

forgotten to

Found



Phoenix
Rescue Mission™

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





DON'T FORGET ABOUT ME

BRIAN PETERSON

This year, we invited muralist Brian Peterson to create a visual at our Changing Lives Center for Women and Children and Transforming Lives Center for Men that embodied the heart behind the Mission. Inspired by the theme “Don’t forget about me”, they depict the relentless love of the Father toward His children.

Ultimately, they represent the prodigal son and the mother and child in each of us; it’s the story of rescue and our hearts coming home. As the artist shared, **“I pray these murals minister to the hearts of men and women coming off the streets and stepping into this ministry and the love of God.”**

“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.”

PSALM 68:5 (NIV)



KEN BRISSA, CEO

Don't forget about me. These words echoed in both spoken and unspoken ways for the men, women and children we welcomed this year.

The work of the Mission is simple, yet profound. Love people as they are. Usher them out of the darkness and into the light of restoration. Remind them that they are seen. And create a place to encounter the never-ending, always-pursuing mercy of a Father who is patiently waiting.

Throughout these pages, you will meet men and women who often felt overlooked by the world. Forgotten. But because of your compassion, they found so much more than just a place to recover. They found *safety. Worth. Peace. Themselves.*

I pray you are reminded of this Divine love, which is always redeeming what was once lost. Thank you for the significant role you play in God's restorative work at the Mission.



MARY KOSTRIVAS, BOARD CHAIR

In Philippians 3:7-9, Paul compares everything as loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ and being found in him. He considers all else “rubbish”.

I'm moved with gratitude as I think of the men and women we serve who have gained a place of true belonging here. They overcame their struggles and celebrated so many life-altering moments with us – graduations, reunifications and sobriety. This ministry of reconciliation we are a part of each day is a beautiful testament and vision of the Kingdom.

It is a blessing to offer this kind of everlasting hope with you.

forgotten to *Found*

Andrew found

Connection



“He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit.”

JOHN 15:5 (NIV)

It was the middle of winter in January. Andrew found himself on a park bench, miserable, drunk, and totally out of options. Next to him was a suitcase packed with items he hastily threw together when his family placed a protective order on him after a drunken argument. “I was hopeless,” he recalled sadly. “I had burned all my bridges.”

Andrew was a self-described “raging alcoholic” – the kind that would even drink rubbing alcohol to pacify his addiction. “It was just bad,” he shared with regret. He had tried a 30-day rehab and was able to get sober, but still didn’t have the tools to handle life and prevent succumbing to his alcoholism again. His family was “done with him”, and everything that was secure in his life collapsed. After losing his job and getting a DUI, he had nothing left.

Homeless and alone in that park, Andrew made a last plea call for help to his sister in Florida. She reminded him of a news segment she saw about Phoenix Rescue Mission and urged him to call. That

moment changed the trajectory of Andrew’s life, as he felt “something guiding him here.”

Andrew now realizes that “something” was the Lord’s

mercy, and after more than 15 months in our recovery program at the Transforming Lives Center, his story of shame and brokenness has been redeemed. “All the things that were lost have been added back into my life,” he described with a newfound joy. Andrew now has healed relationships with his family and begun work with other men at the Mission. Most importantly, he discovered the one thing he needed for all of this to be possible.

“There was definitely something missing from my life... and that was connection with God. That’s what I have gotten here.”

“There was definitely something missing from my life... and that was connection with God.”

ANDREW



1,369

people served through our residential program



102

long-term recovery program completions

forgotten to *Found*

Carol found

Worth



“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life.”

PSALM 138:7 (NIV)

“I could have died many times over.”

Carol's statement hung heavy, describing her harrowing last two years where she had been on the brink of death more than once. Breast cancer, a coma, temporary paralysis and an infected chemo port almost took her life. After she lost two of her own siblings to cancer in the same season, she had come undone. Despite God healing her body in a miraculous way, she was trapped under the weight of a deep depression and an overwhelming sense of worthlessness.

In September, after Carol's disability was cut off, she had no money and no way to put food on the table for her and her grandson. “How are we going to eat?” she recalled asking herself, panicked. She heard about our Hope for Hunger Food Bank and arrived that day to receive a food box. But something else happened that Carol didn't expect. She was deeply impacted by the joy of the people serving and by the way it was run. So much so, that she asked if she could

come and be a part of serving there, too. “I felt useless and lacked purpose. But this place has changed me. It makes me feel so good inside to help change people's lives.”

“I felt useless and lacked purpose. But this place has changed me.”

CAROL

Carol has been consistently serving at the food bank since her first visit and describes her time there as “better than therapy.” It has given her a true sense of community and connection after emerging from an incredibly dark and traumatic time.

“God gave me a second chance. So I'm taking it and I'm using it to help other people.”



16,558

households
received food
assistance



79,880

food boxes
distributed

forgotten to

Found

Marcos found a

Lifeline



“From beginning to end, he’s there, towering far above everything, everyone…”

COLOSSIANS 1:19 (MSG)

Marcos was intently reading a book at a bus station off Dunlap Avenue in Phoenix in a Seahawks jersey, unaware that his life was about to take a dramatic turn.

Ben parked the Street Outreach van and prayed to himself as he walked up. As a case manager with the Mission, Ben was used to approaching men and women who appeared to be experiencing homelessness to offer them a lifeline off the streets. With Marcos, he couldn’t quite tell. “Honestly, I felt a bit apprehensive because it can be awkward if you assume someone needs help and they don’t.”

Ben followed the Spirit’s leading, and Marcos opened up to him, sharing that he had been living on the streets for two months battling an intense meth addiction. He invited Marcos to the men’s campus for screening and put him up in a hotel until he could start his intake. “I’d come by to pray with him and bring him food from our food bank. I hoped he’d still be there when I came. And he was. He told me, “This is so God. God showed up in an amazing way for me.” He was just so excited,” Ben described.

“That’s what I love about street outreach — all of these divine appointments. People on the streets are so accessible. This tends to be where God does His work, at our rock bottom.” Two days later Marcos began his journey of recovery at the Mission, where he found a hope greater than the world had ever offered.

And that book Marcos was reading? It was the Bible. Specifically, the Message version of Colossians 1:19. God was stirring Marcos’ heart long before his encounter with Ben, reminding him of an everlasting love that spans all of our stories – from beginning to end.

“It makes you aware that God is completely sovereign. He sees people’s needs and He meets them, very practically,” Ben said with a smile. “That’s my favorite part.”

“God showed up in an amazing way for me”

MARCOS



22%

increase in rescues/
program placements



18,208

Hope Totes
distributed

forgotten to *Found*

Aisha found

Herself



“For the mountains may move and the hills disappear ... my faithful love for you will remain.”

ISAIAH 54:10 (NLT)

On the outside, Aisha appeared to have it together. She had a job, an apartment and a car. But daily she wrestled with inner turmoil; a secret life of drug addiction and dysfunction in her relationships. “My life was constant drama.”

Aisha had grown up in a religious cult and suffered traumatic abuse at the hands of her stepfather. To survive, she became a master at detaching from her feelings and denying herself the very thing she needed most: healing.

Aisha gave birth to twins and tried to stop using, but her postpartum depression created a perfect storm. Not knowing where else to turn, she locked herself in a dark closet and cried out to God. With trembling fingers, she dialed the Changing Lives Center (CLC.) When the voice on the other line described that the program was a year, Aisha was resistant. He asked her something that she couldn’t shake long after she hung up: “What’s a year to save your life?”

Aisha finally let go. “I was looking for any way out, but something supernatural moved me through these gates. For the first time out of the destruction of my life, I felt peace,” she described through tears.

All of her walls crumbled as the love of Christ flooded in. The CLC offered her “soft truth, tough love”, and a sisterhood that carried her through the valley.

Three years later, Aisha’s recovery has come full circle. She graduated and works with the CLC’s alumni program, connecting women with the resources they need to thrive.

“The CLC gave me myself back. God didn’t make me someone different – he just restored the broken parts.”

“The CLC gave me myself back. He didn’t make me someone different – he just restored the broken parts.”

AISHA



\$17.05

average starting wage for vocational development clients



23%

increase in vocational development program enrollments



Hope

is found at the Mission

2023 STATS

In 2023, the love of Christ searched our city streets and led thousands through our doors and into the refuge of His welcoming arms. Because of your compassionate partnership, forgotten men, women and children experienced the healing hope of the Gospel through our programs. This year, you inspired the following impact:



RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

342 average daily recovery program census

20 children reunited with their mothers



FOOD ASSISTANCE

12% increase in households served

45 mobile pantries and community events



VOLUNTEERS

890 new volunteers

19,024 hours served



HOMELESS STREET OUTREACH

830 people rescued from the streets

3,076 people who received case management

33,215 engagements to build relationship



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

141 jobs obtained through vocational development program

601 new program enrollments

Financials

75% of budget going to programs

Phoenix Rescue Mission is funded almost entirely by individuals, businesses, foundations and other organizations. We strive to maximize and steward the impact of the gifts entrusted to us by God and our ministry partners. Because of this, we are proud that XX cents of each dollar raised goes directly toward program and services.





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Thank You

Your support and engagement helped us meet our Valley's forgotten right where they were and guide them toward a vibrant, more hopeful future. Because of you, so many of these men and women now have a new standing: from **forgotten to found**.

OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

Sustain our work

Help bring renewed hope through a financial gift.

Volunteer

Serve your community through a variety of opportunities.

Spread The Word

Be an advocate for the Mission in your sphere of influence.

Pray

Petition for transformation of our clients and for those we have yet to reach in our city.



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