Hope for Happy Endings

As part of my role as CEO of the Rescue Mission, I visit with individuals, foundations, corporations, and community groups – describing the state of homelessness and hunger in our communities, and introducing the Rescue Mission programs in Syracuse, Auburn, Binghamton, and Ithaca. I often recite the statistics of those we have served, numbers you will see here in our annual report.

But numbers, while impactful, are forgettable. It is not the numbers that drive home the magnitude of the work happening at the Rescue Mission. It is the narratives. Every individual who has come through the doors of the Rescue Mission has a story to tell. Stories of bad luck or bad decisions. Stories that seem impossible to be true. Stories with endings that are unwritten.

Every day at the Rescue Mission, we are working to add new chapters to the stories of the men, women, and children we serve. Chapters that lead our heroes away from misfortune, and into redemption. Chapters that leave hope for happy endings.

The year 2018 was another year of great progress at the Rescue Mission. In April, we announced plans to develop and open a youth shelter in Syracuse, and in July, we broke ground on our newest project – an expansion and renovation of the Clarence L. Jordan Food Service and Culinary Education Center. However, 2018 was also a year of loss. In September, we said our final goodbye to Clarence Jordan, our beloved former leader. His influence and guidance cannot be understated, as he helped the Rescue Mission grow to become the beacon of hope it is today.

I look forward to the continued growth of the Rescue Mission in 2019 and beyond. This year, I encourage you to come and visit the Rescue Mission. Here, you can see hope and love in action, and watch how stories of life change unfold.
Helping Hearts and Hands
All year long, volunteers are busy behind-the-scenes lending their time and talent to help in nearly every area of the Rescue Mission. In 2018, nearly 4,000 volunteers completed over 100,000 hours of service. Every day, volunteers are on-site serving meals in the Food Service Center, providing mental health support and medical services at the Emergency Shelter, playing board games with residents at the Crossroads Residence, sorting donations at Clothing Outreach and our warehouse in Liverpool, and stocking shelves at our Thrifty Shopper stores. We also hosted special opportunities for volunteers to lend a hand, including our annual Super Bowl party at the Emergency Shelter, spring campus cleanup, creating Easter baskets, Thanksgiving and Christmas meal deliveries, and baking Christmas cookies. Some volunteers even helped from home, quilting blankets and knitting hats and gloves. We celebrated our volunteers at our Volunteer Appreciation event in April, where attendees were treated to a thank you party.

A Second Chance at a New Life
Twelve years ago, Justin was arrested on drug trafficking charges. “I thought my life was over,” Justin says. Today, Justin is a different man. He’s held down a job for years, has an apartment, and is working on buying a house with a first-time home buyer program. He credits the Rescue Mission for helping him along the way. When Justin was released from prison in 2010, he had nowhere to go. So his parole officer sent him to the Rescue Mission’s Emergency Shelter in Syracuse. “It opened my eyes. It kind of matured me a lot.” Rescue Mission staff helped him with his resume and job leads. He worked for a garbage company, a large retailer, and even for a company that made hoses for the Air Force. “So I always had a job to keep me busy,” he says. But Justin decided he wanted to find a better job with benefits that he could retire from someday. In 2013, he landed a job at the Rescue Mission. He drives a truck for the Food Service Center, picking up donations and helping out wherever he’s needed.

Reflecting on how far he’s come, Justin says help from the Rescue Mission staff, especially the Rescue Mission’s staff helped him with his resume and job leads. He worked for a garbage company, a large retailer, and even for a company that made hoses for the Air Force. “So I always had a job to keep me busy,” he says. But Justin decided he wanted to find a better job with benefits that he could retire from someday. In 2013, he landed a job at the Rescue Mission. He drives a truck for the Food Service Center, picking up donations and helping out wherever he’s needed.

Social Enterprise Continues to Grow
In 1961, the Rescue Mission opened its first thrift store to help generate income to support its programs. Today, the Rescue Mission operates 17 Thrifty Shopper stores in nine counties and the 3fifteen boutique on the Syracuse University hill.

In 2018, the Rescue Mission:  
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• Launched the Thrifty Shopper App, designed to improve customer communication and overall experience.
• Began offering refurbished appliances with a 100% guarantee and 30-day exchange warranty at select Thrifty Shoppers.
• Held six major sale events. On average, these events can increase a typical day’s revenue by 300-400%.
• Partnered with the Syracuse City School District to provide families in need with Thrifty Shopper vouchers for clothing and household goods.

In 2018, the Rescue Mission:  
• Gave away nearly 81,000 pieces of clothing, household goods, and furniture.
• Began collaborating with SUNY Upstate physicians to provide on-site medical and mental health care.
• Established a partnership with Helio Health that connects clients with substance abuse professionals and treatment.
• Connected with 83 individuals experiencing homelessness through the street outreach team, and were able to place nearly one person a week into permanent housing or emergency shelter.

3,800 volunteers served for 100,783 hours in 2018

3rd Avenue
Syracuse, New York 13208

400 N. 3rd Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13208

Phone: 315-474-6700

Website: rescuemission.org
Getting His Life Back

Alcohol was a part of Todd’s life since childhood. He started drinking at 12 years old. His mother and stepfather were loving parents, but struggled to support six children, Todd says. And they ignored his drinking.

After high school, Todd landed a good-paying job at a pancake mix company. Todd succeeded there, despite being a functioning alcoholic. When the company closed, he lost his job. He soon found work as a cook at a local bar and grill. Though he never drank during work, he would often partake at the bar after his shift was through.

Following a DWI, things worsened. When he couldn’t pay his taxes, he eventually lost his house. At the urging of family, Todd decided to get help. He entered an inpatient substance abuse program. “And every day since then it’s getting better,” he says.

After completing the program, Todd did some research and decided to move to the Binghamton Rescue Mission. Todd says he chose the Rescue Mission because he knew he’d have staff support and a safe place to live. Since arriving, Todd has relied on prayer, keeping touch with family, and daily Alcoholics Anonymous meetings to remain focused and sober.

He plans to find a job and wants to move into an apartment in the future. “This place is helping a lot of people with their lives, putting their lives back together,” Todd says, “The Mission has given me my life back.”
The Auburn Rescue Mission assists families and women experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Services include supportive permanent and transitional housing, help with basic needs, housing placement, employment and education resources, spiritual care, and youth and family activities.

In 2018, the Auburn Rescue Mission:

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The annual Scan-Away Hunger campaign raised over $13,000. Partnering with Wegmans and other area supermarkets, local shoppers generously added $2.24 to their grocery totals throughout the holidays.

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28,324 overnight stays provided

41 family permanent housing placements

4,251 food pantry items distributed

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Our staff continues to carry on Clarence’s legacy every day, in quiet ways that sometimes go unnoticed. We learn and remember the names of everyone who walks through our doors. We celebrate their victories – no matter how small. We remind them through times of defeat that they are worthy, that they matter, and that this moment does not define them or their potential in the future.

The indelible mark of Clarence Jordan is felt every day – in every meal served, in every job secured, and in every hallway and office here on our campus. His passing is a profound one for the Rescue Mission family, though his memory will not fade. We are honored to have known him, served with him, learned from him, and to have called him our brother in Christ. We take comfort knowing he is now with the Lord.

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The Rescue Mission rounded out 2018 with the 29th annual Movie with a Mission, hosted by News Channel 9. Viewers watched Christmas classics, and donors had their gifts doubled as they called in or presented contributions on-air. The event raised $36,000.

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Inspiring Stories of Hope

The Syracuse and Binghamton Hope Awards are the Rescue Mission’s annual events to celebrate men and women who have made great progress in the face of significant challenges. These individuals prove every day that their hope and determination are bigger than any barriers that stand in their way.

At the Syracuse Hope Awards, 48 men and women from the Syracuse and Auburn regions were honored and shared their stories and gratitude. Former Syracuse University and NBA star Billy Owens gave a keynote speech.

St. James’ Episcopal Church in Skaneateles received the Clarence L. Jordan Hope Award for outstanding service and leadership in addressing poverty. Active with the Auburn Rescue Mission, church representatives host quarterly meetings with staff to develop programming and help tackle the needs of the neighborhood. Since 2016, church parishioners and volunteers have participated in nearly 100 Auburn Rescue Mission events.

The Hope Awards also honor individuals and businesses for their dedication and support of the Rescue Mission. SEFCU and Dumac Business Systems received Community Awards, and Connie and Harry McEvers received the Individual Recognition Award for outstanding volunteer service. Harry, a former client of the Rescue Mission, passed away in 2018. He and his wife Connie volunteered at the Rescue Mission for years, and were mainstays at our holiday dinners.

At the Binghamton Hope Awards, seven residents were recognized with awards. Dr. John and Sara Gartman received the Individual Recognition Award for their longtime support, and Lourdes Hospital was honored with the Community Award. The hospital has been a proud sponsor of Binghamton Rescue Mission events and its employees volunteer regularly.

Prudy, a 2018 Hope Award recipient, found an apartment of her own. In addition to thanking the Rescue Mission, she shared her wish to someday own a horse.
THRIFTY SHOPPER STORES

Social Enterprise Continues to Grow

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When Justin was released from prison in 2010, he had nowhere to go. So his parole officer sent him to the Rescue Mission’s Emergency Shelter in Syracuse. “It opened my eyes. It kind of matured me a lot.”

Justin decided he wanted to find a better job with benefits that he could retire from someday. In 2013, he landed a job at the Rescue Mission. He drives a truck for the Food Service Center, picking up donations and helping out wherever he’s needed.

Reflecting on how far he’s come, Justin says help from the Rescue Mission was crucial, but that he had to make the effort to pull himself up. He says help from the Rescue Mission can only take people so far before they have to take charge of their lives.

“You do what you’ve got to do, they’ll help you,” he says. “You just got to put the work in.”
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S MESSAGE

Hope for Happy Endings

As part of my role as CEO of the Rescue Mission, I visit with individuals, foundations, corporations, and community groups – describing the state of homelessness and hunger in our communities, and introducing the Rescue Mission programs in Syracuse, Auburn, Binghamton, and Ithaca. I often recite the statistics of those we have served, numbers you will see here in our annual report.

But numbers, while impactful, are forgettable. It is not the numbers that drive home the magnitude of the work happening at the Rescue Mission. It is the narratives. Every individual who has come through the doors of the Rescue Mission has a story to tell. Stories of bad luck or bad decisions. Stories that seem impossible to be true. Stories with endings that are unwritten.

Every day at the Rescue Mission, we are working to add new chapters to the stories of the men, women, and children we serve. Chapters that lead our heroes away from misfortune, and into redemption. Chapters that leave hope for happy endings.

The year 2018 was another year of great progress at the Rescue Mission. In April, we announced plans to develop and open a youth shelter in Syracuse, and in July, we broke ground on our newest project – an expansion and renovation of the Clarence L. Jordan Food Service and Culinary Education Center. However, 2018 was also a year of loss. In September, we said our final goodbye to Clarence Jordan, our beloved former leader. His influence and guidance cannot be understated, as he helped the Rescue Mission grow to become the beacon of hope it is today.

I look forward to the continued growth of the Rescue Mission in 2019 and beyond. This year, I encourage you to come and visit the Rescue Mission. Here, you can see hope and love in action, and watch how stories of life change unfold.

Dan Sieburg
Chief Executive Officer