

# STORIES OF HOPE

June 2023



MEET  
Jessica







**Pastor Michael L. Brown**  
President/CEO

**Proverbs 17:17 NKJV**

***"He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given."***

It has been great to experience a few consistent days of sunshine, finally! Spring is the time of year that our **New Life | New Hope program members** are ready to go to the U.P. for a week of solitude and service projects at **Cedar Bay Camp**. The U.P. retreat is an opportunity our long-term program guests have **twice a year**. It's such an excellent partnership that allows program participants to experience God away from the busyness of the city. In return, we support the camp in preparing the cabins and facilities to be open for the year, and I look forward to hearing the stories of **"God Encounters"** when they return every year.

Now is also the time of year when many of you seek volunteer opportunities around the community. KGM has a wide range of volunteer opportunities that cater to different schedules and skill levels. There are opportunities for food service support, donation pick-up drivers, and educational support. Whether you want to help at the shelters, thrift stores/warehouses, or the maintenance department, there's something for everyone. It's a great way to give back to the community and make a difference in people's lives. It's always so interesting to me how so many of our volunteers

say that they came to be a blessing and ended up **getting blessed through the experience**. Whether you are an individual or part of a group, we'd love to provide you with an opportunity to support a ministry that you know has a proven track record of changing lives. Just yesterday, a lady in the shelter told me that she and her three children came to **KGM** fleeing a domestic violence situation. Shortly after arriving, she had to have emergency surgery. **"I am so grateful for the safe, loving environment that my family and I have experienced,"** she said. Your support made this possible. **Thank you!**

Finally, we are also celebrating our **90th year of ministry in Kalamazoo. Hallelujah!!!** Please consider making an additional gift to KGM this year to celebrate this milestone. You might send an extra **\$9, \$90, \$900, or \$9000**. Whatever you'd like to do to help us celebrate. God has been so good to **KGM** over the years, and we expect His grace and mercy to continue to cover us for **years to come**.

**Thank you, and God Bless.**

A portrait of Jessica, a Black woman with her hair in red and black braids, smiling. She is wearing a black t-shirt with a white graphic. The background is a brick building with windows.

# Meet JESSICA

Growing up in **Three Rivers**, Jessica's family struggled to stay together; she grew up in a Christian foster care home and thought she knew **Christ**, but now realized that her walk with Him wasn't that deep. At the age of ten, Jessica started smoking, and through the years, it escalated to drugs and alcohol. A quiet voice told her to quit these habits, but she ignored the idea of quitting and continued. As an adult, **Jessica** was in a relationship for 8 1/2 years and had three kids, but the relationship became abusive. For safety reasons, she knew she needed to leave the caustic relationship. Later as she dug into the Bible, she discovered that God was always present and talking with her; she just had to **listen and obey**.

Coming to the Mission alone, Jessica was nervous and kept to herself. But staff members, like **Annie**, have reached out in support. While chatting, Annie told her about the **New Life | New Hope Program (NL|NH)**. Jessica joined the program and liked the structure and Biblical classes; these practices helped her to read God's Word, learn more

"I know God has a plan and a purpose for my life." -Jessica



## YOU PROVIDED THESE LIFE CHANGING SERVICES IN 2023

about Him, and create other good **life-changing habits**. And while she has been studying the Bible, Jessica feels called by God to tell others about **Christ**, tell people about the **NL|NH program**, and how much both have changed her life.

Jessica struggles with anxiety, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder, and feels disheartened by her uncontrollable moods and how those affect people. But the **KGM staff** have encouraged her with the Bible, and have walked alongside Jessica with support and encouragement. The environment at **Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries** has given her a sense of community, helping her not to feel alone in her struggles. Jessica has felt cared for by the mission. She appreciates the shelter and mentors she has found in the staff and their supportive words.

The environment at **KGM** has given Jessica the time to learn more about God and has given her hope for the future. **"I know God has a plan and a purpose for my life,"** she says. As Jessica imagines what's next, she has set goals; Jessica wants to graduate from the **New Life | New Hope Program** and become a **women's shelter staff** so that she may someday, become a mentor to women going through the same experiences she has had in her life.



**35,471**  
Meals  
Served



**35,130**  
Nights  
of Stay



**524**  
Guests Served  
At KDC



**15**  
Long Term  
Program Guests





## OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITY

**Rescued Treasures** and **Simple Treasures**, both ministries of **KGM**, offers new and gently used items of all kinds, including clothing, furniture, household goods, books, and unique finds. All revenue is used to support the ministry's life-changing programs and services for those experiencing homelessness right here in **Kalamazoo**.

These stores also provide a training ground where students of **KGM's New Life | New Hope long-term program** learn vital workplace skills as they perform retail functions.

**Rescued Wheels** accepts **new/used vehicles** and sells them to the public at a very reasonable price. **"Often, the cars we are selling to the public are for families who are not in a position to purchase a car from a new car lot,"** says Michael Moore, Manager of Rescued Wheels. **"These cars help struggling families who need to get their kids to school and access to the grocery store."**

If you have gently used items or a vehicle that you would like to donate, **please call (269)345-2974 for more information.**





## 3 WAYS TO TRANSFER YOUR VALUES TO THE NEXT GENERATION

A famous actor once observed, *"Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like."* As humans, our emotions and motivations are largely connected to the way we spend money. **Matthew 6:21** even goes as far as to say, *"for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

The good news is, if you're holding **this Newsletter**, you're most likely someone who understands how to give generously and with purpose. Your connection with **Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries** reveals you've taken the time to align your giving with your biblical values. Do your kids and grandkids know how to do the same? Here are three ways you can transfer your values to the next generation and help them make God-honoring decisions they can feel proud of (see column to the right).

Don't miss out on your opportunity to share the most important things. Inspire the next generation to live and give with purpose. ***That's a legacy that will truly last.***

For more information on adding KGM to your will, contact Tammy Clubb at [tclubb@kzoogospel.org](mailto:tclubb@kzoogospel.org)

**1. Write it down.** We pick up messages through subtle or unspoken cues daily, but the clearest way to communicate one's thoughts **is to put them in writing**. Compose letters for your loved ones that share personal stories, lessons you've learned, your journey of faith, and loving words that explain how you feel about them. You could also draft an **ethical will** which adds a personal, heartfelt dimension to your legacy plan. **Be clear about what you want them to know.**

**2. Collaborate missionally.** Do you have funds earmarked for blessing Christian organizations? **Invite your loved ones to share input on where you give**, then donate together. Or perhaps you volunteer time toward a cause you're passionate about. Invite family into an afternoon of **serving the Lord together**. By demonstrating your closely held values in action, they'll have a road map to do the same.

**3. Make yourself available.** The most meaningful investment you can make in the life of your children or grandchildren is **yourself**. Be a reliable and trustworthy source. Be generous with your time, your presence, and your listening ear. **Your love will speak volumes and set a powerful Christ-like example.**



## A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR RESILIENT SPONSORS



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