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VOICES & PRAYER WARRIORS

Official Newsletter from Union Gospel Mission

God Will Make A Way

BY FRANK ULRICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When you read through this edition the Voices and Prayer Warriors, you will hear about many stories of how God is moving and working in powerful ways in the lives of the people that we serve.

For those of us who are privileged to serve as missionaries and volunteers here at Union Gospel Mission, we get front row seats to how God is making a way in the wilderness and desert of the hearts of men, women and children that we serve.

Every single day we are able to observe many lives being changed, in Jesus' mighty name. Here are just a few that come very quickly to mind. A gentleman in our program has been able to stop smoking through fervent prayer. A young man who joined us for our lunch ministry, although intoxicated, asked me to hold his hands while I prayed that he would be able to live free from addiction in Christ, further to this request from him.

UGM VOICES & PRAYER WARRIORS

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Please pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to work to transform lives for Him. Eternal destinations are at stake and personal lives, families and the culture of our city and province are significantly impacted.

“REMEMBER NOT THE FORMER THINGS, NOR CONSIDER THE THINGS OF OLD. BEHOLD, I AM DOING A NEW THING; NOW IT SPRINGS FORTH, DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT? I WILL MAKE A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS AND RIVERS IN THE DESERT.”

ISAIAH 43:18-18

No Other Way But Through Jesus

As the P.R. person at UGM, I could not resist sharing with you a little more insight in to the culture of UGM.

Every pay period, our Office Manager solicits a staff member to give words of encouragement to staff. We call all our paid staff, ‘missionaries’. Every one of us must have the ability to share the gospel and represent Jesus, wherever we are, wherever we go. We are far from perfect however, and need reminders of that, and that we need the Lord’s constant instruction.

Lisa Schau, teacher at our Adult Ed, submitted the following humbling yet inspiring words:

“As we seek His face this month, brothers and sisters, what are we seeking?

1. Glory for ourselves for being so righteous?
2. Blessings for ourselves and our loved ones that are merely more material comfort, or less annoyances or inconveniences?

Oh no! Please God, do not let us settle for lesser things, or set our hearts on them! Forgive us for so quickly slipping into those habits of mind! We want to know more deeply:

('NO OTHER WAY' CONTINUED.)

1. To know more deeply the blessing of union with Christ. Nothing less.
2. To cast off the uncleanness of our hands, the idolatry of our hearts and our deceitful commitments.
3. To desire only the righteousness that is a gift from the God of our salvation, so that we will all the more delightedly tell others of this gift freely available!
4. To be more than a few who do these things. Make us a generation of those who seek your face! Multiply your salvation in our families, our ministries and our neighbourhoods! Multiply your people's true prayerfulness, seeking your face continually."

Doesn't this inspire, excite and move us to greater service? Wow...Nobody But Jesus can lead us like He does! Please pray we remain teachable, always.

Breath Of God

How is your imagination? Please picture the scene. At 320 Princess, behind & to the southeast corner of the building, our men's recreation deck sits above our drop-in and part of the chapel. The deck overlooks Henry Street & the alley behind us.

On this particular day, Kerry was, in his own words, "Breathing out the Holy Spirit" on the 'street' people gathering below on Henry Street. Clark was standing with him and inquired of

"WHO SHALL ASCEND THE HILL OF THE LORD? AND WHO SHALL STAND IN HIS HOLY PLACE? HE WHO HAS CLEAN HANDS AND A PURE HEART, WHO DOES NOT LIFT UP HIS SOUL TO WHAT IS FALSE AND DOES NOT SWEAR DECEITFULLY. HE WILL RECEIVE BLESSING FROM THE LORD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM THE GOD OF HIS SALVATION. SUCH IS THE GENERATION OF THOSE WHO SEEK HIM, WHO SEEK THE FACE OF THE GOD OF JACOB"

PSALM 24:3-6



“The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

JOB 33:4

“My empathy is growing. I want to plant seeds. I want to become a pastor.”



(‘BREATH OF GOD’ CONTINUED.)

Kerry, what he was doing. Kerry explained and Clark duly joined him in this unique airing of love and faith, compassion and care in action. Job 33:4 reads, **“The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”**

So our two brothers stood for a while exhaling the Holy Spirit.

This ‘breathing out’ took place early summer. Clark is now home with the Lord. But Kerry tells me, he still defaults to his ‘breathing out the Holy Spirit’, especially when he is at a loss to know what to pray about. He cited a lady below, seemingly out of it, spending nearly 10 hours playing with sticks and stones on the Henry Street sidewalk. Hurt by drugs, mind impacted by years of ‘use’. “My empathy is growing. I want to plant seeds. I want to become a pastor.”

It is such a privilege to write of these two brothers in addictions recovery. One is fully recovered and now home with his Lord, (Clark will be deeply missed) while the other continues to blow the breath of the Spirit and sow the seed of His Word on the world beneath his feet!

Standing Firm

BY LORIANN TULK, CHARIS PROGRAM MANAGER

In June two fellow missionaries and I got to witness the fruit of what the Lord does at Charis Centre. One of our ladies graduated from an adult Ed program at a well know college. She was overwhelmed with gratitude when she was asked to be the valedictorian, and excitedly accepted the privilege.

Upon putting much effort into her speech, she

(‘STANDING FIRM’ CONTINUED.)

finally perfected it, thanking the Lord for being in the center of her successful journey and ending it with her favorite Bible verse from Proverbs.

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”, Proverbs. 3:5-6.

When she submitted her speech for approval, she was told that she could not include her faith in her speech and that it should be inclusive of all spirituality. She approached us in tears feeling very discouraged and wanted to back out. We talked with her and encouraged her to give the speech that she wanted to give (she had read it for us earlier and it was very beautiful and appropriate).

“ For I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD.”.

JEREMIAH 29:11

Today we watched her give her original speech in front of her teachers, friends, family and guest. With confidence, she declared her God got her through this journey and encouraged her classmates with her favorite Bible verse. After the ceremony she told us that she went to the person who advised her not to do her speech and to remove the Lord from it, and stood up for her faith. We were all SO proud of her

and thankful to the Lord for the courage that He has given her, to speak the truth and declare Jesus!



Charis Centre Intern

Amber is in her second stage at the Charis Centre and working faithfully as an intern at Charis. Recently Amber has been thinking of her old friend Alice. Amber has wanted to find her and tell her “thank you for taking me to church when I was young.” Amber has not been able to find Alice yet, but this testimony of Alice pouring love into Amber’s life when she was young and influencing her for God is a great example of what God calls all Christians to do; love others.



Amber remembers that Alice liked to garden and grew tomatoes and after church she would invite them over and give them lunch and tomatoes. She and her husband Bruce also connected with Amber’s mom to send Amber and her brother to summer Bible Camp at Valley View and Gimli. They also gave her and her brother Alex rides to and from Camp, Sunday school and church.

Amber’s memory is not certain but she thinks that she invited Jesus into her life when she was either with Alice or at camp. Amber remembers feeling loved when she was with Alice. Amber says she lost contact with Alice when she went through some tough times and didn’t want to be disrespectful to Alice with the way things were in her life at that time. Now Amber is on the road to recovery and growing in relationship with God.

She would like Alice to know that she was struggling but is doing better and wants to thank her for having such a good influence in her life. Amber is so thankful for Alice and how she loved her and took her to Sunday school and church and helped her to know God.

If you know Alice MacDonald, please call the Charis Centre and ask for Chaplain Freda at 204-415-3934. Please pray that Amber may be reunited with her old friend.



Caroline’s Baptism Testimony

Luke 15:3-7: So He told them this parable, saying, “What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

I invited Jesus Christ in my heart when I was a little girl. I knew there was a God but I didn’t know Jesus personally. I knew He died on

('CAROLINE'S TESTIMONY' CONTINUED.)

the cross for our sins and rose on the 3rd day. I would go to LBE (Living Bible Explorers), Bible camp and Sunday church. But as I got older I stopped going. At age 16 I lost my best friend. That's when I lost all faith. I questioned God. "If He is so good, why did He let bad things happen?" Always why, why?

I started drinking, then pills. At 18 I did coke, then at 21, meth. I suffered a lot of trauma, pain and abusive relationships. I blamed God and others around me. I remember when I was sick of living like that and wanted to get help, but I couldn't stop using. My trauma kept haunting me. I tried to end my life a few times, but the Lord kept me alive.

I got into trouble and went to prison for awhile. I thank the Lord for that, cause I healed a little bit in there. I learned healthy coping skills and kept me safe from covid. I tried (to quit) the traditional way, but it didn't work for me cause I went back to my old ways and back to using.

I got reintroduced to Jesus from an ex-partner who is a drug dealer that was a Christian that had slid. His testimony was so powerful, I wanted that kind of encounter. He got me my first Bible and we went to a Holy Communion April 2023. That relationship didn't work cause I was still an addict, so was he. I sobered up a bit after, then met an evil person who hurt me and I got back into drugs.

I knew I didn't want to go back down that road once again, so I went into detox. There is when I realized I was powerless and needed Jesus. I couldn't do it on my own. I told Him to "take control and I will surrender my life, let's do it

"I tried to end my life a few times, but the Lord kept me alive."



"Let's do it Your way cause it's not working my way."

(‘CAROLINE’S TESTIMONY’ CONTINUED.)

Your way cause it’s not working my way.” So I read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and that’s when I got to know my Saviour personally. Now I know Jesus, before I knew of Him.

Since coming to Charis, I’ve encountered Him in many ways. I was delivered from addiction. I repented of sins and turned to God and Jesus. It was the best decision and changed my life completely. I’m so in love with my Saviour, cause God is love. He has given me so much to look forward to cause I know He is with me and has me. I pick up my cross daily and follow Him, for the rest of my life. He is my redeemer, friend, my Saviour and Lord. I will praise Him forever and give all the glory to Him.

“ There is no greater love than to lay down ones life for one’s friends.”

JOHN 15:13

I want to get baptized to show my commitment to the Lord. I deny myself and give Him my life. My old self is dead and gone and this baptism is a representation of me, a new creation in Jesus Christ, and I belong to Him.

Karen’s Baptism Testimony

KAREN’S BAPTISM

I came from a Christian home. I grew up knowing God. At the age of 12, I gave my life to the Lord. I would go to church and read my Bible, I had a good relationship with Him.

By 22, I had started drinking and using a lot and I had turned away from Him. I was an alcoholic for 15 years. Nothing or no human could help me. Because of my drinking, I lost my house, kids and family. I went to treatment but my sobriety didn’t last long. I started drinking and using again. I felt alone, hopeless and worthless. My life was out of control. I was hurting my kid, family and myself.

I couldn’t do this anymore so one day I prayed and asked God to help me stop. He led me here to Charis. I didn’t think I would last here, but day after day, I was learning more about God and praying to how to have a relationship with Him. I repented of my sins and asked for forgiveness.

('KAREN'S TESTIMONY' CONTINUED.)

I remember the feeling, for the first time I felt so free. For the first time I could feel the love, a love so big that I could have never gotten from someone else.

My life changed drastically. I started to see things differently. The Lord God, the Lord Jesus has been so good to me and I am beyond grateful for all that He has done. He saved me from my addictions. He has completely given me a new life. A life filled with His light. He constantly gives me strength and is the reason why I breathe. He is my source of Joy, comfort and peace. Truly, He is deserving of all praise and glory. I love and praise my one true Lord.

I want to be baptised today to show God's redemptive work in my life and that He is the only one in whom salvation is found. Amen.

“Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”

ISAIAH 41:10

Rebecca's Baptism Testimony

Hello! My name is Rebecca. I'm 18 years old, born in Revelstoke, BC. This is my testimony to you, but most importantly to God.

I truly came to know the Lord in April. I surrendered to Him a few months ago, at one of my old jobs with a sweet Christian client. Although I didn't truly know Him as I do now.

When I found the Lord is a different story. I was at a point in this world where nothing mattered to me, especially myself. I did anything to run and cope with the painful, constant thoughts; traumas, shame and fears. I never felt good enough to even pull myself out of it and honestly was stuck in a cycle of addiction, self-pity and self-hatred. I hit rock bottom in a matter of months without even realizing it at first. But then God was revealed to me. I surrendered to him within that month, but ultimately it's a choice I make everyday to Christ Jesus and myself.

Over the past couple of weeks I've gotten asked the question quite frequently "Who is God in your life?", so I'm going to tell you. God in my life is my hero, friend and Father. God knit me precisely in my mothers womb, He's always with me



(‘REBECCA’S TESTIMONY’ CONTINUED.)

and always has been. He knows when I sit and when I stand. He knows the words and thoughts even before I do! He knows ME and with that, the messiest parts too, but He loves ME!

He is my hero because He saved my life. He pulled me out of satan’s grasp and placed me under His wing, within His righteous, pure hand. He gave His one and only Son for me and you. **“He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins, He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed,” Isaiah 53:5.**

So you see, His love is so grand and sincere He gave his innocent Son, so we could have a relationship with Him and have the gift of eternal life.

I’ve heard the words, “God brings beauty out of disaster” and I’m living proof. I wouldn’t be here today thankfully and joyfully declaring what I am, if it wasn’t for our heavenly merciful Father.

Hebrews 10:31, “it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

If you don’t believe that, look at our fallen world with changed eyes. It’s not our God who takes us into addiction, depression, abuse or quite frankly anything negative of this world.

“The thief’s purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.” John 10:10.

That doesn’t mean I’m not sinful and that everyday is a piece of cake. No that’s not even slightly true. It means I have someone to give my anxieties, troubles, heartaches and difficulties to, and have full faith I’m being helped, heard and graciously seen. I have love and someone to lean on in the hardest part of my life.

“He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.”

ISAIAH 53:5



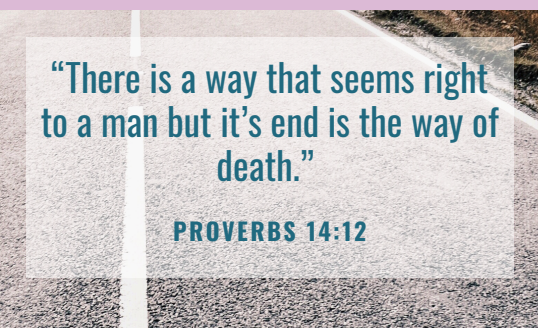
“The thief’s purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”

JOHN 10:10

(‘REBECCA’S TESTIMONY’ CONTINUED.)

God continues to work on me everyday, with love and kind discipline; He gives me endurance, hope and a knowing. I will not stray from my God. My life has changed because of Him. I actually live now, because without Him it isn’t life, it’s death.

Thank you Lord for saving my life!
Amen.



**“There is a way that seems right
to a man but it’s end is the way of
death.”**

PROVERBS 14:12

Finding True Freedom, An Independent Perspective

BY DANIELLE MANN

How the Charis Centre, a ministry of Union Gospel Mission, is bringing the hope of Jesus Christ to women struggling with addictions in Winnipeg.

As a second-year student at Millar College of the Bible, I’ve had the opportunity to volunteer at the Charis Centre for the past seven months. Before attending Millar, I studied Social Work in university. In doing so, I realized that the world

does not hold solutions that are sufficient to undo the brokenness and to heal the wounds of those who are hurting. This left me eager to search the Scriptures and understand the hope that is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Understanding Addiction

When you think of substance addiction, what would you consider the opposite to be? Most people would say sobriety. In a viral 2015 Ted Talk delivered by Johann Hari, an enticing phrase was presented that would shape how professionals and the general public would approach addictions; a topic that no person remains untouched by. Over 30 million people have listened to Hari’s profound ideas, many of whom were inspired to start new recovery programs, engage in further research, and advocate for political reform. Here’s the concluding statement which gripped the hearts of so many people and compelled them to action:

The opposite of addiction is not sobriety; the opposite of addiction is connection.”

The duration of the TED talk elaborates on how research supports this notion. He explains that his hypothesis began after an animal experiment observed that rats living in a community opted for normal water, whereas rats existing in isolation gravitated to water and at times consumed a lethal amount.

('FINDING TRUE FREEDOM' CONTINUED.)

After further researching patterns related to human addictions, overdoses, and recovery, Hari concluded that addiction is more than “chemical hooks,” rather, it is “an adaptation to your environment.” He suggests that humans have an innate need to bond with each other, and the reason people choose not to use substances is because they have “bonds and connections they want to be present for.”



While this sounds enticing and optimistic, one might confront it with the following question: In this digital age where we are theoretically more connected than ever before, why is the prevalence of addiction increasing?

Hari's TED talk briefly addresses this reality as well. He mentions that while the average amount of close friends a North American has is decreasing, the average amount of floor space a person has is increasing. Perhaps the shift towards independence and isolation

is a costly one. It is clear that connection is crucial to recovery; however, I would like to present a slightly different variation of Johann Hari's premise...

The opposite of addiction can be connection, but it depends on what/who you are connecting to.

With strong connections and meaningful human relationships, a person might be able to maintain sobriety, develop passions or interests, and make positive contributions to society; however, let us not forget that we live in a deeply broken and fallen world. People let us down. Always. Unforeseen circumstances happen, illness ravages, and tragedy strikes with or without notice. No amount of human connection can foster the resilience needed to navigate life in a world of this state and live with freedom, restoration, and healing. There must be something more.

At the Charis Centre, women struggling with substance abuse are invited to develop a relationship with the One who is unshakeable and unchanging. The mission exists to “bring the eternal life of Jesus to those who have lost hope” and to “help the less privileged by providing an opportunity for restoration, transformation, and healing.” After interviewing two women in the program, it is clear God is using the Charis Centre to accomplish just that.

(‘FINDING TRUE FREEDOM’ CONTINUED.)

One lady explained that the other recovery programs provide tools to aid in the process, but the Charis Centre offers real hope that can be found in a relationship with Jesus. Without God’s work in her life, she’s certain she would be either in jail, dead, or in the psych ward. Now, she is learning to love God, herself, and others, and she has a smile that beautifully displays the joy she has found. Another woman shared about how she has spent her life longing to connect with God. While other treatment programs always felt like something was missing, this woman has found peace and strength in God’s word. Despite hearing about Jesus at a young age, this participant explained that she “was always trying to find connection with God through all the wrong things, but God opened [her] eyes to the truth.” Truth is, she did not have to earn God’s grace or be “good enough” for Him. She shared that “it was hard to receive God’s grace because it was just so good.”

Neither of these ladies would ever venture to say that life is easy now that they have Christ, however...Ladies at the Charis Centre are learning to trust God’s promises as they understand His character. Christians of all backgrounds and walks of life must remember: We are promised life will be hard, yet God sustains us. We know people will let us down, yet God remains faithful. We are promised that we are not enough, yet God is. We are sinners. But Christ died to save us.

The opposite of addiction is connection; however, a relationship with Christ is the only one with the power to save.

About the author: Danielle Mann is a second year student at the Millar Winnipeg Campus from Calgary, Alberta. With a heart for the broken, she has studied Social Work and spent time working and volunteering at various non-profit organizations.



SAMANTHA’S GRADUATION

“The opposite of addiction is connection; however, a relationship with Christ is the only one with the power to save.”

Thou Art Holy, There Is None Beside Thee

I've known Nora* for over four years. Her partner Jason*, who is significantly older than her, was in UGM's men's recovery when I started working at UGM in January 2020. Nora would come regularly with their toddler daughter and infant son to visit Jason. To help, I would engage with their daughter so that Nora and Jason could eat lunch and converse with each other.

Jason left the program early in 2020 but he and Nora and children would come by regularly to visit and join us for lunch. Sometimes Nora would come on her own, with and without her children.

Nora is quiet and reserved and a very good mother. Her love for her children is very evident. Part of her joy of coming to UGM was watching her children being loved on by the UGM staff. I enjoyed watching Nora as she would sit and serenely smile as she watched the different staff play with her children.

On this day, Nora had come alone. It was a miracle that she even found her way to UGM. She was so lethargic, slumping over with her eyes rolling back into her head. Despite her condition I could tell, by her responses, that Nora was listening to me. She was willing to listen but not willing to cooperate.

An ambulance was called, the EMS used Narcan to block the affects the drug was having on her, causing Nora to become angry, leaving UGM looking for her next fix.



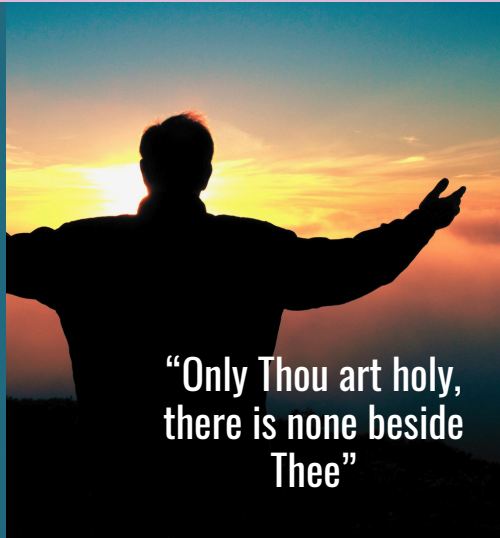
Two visits later the drugs are not as strong in Nora. We are able to have a conversation. She listens intently as I share scripture of God's love for her and her need to submit to Him. But when I say that she is a good mother, Nora rolls her eyes up and looks away. Nora has accepted Satan's lies over her. I can tell that my words are not changing her mind. She is willing to accept Jesus as her Saviour. I pray with her but Nora leaves UGM with the "I'm not a good mother" shame weighing heavy on her heart.

As I continue to pray for Nora, the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!" comes to my mind. In particular the words "Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee, though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see; only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee, perfect in power, in love, and purity". It is because of the perfect

('THOU ART HOLY' CONTINUED.)

love of God that Nora continues to come to UGM and it will be the perfect love of God that draws her to her knees. Praise our holy God, who is perfect in power, love and purity, and who is the only hope for the Noras and Jasons that UGM is called to serve. There is none beside Him! Please pray for UGM as we strive to continue to serve with this truth and hope.

*names changed to protect their identity.



**“Only Thou art holy,
there is none beside
Thee”**

Ordered Steps

Kerry held on to Jesus, subconsciously through the many trials and tribulations of his early life. He knew in his heart that he was allowing the bad things to dictate his walk, but was not willing to submit or change. A ‘drowning’ at Camp Manitou when he was 6 years old shaped his life. He had jumped in the deep end and drowned’ (his words). Within moments of drowning, Kerry felt surrounded by angels. He recalls hearing a voice, ‘You will have a tough life ahead’, then it all went blank. He was told he had drowned! Kerry would look back at this incident and know peace, from hearing in his heart – ‘life will be alright in the end’. But it took years and years before Kerry would learn to accept God’s help and recognize that He is in control and merits all the glory!

Kerry is living at UGM and has

successfully completed the men’s recovery program at 320 Princess. He was working as a part time cook in another mission and in a commercial kitchen. To get to these jobs, Kerry invested in an E-Scooter and quickly learned that our streets are littered with potholes and irregular surfaces. One brush with the pavement had Kerry’s family (we are a family at UGM), urge our brother to invest in a helmet. Teachable, Kerry wisely took the advice.

The new helmet arrived and Kerry had a little wrestle with himself to wear it the day it came! But wear it he did. Thank God! A vehicle drove

**“The steps of a man are
established by the Lord, when
He delights in his way; though
he fall, he shall not be utterly
cast down, but the Lord upholds
his hand.”**



('ORDERED STEPS' CONTINUED.)

across Kerry's path. That helmet saved his head! Without it, we may be writing a different story. A shoulder was broken. Bones shattered. The driver didn't run, but neither did he seem to care for Kerry's injuries. Kerry himself was initially wondering whether God was disciplining him or punishing him. That quickly gave way to 'stuff happens', followed by "Praise God He saved my life again!"

"His love for me, directly and through my brothers, meant my head was protected from severe or fatal injury. As I reflect more deeply, He showed me that before this accident, my focus was to earn enough to be able to get my pilots license. But I was uncertain about that path. Now I am enrolled in Bible School and am at total peace. I always felt I had life covered, with back up plans for all situations. But I didn't see an accident coming. I didn't see God wanted my eyes open to Him and to let the Holy Spirit lead me in total surrender to my Heavenly Father. The bad life growing up (in one foster home playing with live ammunition in a vice grip and hitting bullets with a hammer, being one of many foolish activities), had led to bad choices as an adult, including the use of illicit drugs. I had many close calls in my life. God spared me."



KERRY'S HELMET



"Lying on the operating table, not sure what all the surgeons were going to find, I was fearful and then emotional as tears rolled down my face. God had saved me and I was going to recover and serve Him for the remainder of my life."

'Pastor' Kerry loves Jesus!

Clark Owen

What do you say of a man who we all loved and miss so much? A man who over the years, battled addiction and battled the pain of rejection and self-worth. A man who had lived in our men's recovery program more than once. A man who early in 2023 was in a coma for 3 weeks. A man who the Lord delivered out of that coma (medically it seemed hopeless) and brought him back to his family at 320 Princess.

In the 15 months or so that Clark was with us, we witnessed him soar. His hunger for God's Word was an example to us all. His willingness to engage in conversation, share some of his journey, but listen as others spoke, was refreshing and healing. He was an intern and loved working



with our street guests. Yes, his body had been beaten up by years of abuse. But his mind, his soul and his spirit were sharp and hungry for more of God.

Clark turned 60 years old shortly before his passing at 320 Princess. He has left a wonderful legacy, while heaven gained a saint. It was a privilege to count him as our brother.

Fractured-Forgiven-Redeemed - Beloved of God

BY STEPHEN BILSKI,
MEN'S RESIDENT SUPERVISOR

It was nearing the end of spring 2024 when we were informed that our friend and brother in Christ, Marc Joseph Soucy, had passed away. We were saddened to hear that the loving and good humoured gentleman we had so much affection for was no longer amongst us. Marc, at one time a resident of Union Gospel Mission Men's Recovery Program, had in

the past worked at the Mission and had also led a Christian Support Group for men overcoming addictions, where he prayerfully sought to support and encourage them not to lose sight of God's love for them. Marc found stretches of sobriety, but by his own admission, his journey was not an easy one. Even though Marc loved Jesus deeply and rested in the promises of God, Marc found the path to sobriety to be fraught with numerous hindrances and relapses in his adult years. Not many days before Marc's passing, he made a

('FRACTURED-FORGIVEN' CONTINUED.)

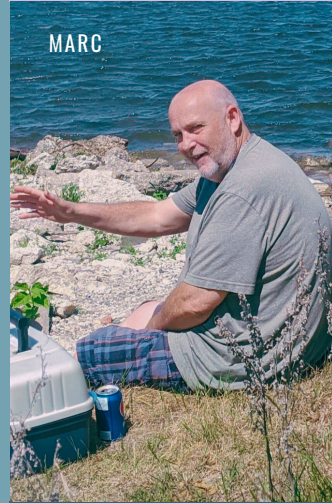
telephone call to his sister Mona. Among the topics, a poignant moment neared; as Marc made mention that he was extremely fatigued. He shared with his sister that he had asked God to take him home to be with Him. Before ending the telephone call, Marc told his sister that he loved her and she said that she loved him as well. That was the last that she heard from Marc, as it seems that God heard his prayer and acknowledging Marc's weariness, brought him home to be with Him soon thereafter. Yet, while she and her family, Marc's beloved mother Lucille, along with his siblings, as well as numerous relatives and friends grieved, Marc Soucy felt no such emotion, nor held any sentiment about the matter, as his days of being chained to a sin imbued world were over, and he was now present with the Lord. Marc knew his true home was in the company of his Creator.

We read in Holy Scripture in 2 Corinthians 5:8, "Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body, and at home with the Lord." With this in mind, we need to hold fast to God's word and declare confidently that while God's love is ever present, that God also holds us accountable for what we do with the Gospel when we are of sound mind. We can see in Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." It is in those moments Marc treasured Jesus more than anything else, and God honours that in Eternity.

Let us think on these verses in the book of Romans to bolster our perspective. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is

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2 CORINTHIANS 5:8



"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

ROMANS 8:35

('FRACTURED-FORGIVEN' CONTINUED.)

written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." Romans 8:35-37

In the present time, our roles and responsibilities do differ, but it is important to bear in mind that we are all equal before God. Make no mistake, we are all fractured, yet we are forgiven, have been redeemed and are beloved of God. Not losing sight of what Jesus did for us and how God views us is essential in how we should live in community

as Christ followers and should be our sole framework for how we represent Jesus and His message of salvation to others as we go about our day. It is imperative that we pause and have a focused time of reflection on the truth that can only be found in Christ Jesus. Jesus is the ONLY way to God the Father and not simply one of the ways. This life is no mere dress rehearsal, no, it is a most important time where Who we serve, counts. As we remember Marc, do not err and conclude that his legacy was that he struggled, but rather know that his legacy is Who he served and trusted. Hear this and know, that victory is found only in the finished work of Jesus Christ!

Listen To His Voice

Recently a Radio Host asked one of our team to share a few words on our 'Nobody but Jesus' Radiothon. Before they could respond to the request, their Bible fell open at Isaiah Chapter 12 and they heard a voice say "Not you, but Me. Share My words. They are enough!"

What a privilege to read scripture over the radio waves. Thank you, CHVN 95.1 FM, for being a station that allows for honouring Jesus!

Isaiah 12: "You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation." With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. "Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."



MATTHEW WITH MIKE THOM AT RADIOTHON

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Men's Addiction Program

Please pray for the following men in residence:

Ken, Kelly, Brian, Tyler, Henry, Ruy, Kirby, Kerry, Raymond, Chris, Cory, John, Matthew, David, Abram

Women's Addiction Program

Please pray for the following women in residence:

Amber M, Jennifer, Rita, Calli, Vanessa, Karen, Emily, Angel, Rebecca, Jillian, Delima, Daphne, Danielle, Jacqueline, Marlee, Samantha, Angelina, Annette, Amber, Taryn & Erin

Please pray for the Charis Centre for wisdom and discernment for staff. Pray specifically against demonic activity and attacks against the residents in our program, for bondage to be broken and freedom from any attachment that individuals have to spiritual darkness.

Contact us @gospelmission.ca

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