drugs and bad crowd he'd gotten involved with during high school. During his two years of service in the Army and three years in the National Guard, that plan worked. But in the years that followed, Todd struggled with addiction and was left without a place to live.

He came to Los Angeles Mission, thankful for a safe place to sleep for the night. But once he started talking with people here and learning what could be possible for his future, Todd asked to join the Fresh Start program. **"I just fell in love with the Mission and what they do here and how they serve the community. It's been a good place for me to learn even more about the Word of God and to transition back into society."**

Through the classes and support he received during the program, Todd has transformed from feeling hopeless to setting goals and having a positive outlook on life. He's also re-connected with his three teenage children and is looking forward to their upcoming visit.

As he looks to his future after graduation, Todd is grateful to be able to say, "I have advocates in my corner. I know that I'm not walking through this alone!"

You are one of those advocates! And Todd is thankful for what donors like you make possible. "They're giving people a second chance at life and, for many of us, a first chance for a relationship with God. That's really something special!"

**Your gift of \$2.03 gives
a meal, a bed and a second chance
to people like Todd!**

Thankful for a Life She Didn't Know Was Possible

At 62, Debbie is grateful to be experiencing life as she never has before. After being homeless and addicted to drugs since she was a teenager, Debbie found life-changing help at the Anne Douglas Center. She says, "I'm a whole new individual! What I'm going through right now, I've never seen before in my entire being. My whole attitude has changed. The way I respond to people has changed."

Debbie struggled to survive for decades and, at one point, even lived in a junk yard. Three different times, she was assaulted. After she suffered a stroke in 2017, she achieved sobriety and entered the Fresh Start program the following spring. Her husband died a few months later, and she relied on support from staff, counselors and fellow students at the Anne Douglas Center to help her get through.

Now Debbie is looking forward to living in her own home for the first time and spending time with her son, daughter and grandchildren. And her gratitude to donors like you is genuine: **"Without the donors, we couldn't have this place. We wouldn't have the learning. I am so grateful for them."**



Your ongoing generosity helps other people like Debbie get the fresh start they need!

Women and Children Given Safety Here

Domestic violence rates rise in the summer, and nearly half of all women experiencing homelessness report domestic violence as the immediate cause. These women are forced to leave their homes, sometimes in the middle of the night. But they will do whatever it takes to keep their children from harm.

They are seeking safe shelter, and as soon as they walk through our doors, they know they've found that and so much more. Thank you for giving victims of domestic violence a safe place to live and heal.



School Supplies Help Students Succeed

The LA Unified School District recently reported that their number of homeless students now exceeds 17,000. **Homeless students are nearly 90 percent more likely to drop out of high school than students with homes, and those who drop out are much more likely to experience homelessness as adults.**

"Much of homelessness is related to underemployment due to lack of basic educational skills," says Herb Smith, Los Angeles Mission President and CEO.

The earlier children learn about the importance of education, the better chances are that they will not fall into homelessness and poverty later in life. **By helping fill children's backpacks with the school and art supplies they need to succeed in school, you can help end the vicious cycle of poverty and help our entire community.**

Thank you for helping children and their parents when they need it the most!



Your support helps give children backpacks full of the tools they need to succeed this school year.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

8/13 & 9/7

Volunteer Orientation

If you'd like to volunteer at the Mission, it's important for you to attend an orientation session. To register for the next orientation, please visit us at Lamission.volunteerhub.com.

10/11

Graduation Day

10/24

Legacy of Vision Gala

Save the date! Please join us for the Los Angeles Mission's Annual Gala at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. For more information, contact Ivan Klassen at iklassen@lamission.net or please call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 325.

For information on more upcoming events at Los Angeles Mission, please call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 400.

The Simplest Way to Make a Difference!



Providing nutritious meals, shelter and care to veterans, children and thousands of individuals experiencing homelessness is an ongoing challenge for Los Angeles Mission. To help us meet that need, please consider becoming a Meals-A-Month partner. This dedicated group of donors provides a steady stream of support that helps us budget and plan more efficiently, stretching every dollar a little further.

Becoming a Meals-A-Month donor is simple and easy! To sign up online, visit us at LosAngelesMission.org/Give. Or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 334 to join by phone.

The Antidote to Anxiety

Money sure takes on different meaning when you're facing a fixed income, doesn't it?

Many people have found peace of mind through Charitable Gift Annuities. CGAs are a great way to support an organization you care about, like Los Angeles Mission, *and* receive the benefit of a financial payout for life.

CGAs help donors:

- Receive a reliable, fixed income
- Gain tax advantages (with a possible income tax deduction at the time of the donation, and another at income tax time)
- Bless an organization during and after their lifetime, with a higher payout rate when compared with CDs, treasury bonds or money market accounts

Don't live with anxiety over outliving your retirement. Start by structuring a plan that's right for your future.

For the full version of this article, ask for a FREE copy of "How Not to Outlive Your Retirement" by contacting Herb Smith at (213) 629-1227 Ext. 305 or HSmith@lamission.net — or bless your family today with a God-honoring Will at www.christianwill.org/lamission.

You Can Change a Life Today!

Send back the enclosed reply form with your gift to provide meals, care and life-changing services to people who are alone with nowhere else to turn. Please give generously and offer your encouragement to neighbors who are rebuilding broken lives one day at a time. Thank you!

John Q. Smith, Your Gift Will Provide Meals, Care and Hope This Summer!

Yes, I want to help neighbors on Skid Row receive safe shelter, a good meal and compassionate care during the summer heat. Enclosed is my gift of:

☐ \$_____ to help as much as possible!

Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Smith
123 Main Street
Anytown, USA 12345-6789



Los Angeles Mission
The Crossroads of Hope
PO Box 94059 | Los Angeles, CA 90054-0059
Give online at LosAngelesMission.org/crossroads

Please make your check payable to Los Angeles Mission and return it with this slip in the envelope provided. To charge your gift by credit card, please fill out the information on reverse side or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 400. A receipt for your tax-deductible gift will be sent to you shortly.

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