



THE BEACON

Stories of Light and Transformation from Las Vegas Rescue Mission | **THANKSGIVING EDITION**



Walk a Mile To Rescue a Neighbor

Our 12th Annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes event will be held Saturday, October 7, 2023. This event raises awareness and funds to help neighbors in need — those who come to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission for help.

Come join other members of the community in taking “steps” to draw attention to our neighbors who are unsheltered. All funds raised during the event go toward providing food, shelter and addiction-recovery services to those who need it most.

Learn more at vegasrescue.org/events



Your compassion helped Brian get the help he needed at the Mission.

A Sense of Security

Our security team helped Brian find peace. Now he's one of them.

This Thanksgiving, Brian is grateful to the security team at the Las Vegas Rescue Mission.

Not just because they maintain order, intervene if someone gets upset and make sure the campus is safe. But because they provide a whole extra layer of security — in the form of encouragement and comfort for anyone in distress.

Brian, 60, is one of the senior members on the team, and he's been on both sides of the equation. When he came to the Mission in early 2022 in need of help, men on the security team often lifted him up in his lowest moments. And now that the shoe is on the other foot, Brian is doing the same for current guests.

“The security guys were always there for me,” Brian says, “saying things like, ‘Hang in there, don’t give up, you can do this.’”

“They had a great effect on a lot of people. It’s not that they were counselors, but there was always someone available to come up and say, ‘It’s all right, it’s going to be cool.’”

When Brian graduated from the recovery program, he was immediately offered a job in security. He took it, grateful for the work, of course, but even more so to have the opportunity to pay it forward.

“A lot of times, we’re the first shoulder to cry on,” he says. “We’ll refer them to counselors as needed, but sometimes people just need a pat on the back.”

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A Note From the CEO

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

— Psalm 107:1

This Thanksgiving season, I have many reasons to give thanks, starting with that verse. I'm thankful for God's goodness and enduring love!

But I'm also grateful for the opportunity to serve men, women and families here at the Las Vegas Rescue Mission, which leads me to the second verse of that Psalm:

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble ...

Could any verse be more spot-on when it comes to a ministry like ours? Every day, we're seeing guests "redeemed from trouble" and finding help, hope and healing in the name of Christ. And we let them "say so" — in their testimonies at the Mission, in their conversations and in the pages of this newsletter.

I'm grateful to be a part of that ... and thankful for friends like you who make it possible. Thank you! And Happy Thanksgiving!

Heather Engle

Heather Engle
CEO

You Can Act Against Addiction!



September is National Recovery Month, a time for spreading awareness of the hope-filled opportunities for people who struggle with addiction. The Mission plays a vital role in helping neighbors overcome addiction ... by giving them a fresh start and equipping them for a hopeful future. If you know anyone struggling, we can help. So can these practical tips.



UNDERSTANDING

It's important for us to understand what addiction is. Addiction is a destructive force that causes pain and suffering on the individual, families and community. It does not discriminate. It can become part of any person's life at any time. It's a disease that keeps growing if untreated. Factors of addiction include trauma, pain, loneliness, family addiction history, mental health, or peer pressure or experimental use.



STAGES OF CHANGE

Understanding the five stages of addiction recovery can be useful for people who are addicted and their family. Stages include precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance. Each stage describes the process of recognizing and admitting the problem, preparing for addiction treatment and dealing with life after alcohol and drug abuse treatment. Relapse is not a stage of change but can happen at any time. This means we need to look at what did or did not work from treatment attempts and refocus. Don't give up.



HOPE

Coming into recovery desperate and broken — all it takes is a glimmer of hope that a better life is possible. Without hope, there is no motivation. Hope in Jesus and a relationship with Jesus Christ. Part of the reason we get into addiction is because we are trying to fill a God-sized hole that the world cannot fulfill. Hope keeps us moving forward and striving.



EDUCATE

Educate yourself on addiction treatments, supports and signs of overdosing and how to stop an overdose. Signs may include: unresponsiveness or unconsciousness, slowed or stopped breathing, snoring or gurgling sounds, cold or clammy skin or discolored lips or fingernails (turning blue). Find your local NARCAN trainings and help save a life.



ADVOCATE

Those struggling with addiction need compassion and understanding. More than that, they need a voice. Unfortunately, stigmatizing language like "addict", "drug user" and "junkie" push those seeking recovery further away. Advocate for person-first language such as "someone with a drug addiction" or "person living with substance use disorder."



ADVERTISE

The Las Vegas Rescue Mission is more than just a homeless shelter. We also have long-term, Christian-based recovery programs for those who want to break free from addictions. Share about the Mission on your social media, at church or with someone you think could benefit.

Thank you for being a positive force for change!

"I Need To Get Help"

How your love convinced Tenisha to pursue hope and healing.

Tenisha grew up in a less-than-ideal home. Her single mom was addicted to crack cocaine, often smoking in front of her daughter. And she was abusive.

In that environment, Tenisha ended up a crack addict too, making poor decisions. She had a child at 14, a boy given up to social services and the foster system. When she got pregnant with twins at 16, she knew she should quit the drugs.

"So I called the police on myself," she says. "I told them to take me to jail because I didn't want to get high anymore." She was booked on a possession charge, and then told the judge she wanted help.

Those twins also ended up in foster care, but Tenisha soon kicked her drug habit and stayed clean for seven years.

She ended up in an abusive relationship and dove back into drugs — this time, crystal meth. She eventually left that relationship and moved in with her mother. Both continued abusing drugs, and Tenisha's mom remained abusive.

"I finally thought, 'Maybe I need to get help,'" she says.

When she first came to the Mission, Tenisha — who prefers her privacy — was overwhelmed by the number of people at the facility.



Thanks to you, Tenisha has reason to smile.

"Being around a lot of people makes me nervous," she says. "I kept saying, 'I'm leaving, I'm not going to stay here.'"

But the love she felt, especially from staff, convinced her to stay. A couple of counselors in particular had shared their own stories with Tenisha — stories of difficult pasts, stories of recovery.

"They were just like me," she says. "They'd been right where I was. That made me more comfortable."

Tenisha continues her journey to wholeness, and is grateful for your kindness! ✝

A Sense of Security, *continued from front*

Brian says his team rarely has to kick into "law and order" mode. When someone is agitated or out of line, the security guys mainly step in to de-escalate and encourage.

"Sometimes people are just having a bad day," he says. "We rarely have to strong-arm anyone." Even rarer, they might have to call the LVPD to intervene.

Brian knows what it's like to have a bad day. He's been there ...

"It just decimated me"

"I loved being married," Brian says. "I loved being a husband and a dad and everything."

But all that changed in 2005 when Brian's wife came to him one day and said she didn't love him anymore and wanted a divorce.

"It just decimated me," he says. "I got really

depressed and drank more than I should have."

He fell into a cycle with on-and-off struggles with alcohol, holding jobs, having any sense of lasting stability. He finally got tired of living that way: "I decided I didn't want the cycle anymore, and I wanted to go wherever I needed to make my life stable."

That place was the Mission.

Brian says the Mission's emphasis on Christian teaching made the difference.

"They helped me get connected spiritually again," he says. "And that solved my depression — getting out of myself. I needed to do a lot of forgiving before I could move on. But once I did, it came with a real sense of peace."

And security.

Thank you for helping men like Brian find a sense of peace! ✝

“Now I See Some Light”

How Adrian found consolation at the Mission.

Like many artists, Adrian turned to his craft to process his pain.

One of his paintings hangs in the Mission chapel. It was done in memory of his son, who died in the line of duty with the Coast Guard a decade ago. He was just 27.

Adrian describes the painting: “It conveys me holding my son through the valley of the shadow of death to an opening sky, and you can see a cross in the sky.”

Indeed, the light and hope shine bright. But it took a while for Adrian to reach that point.

After his son’s death, Adrian says he “kind of went crazy.” He dove into a home improvement project. When that brought no consolation, he dove into drugs. He was homeless for a while. More than once, he considered suicide.

“I spent so much time in darkness I didn’t think I was going to make it,” he says. “But now, I see some light.”

He’s finding that light at the Mission, where a counselor suggested he take on an art project to help with the grieving process. The result is the painting shown at right.

“If it weren’t for the Mission, I’d still be in some dark street, trying to find my way,” Adrian says. “The Mission helped me see my place in the world. There is a God, and God has a plan for us.”

Thank you for helping Adrian to find light in the darkness. ✝



Adrian painted this work in memory of his son.

PLEASE CUT OFF THE REPLY FORM BELOW, AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR GIFT. THANK YOU.

I WANT TO TRANSFORM LIVES THIS THANKSGIVING



480 West Bonanza Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89106-3227

To give online, visit
vegasrescue.org or use your
phone to scan this code
Thank you!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Yes! I want to help my neighbors in need this Thanksgiving. Enclosed is my gift of:

- \$19.92 to provide 8 meals and care.
- \$32.37 to provide 13 meals and care.
- \$64.74 to provide 26 meals and care.
- \$_____ to provide as much care as possible.

I'd like to give monthly. My first gift of \$_____ is enclosed.

Please make your check payable to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission.