

News from Los Angeles Mission

CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

JANUARY 2020



NEW YEAR, NEW START

"There is hope . . . there is a better future . . . and there is a better life."

— Christopher, from former guest to current inspiration

See your impact on Christopher's life on page 2 ►

New Year, New Start



Dear Caring Friend,

Happy New Year! I want to start the year by thanking you for being a compassionate friend to our neighbors on Skid Row and for offering your generous support so we can change the future — one life at a time! Thanks to you, people are successfully rebuilding their lives — people like Christopher, April and Galen, whom you'll read about in this issue.

Unfortunately, with this good news come some challenges. As we begin 2020, the homelessness crisis continues to dominate the headlines, and solutions are slow to materialize. As the challenges surrounding the issue of homelessness evolve, so must we. We have to be able to embrace the growing number of men and women who need a meal, a place to lay their heads, a warm shower and a chance to restore their lives.

As we look ahead to another year of providing the daily, direct assistance that people experiencing homelessness so desperately need, I ask for your continued support and involvement. Please join us as we reaffirm our commitment to provide help, hope and opportunity to everyone who needs it. We simply cannot do it without you.

God bless you,

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

Herb Smith
President/CEO

Christopher's Story: From Former Guest to Current Inspiration

One plate of food really can last a lifetime



"I used to come to the Mission to eat lunch or breakfast. But I never thought I would be in the program," Christopher recalls. However, the grind of life on the streets finally became too much. "That's when I decided to come to the Mission and enter the Fresh Start program."

During the program, Christopher worked in the kitchen. He cooked approximately 1,200 meals a day. "I never knew that was going to be a blessing," he says. "I never knew that God had something better in store for me."

After Christopher graduated, he used his culinary skills to get a job in a restaurant, where he worked for two and a half years. Then, he heard about the perfect job: chef's assistant at Los Angeles Mission, and he got it!

"When I see our friends and neighbors, I see myself," Christopher says. "I used to be one of them, so I'm able to connect to them, give them hope and a word of encouragement, and inspire them. I consider myself a poster child for Los Angeles Mission because of where I'm at today."

Christopher is a real-life example of how your generosity helps make a lasting impact in the lives of those who walk through our doors. Thank you!

Desperate for Safe Shelter

The beds at Los Angeles Mission are more important than ever.



As Los Angeles Mission sees more people come through its doors than ever before, our safe shelter has become incredibly important — the number of attacks against people living on the streets is rising. Arson, assault, harassment and vandalism are frequently being reported, leaving an already struggling people wondering how much worse life can get.

With your help, the Mission can make sure homeless men and women have a safe place to rest their heads at night and receive the opportunity to transform their lives. **Thank you for helping your friends and neighbors.**

Thanks to Your Support, There Is Help and There Is Hope

The Anne Douglas Center for Women offers a fresh, safe new beginning



She was living a nightmare. April* never dreamed that the man she was dating — the man she would marry! — would become obsessed, controlling . . . and dangerous. For almost three years, she suffered his domineering infatuation. She went to the police. She got the courts involved. She took out restraining orders. But nothing stopped him. His constant harassment even cost April her jobs. With no income, no security and nowhere to turn, she had to find a way out.

A relative told April about the Anne Douglas Center. “The chaplains were excellent, and the staff was welcoming,” April says. “This place is awesome. I gained my confidence back.”

April graduated from the Fresh Start program and is now taking college classes. She’s also looking forward to enrolling in our Life Start program so that she can stand on her own again by working and having her own housing.

As she rebuilds her life, April reflects on Romans 12:2, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” “To me, that means let God restore you. Renew me, refresh me, let me start over again,” she says. Thank you for helping us be there for women like April.



“This place is awesome. I gained my confidence back. I’m back on track.”

— April

** Name changed for privacy*

“If you knew my old self, you wouldn’t even recognize me today.”

You Make A Difference

After struggling with drugs for over 18 years, Galen realized he needed to change. He came to Los Angeles Mission in 2012 looking for safe shelter, a warm meal and, most of all, hope. And thanks to the support of people like you, he found it.

Galen worked hard to complete our Fresh Start program and transformed his life. “If you knew my old self, you wouldn’t even recognize me today,” he says.

While he was in the program, Galen worked in Los Angeles Mission’s kitchen as a food service administrator. He learned responsibility, integrity and reliability — skills that helped him get a full-time job at Jiffy Lube when he graduated.

Today, seven years later, Galen is still employed at Jiffy Lube, where he was recently promoted to supervisor.

Galen is grateful to be able to pass on the help that you gave him — some of his coworkers are also seeking life-changing support at the Mission. Like you, Galen is dedicated to making sure they get the help they need.

“I’m here to support them if they need help outside the Mission,” Galen says. “We’re all a family.”

Thank you for your gifts to Los Angeles Mission to help people like Galen. Because of the generosity of people like you, Galen is looking forward to 2020 and the opportunity the new year brings.

“I want to continue to fulfill my life, help my family out and show my brothers and sisters there is hope,” Galen rejoices. “I love the new year!”



Because of you, Galen found salvation. Now he is loving life and helping others at the Mission who are ready to change.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

1/5 & 2/2

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 LosAngelesMission.org/act.

2/8

Anne Douglas Center Honors Evening

Join us for an intimate celebration of our Anne Douglas Center graduates.

2/14

Graduation Day

Come help us celebrate our Fresh Start graduates.

3/5

Annual Career Fair

It's a great opportunity to connect employers with job seekers from our Mission community! For more information, call Allen Ceravolo at (213) 629-1227 Ext. 517.

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. Signing up is simple, and your gifts will be processed automatically each month by the method you choose.

To sign up online, visit us at Give.LosAngelesMission.org. Or call (213) 629-1227 Ext. 334 to join by phone.

Leave a Lasting Legacy — Even if Your Situation Changes

For 28 years, John and Stella Chan arrived at their shop at 2 a.m. every morning to bake donuts . . . until Stella suffered an aneurysm, forcing John to run the shop alone. Everything began to suffer, until a customer asked about Stella's absence. News of her illness spread quickly, and now local residents are hurrying to empty John's daily inventory so he can close early — often before 8:30 a.m.!

Sometimes Plan A doesn't turn out like we hoped, but that doesn't mean Plan B can't still be a blessing. How can you think differently about the future?

- **Reframe.** Remember what is true. Psalm 73:26 says, "God remains the strength of my heart . . ."
- **Recalibrate.** Circumstances can bump us off course — but God can help us find our new normal.
- **Reimagine.** When things fall apart, we have an invitation to dream anew. Do you want to impact lives? We love when people explore creative ways to serve with us. Some have even chosen to include Los Angeles Mission as a beneficiary of their Will, so they can bless their family and change lives too.

For the full version of this article, ask for a FREE copy of "When Plan A Falls Apart" 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!

Your Gift Will Provide Meals, Care and Hope!
Yes, I want to help provide a hearty meal and compassionate care for friends and neighbors on Skid Row. Enclosed is my gift of:
☐ \$_____ to help as much as possible!

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

Los Angeles Mission
THE CROSSROADS OF HOPE
PO Box 54059 | 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 change 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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