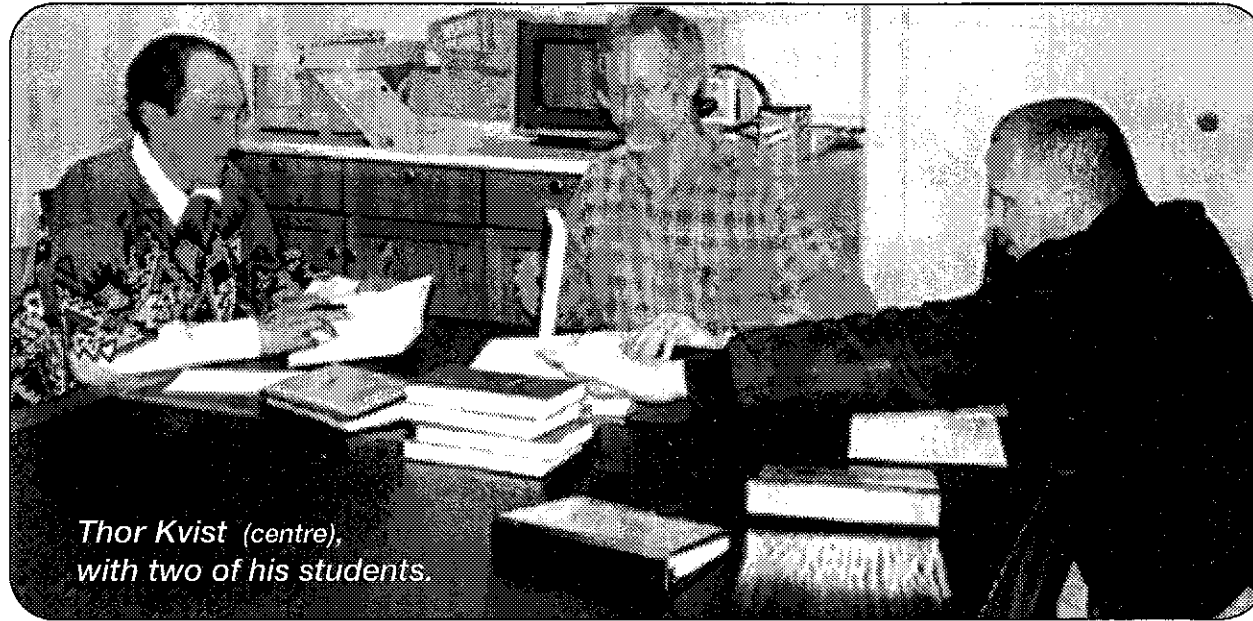


Walter wasn't showing up. I wondered why he wasn't coming. It was not like Walter, who had always informed me in advance of a possible visit to his family in the north. I made inquiries regarding his whereabouts from other class members, but no one could offer any information. One afternoon Wereschuk Funeral Home called and reported that Walter had been found dead in his apartment. Walter had told his family, that he had made some friends at the mission, and so his family wondered if any one at the mission could take his funeral. I was happy to help.

As I thought about what to say at the funeral, my thoughts went back to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September. Walter was the only person who had turned up for Bible Study that day. I remembered the disappointment. I had wanted to give Walter the option of having the Bible lesson, even though he would have been the only student, or simply offer to cancel the class. To skip the study would have been convenient, because we were short-handed that morning, but I wasn't even given the opportunity to ask. Walter was already on his way down the stairs to the classroom, and I was obliged to tag along.

**A**fter reading various portions of scriptures, Walter asked about the *Book of Life* and where it might be found in the Bible. So I turned to Rev. 20:11-15 and read the passage to him. He then questioned me, "How do I get my name written in that book? I don't know how to get it in there." He said he had been wondering about it for a long time and it frightened him to think that his name was not in there. So I shared with him how he could be sure that his name was written in that Book. We talked about how he would have to admit that he was a sinner (Luke 18:13), ask



*Thor Kvist (centre),  
with two of his students.*

Jesus to forgive his sins, and turn to God. All sins would then be forgiven and wiped out (Acts 3:19). If he would believe in Jesus (John 3:16), and receive Him as Lord of his life (John 1:12), his name would be written in the Book of Life. Walter followed me in a simple prayer.

"Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner. I repent and turn to You. I believe You died on the cross for my sins. Forgive me for all my sins. I open the door of my heart and receive You now as my Saviour and Lord. Take control of my life and make me the kind of person you want me to be. Thank You Lord for saving me. Thank You for giving me new life in Jesus Christ - now and forever. Thank You for writing my name in the Book of Life. Amen."

When we finished praying, I looked over at Walter. His head was bowed, he was weeping, tears were flowing. He was visibly moved as someone who had just experienced a great relief. A great burden had been lifted from his shoul-

ders. As he left to go upstairs for lunch, he thanked me and smiled in a way that let me know he was truly thankful to God for the assurance of salvation that God had given him.

After Walter left, and I was by myself, I thanked God for the time He had given us together, alone. It was a time I would not have wanted to miss. My tears also flowed. They were tears of joy and gratitude. God had set that time aside for just Walter and me to meet with Jesus.

**A**t the funeral I read Matthew 28:1-10, and explained why Jesus had to be born as a baby into this world. I asked the audience, "Did you ever wonder why He would leave heaven and all its glory in order to come to this earth?" I continued to say that the Bible tells us it was out of love for you and me. He wanted to save us and give us eternal life. When we think of that, it makes us realize that God loves us more than we can understand. God places inestimable

value and importance on our eternal souls. He wants to see us saved for eternity. God wants no one lost. Jesus, the Son of God, went to the cross, where he suffered the ruthless and indescribable cruelty of crucifixion by Roman soldiers. Crucifixion was a most horrible way to die. Before nailing the victim to the cross, they were severely beaten with a whip that had sharp bones and pieces of lead imbedded in its thongs which opened up the back, and left the flesh bleeding, lacerated and raw. Many people died from the beating even before they got to the cross, but the physical suffering on the cross, was not the greatest suffering that Christ endured. The real suffering was the sin which he took upon Himself. He became our sin-bearer. Why would Jesus suffer like that for us?

He looked down from the cross and saw the many faces around the cross and prayed, "Father forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." And then, just before He died, He cried out, "It is finished." He came to die for our sins and He finished that assignment. He did it so that you and I can now be set free from the penalty of our sins and receive eternal life. What a precious gift!

And here in Matthew 28, we read about Jesus rising from the dead, leaving the tomb empty. That is proof sufficient of a life after death. The resurrection was God the Father's stamp of approval that Jesus truly was the Son of God, and that His sacrifice was accepted and sufficient for our atonement. He showed himself to his disciples on numerous occasions after His resurrection, to prove that He truly was alive, and to give them more understanding regarding the kingdom of God to come. He also told them to

continue to represent Him, after his departure. Then, after forty days He was "taken up" and disappeared out of sight before the very eyes of the disciples. He was transported out of this natural world and into the very presence of His Father. He had finished His job. He had paid for our redemption in full.

**M**any mourned the death of Christ, but His death was the greatest victory for mankind and for each one of us. Jesus said, "Because I live, you too shall live." We can have that victory in our lives too, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We tend to squander and waste our lives in bondage to sin, but God can take our ruined and wasted lives and transform them into something beautiful and for His glory.

There are many things in life that we have little control over, but every one of us can make absolutely sure of our destination after death. The Lord Jesus makes the difference. He can change our whole way of life so that we are ready to meet death at any-time, and anywhere. We don't need to wait. The convenient moment is now. We can be saved now. The most important thing in our lives, is our future and eternal destination. God allows us to determine our destiny. God waits for us to decide, and invites us to become His children.

I then told the story about the Bible Study, where Walter had been the only student, and our special time together on September 10, 1996. The chapel in the funeral home became very quiet. When I shared how, after the prayer with Walter, I had opened my eyes to see him weeping, I couldn't hold back my own tears. I am not a person who normally loses control emotionally in a pub-

lic place, but there at the funeral, I could not hold back my tears. The Holy Spirit was showing my true heartfelt feelings to these people in a way I could never have done on my own. Somehow I felt that God was using this simple message to touch the hearts of Walter's family and friends.

I then explained to them what they had to do to make sure they were also saved, their names written in the Book of Life, and destined for heaven, just as I had done for Walter. When I explained the prayer that Walter had prayed, I saw one of the younger men whispering words of reassurance to one of Walter's sisters. I then simply said, "If you want to pray the same prayer that Walter prayed, then repeat after me." I started to pray, and to my surprise, half, and perhaps two thirds of the people in the room spontaneously repeated the prayer audibly after me.

**A**fter the service a lady came up to me, indicating she had been comforted by what she had just heard, and said, "Thank you for doing your job." She was obviously suggesting that she was thankful that the Union Gospel Mission had been there to provide the rescue service Walter needed in his time of need and in preparation for his departure.

I left the funeral rejoicing that Jesus had ministered to all of us through Walter's funeral. Though Walter personally was not with us, God had used his experience to speak to the members of his family.

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 as a tract for distribution.  
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 to  
**UGM office. 943 9904**



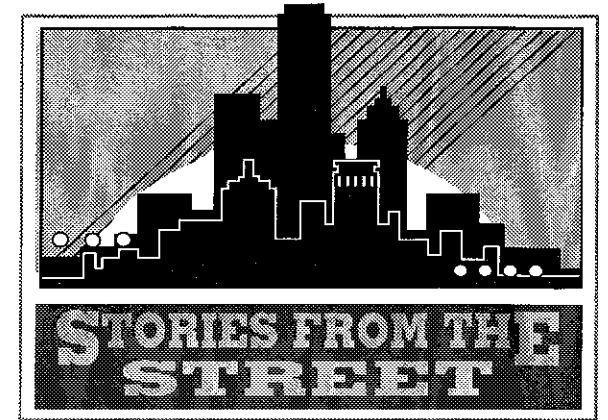
**Union Gospel Mission** receives food donations such as meat, vegetables, fruit and bread with which to feed the many homeless and needy. In addition to the donations made, UGM's cost per meal is approximately \$1.00. Over 135,000 meals were served in the last 12 months. UGM's need is for Meal-a-Day Sponsors. All donations, small or great are greatly appreciated.

*"He will deliver the needy when they cry for help. He will have compassion on the poor and needy, and the lives of the needy He will save."*

Psalm 72:12-13

**Union Gospel Mission**

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 or call 943-9904



# Walter has gone home

by Thor Kvist  
 (Associate Chaplain)

**E**very Tuesday morning, since Jan 15, 1996, the Union Gospel Mission conducts a Bible Study for guests from the street. Walter was one of the most regular attendants, so I got to know him quite well. Several times a week, I was stationed at the front door greeting the people coming in, and I would look for Walter. He was always friendly and greeted me with a strong healthy hand-shake and a heart-warming smile. He waved to me when I came into the chapel for the service. We had become friends.

In January 97, I began to notice that