

HELP US REACH THE HOMELESS IN OGDEN THIS THANKSGIVING!

It's hard to believe but in two quick months, our homeless friends will pour into the Rescue Mission for our annual Thanksgiving Banquet. As the day approaches, we are already gathering the supplies and support we will need to serve over 1,000 of our "street-famous" turkey dinners.

It takes a lot of resources to pull off the event. Besides hot Thanksgiving dinners, there will live, God-honoring music, free warm clothing, showers and hygiene items, along with: haircuts, flu shots, referrals to our recovery program, and housing opportunities. Our staff members and volunteers will be showing love to our homeless friends and, where needed, they will provide crisis care to the weary and downtrodden. Most importantly we will be

sharing how much God loves them, how much we love them, and offer friendship and care.

Our goal is to create an experience so wonderful that our homeless friends will stay and join our New Life Program, which provides a pathway off the streets and into faith, employment, and permanent housing. When one of our Thanksgiving guests makes the decision to join our New Life Program then we can truly say that their restored hope began with a meal.

So please support our banquet by using the envelope included with this newsletter. You can also call our finance office at 801.746.1006 for secure credit card donations over the phone or visit OgdenRescueMission.org to donate online. We are similarly in need of warm clothes, winter boots, and other items (visit our website for a more complete list). We do not want to turn anyone away this holiday season and want to make sure no one will go hungry. Please help today!



CONTACT US

Web & social:

OgdenRescueMission.org

[Facebook.com/RescueMissionOgden/](https://www.facebook.com/RescueMissionOgden/)

[Instagram.com/ogden_rescue_mission/](https://www.instagram.com/ogden_rescue_mission/)

Contacts:

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801.621.4360

Send mail to:

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84110-1227

Location:

2775 Wall Avenue, Ogden, Utah

CONNECT ON SOCIAL

We have great content on Facebook and Instagram, including video testimonies and more. Check us out on the platforms you use.

[Facebook.com/RescueMissionOgden/](https://www.facebook.com/RescueMissionOgden/)

[Instagram.com/ogden_rescue_mission/](https://www.instagram.com/ogden_rescue_mission/)

RESTORED LIVES

The bimonthly newsletter of the Ogden Rescue Mission

ELLA TORRES—A MOTHER FINDS SOBRIETY, FAITH, AND A NEW LIFE AT THE OGDEN RESCUE MISSION

My name is Ella Torres and this is the story of how God changed my life at the Ogden Rescue Mission. Before I came to the Rescue Mission earlier this year I had been in and out of jail and homeless due to an addiction to meth and other drugs.

BORN INTO A LIFE OF DRUGS

I was born a heroin baby, which means my mother did heroin while she was pregnant, but I have never liked heroin or pain killers. I did start smoking marijuana with my mother when I was nine and suffered through a lot of abuse when as a child. I was in and out of foster care and became pregnant when I was just 15 years old. I had the baby and offered my child up for adoption. The same thing happened at age 18 and again my baby was adopted shortly after birth.

I knew that as a struggling teenager I was in no place to raise children. Looking back, I am thankful God put it in my heart to have those two babies and blessed me by putting willing families in my path who would take them into their families.

My mother took her own life in 2001 and that only contributed to the pain and heartache I felt every day. The only way of life I knew was to use drugs to ease my pain. I could stay sober for short periods of time, but it never lasted.

TRYING TO BE A MOTHER

When I was in my mid-20s, I had another child, my daughter. This time I wanted to try and be a mother. But my addiction won out and I was not able to care for her.



Since coming to the Ogden Rescue Mission, Ella Torres got married, earned her way off probation, connects regularly with her daughter, joined a gym with her husband where they keep in shape, and is looking forward to lasting employment.

MORE PEOPLE ARE LEAVING CAMPS AND ENTERING SHELTERS, WHICH IS A GOOD THING

A recent state report showed the number of people who are homeless in Utah and use emergency shelters increased between Fiscal

Year 2021 and 2022. At the same time the number who were homeless and living outside (not in shelters) dramatically decreased.



The 2022 report from the Homeless Services Division of Workforce Services noted that the homeless staying in

shelters grew from 2,410 in 2021 to 2,684 in 2022. Conversely those living outside decreased from 1,155 to 872.

Realizing that the pandemic probably skewed the 2021 numbers a bit, I was still happy to see that the number of people staying in shelters is increasing and the number of people camping out is decreasing.

When people ask me why it is better for a person who is homeless to stay in a shelter versus outside, I have a lot to share. First, from a safety perspective it is much better to be in a secure, safe, and temperature-controlled environment, than out on the streets. Second, we have resources (food, showers, toilets, clothing, connections to healthcare, and more) that give people dignity and help them feel human again. Most importantly, we have daily Bible studies and nightly chapel services that encourage our homeless friends to take steps of faith and trust Jesus, who can truly provide the spiritual restoration they need. And after a relatively short time of stabilization in a shelter, we have the tools, including our New Life Recovery Program and Transitions Program, to help people achieve long-term sobriety, employment, and housing.

Additionally, seeing people camping and loitering on our streets frustrates many people. Most people want to live in a beautiful, clean city. They pay taxes to support garbage pickup and street cleaning. When taxpayers look at people who are homeless, camping on their city streets, they can feel a sense of anger, as run-down tents and garbage decrease their ability to enjoy the city they love. Instead of creating a sense of compassion, homeless camps often embitter people towards the homeless and make them less likely to help. Getting people into shelters, I believe, makes people less frustrated with our homeless community and therefore, more compassionate towards them in the long run.

So, while I am happy to see more homeless people utilizing shelters, that also means shelters like the Ogden Rescue Mission are, and will be, busier than ever. We need you support now as we enter our busy holiday season and inflation and high housing costs continue to create more and more need. Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our ministry. Please join me in praying that God will send more and more people to our doors seeking shelter and please give today if you are able!

God bless you,

Chris D. CroswHITE

Executive Director

HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS

OUR STATS

	2022 Totals (through JULY)
Professions of faith	87
Meals	46,143
Family food boxes	380
Nights of shelter	10,530
Clothing	4,666
Hygiene items	14,832
Day service	2,693
Jobs obtained	7
Housing obtained	8

Ella: Continued from the Front Page

Thankfully, her father had another daughter, who was 12 years older than my girl. Her dad and his older daughter took her in and her older half-sister has been like a real mother to her. She does her hair, makeup, and takes her to movies.

While happy for my daughter, I was still alone and addicted. My pain was compounded when I got into a car accident, shattered my pelvis and slipping into a coma. When I came to I was declared disabled and unable to work full-time. In pain and depressed, I continued to use drugs and was in and out of jail. When I was released from jail the last time, I looked in the mirror. I was 44 years old. I couldn't keep living this life.

FINDING THE HELP I NEEDED

Being homeless in Ogden, I knew of the Ogden Rescue Mission. My then boyfriend, who is now my husband (we were married earlier this year), had success getting sober through the Ogden Rescue Mission so I thought I would give it a try.

When I came to the Rescue Mission I was welcomed with love and not judgment. They let me rest for a few days, since I was just quitting meth and was so tired from street life. I have never really felt the love I feel here anywhere else. It's like a family and you develop real relationships with people.

When I was rested, I started going to the Bible studies, counseling sessions, and nightly chapel services. Pastor Greg does a great job of making the Bible easy to understand and the counseling helps me look at myself and how I need to ask God to help change me on the inside.

A SPARK OF CHANGE

I started going to a local Christian church called the Genesis Project and it has been a great encouragement to learn more about the Bible and meet people there. I feel like going to church puts the weekly armor on me that I need to face the next week. As I have come to have a relationship with God (I always felt like I believed in God, I just never followed Him) He has changed me.

For starters, I have found joy in working again. As part of the Rescue Mission's New Life Program I have a job here at the Mission washing linens, tidying beds, and making the overnight shelter clean and comfortable for our homeless guests. It's great to

have a structured schedule to follow and enjoy.

EXPERIENCING A NEW LIFE

Additionally, my daughter, who is 17 now, will come to visit me. She is doing so well. Her older half-sister, who is in her late 20s, still takes great care of her. She has her own room, a car, and people she lives with who love her. I am so glad to be part of her life again and so thankful that God and her family took care of her when I couldn't.

While I have been at the Mission, I also married my boyfriend, the one who first turned me on to the Ogden Rescue Mission when he achieved sobriety here. He lives in a sober living home and has been doing well since 2020. We bought a gym pass together and go to the gym most nights to spend time with each other and stay in shape. We love to play basketball together. When I graduate from the New Life Program we hope to get a place of our own.

For the first time in a long time I am off probation. My probation officer was so proud of my success he was happy to recommend to the judge overseeing my case that my probation be terminated.

YOUR PRAYERS & SUPPORT MATTER

I am still classified as disabled and get a small monthly social security check each month, but under the conditions of my disability, I can work part-time to supplement my income. I know it might not sound overly ambitious, but my dream job would be to clean rooms at a hotel while listening to music on my headphones. When I move on to the employment phase of the New Life Program, I will be looking for that kind of work. So, pray for me that I would be able to find a job when the time comes.

Thank you so much for supporting the Ogden Rescue Mission. With your support and God's enabling power my life has changed. I had tried so many times to get sober and failed. Your support helped create the one place God used to change my life.