



Encouragement From Pastor Michael L. Brown President/CEO

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

In the book of John, the 5th chapter, there is the story of a man at the pool of Bethesda. This was a place where, "a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water", were laying. This man had lain by the pool for 38 years, waiting for his situation to change. When Jesus asked him the question, "Do you want to be made well?" His excuse for being there for so long is that; "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, someone else steps down before me."

It's interesting that Jesus immediately gave him something to do. Something that he thought he couldn't do, yet his healing was in his obedience. You would have thought that by being in that condition for so long, it would had been obvious that he would want to be healed. So why would Jesus ask such an obvious question?

I've believed for a long time that the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission is much like a modern day, "Pool of Bethesda". A place where those who need help gather, waiting for someone to do something for them that will change their circumstance, yet many haven't made up in their minds yet how to answer that same question. "Do you want to be made well?"

While we speak of Gospel-Powered life transformation, we should recognize that even Jesus expected the lame man to be responsible to do what he could do, "take up your bed and walk," as a demonstration of his desire to be healed.

The majority of the success we see at KGM is in the lives of those who are willing to engage in their own success stories. We provide them a safe place, encouraging staff, great food and case managers, along with the collaboration of other service agencies, so no one who wants to be healed needs to remain by the pool.

Together we can turn back the tide of homelessness but it's going to take all of us. That's why we need your help to continue the work of this ministry. Everyday, someone else makes the decision to take up their bed and walk and when they do, we are there to encourage and direct them so they too can return to a healthy place in society. Thank you for being such a vital ministry partner in this process.



Meet Latoyia

In 2005, Latoyia volunteered her time in clothing donations at KDC. She needed an outlet while dealing with some family difficulties. Latoyia found

the support she needed and the staff quickly became family to her. She has continued to serve for more than a decade and is now on staff as the Lead Receptionist.

"KDC is a big part of my life and it brings me joy to know I am helping people in the same situation I was in years ago," says Latoyia. KDC, a ministry site of Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries, serves our community through kindness, dignity and compassion. The ministry site offers clothing, a food pantry, housewares and assistance to individuals who are experiencing financial crisis.

Meet Stephany

My name is Stephany, and I've been at Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries for 3 months. I grew up in Michigan, but 5 years ago I moved to California to distance myself from my family situation.

While I was living in California, I was diagnosed with an inflammatory disease called Sarcoidosis. Dealing with the illness was tough and even though I was considered the "black sheep" of the family, I came home because I needed support.

I quickly realized that staying with my family wasn't the best idea and ended up at the doors of KGM. I had a lot of fear walking into the Gospel Mission for the first time. Once I got in, I quickly understood what I needed to do, and that's when I met my case manager, Katrina.



A couple of weeks after I got here, I felt like my life was beginning to change. KGM has been helping me with everything. An important part of that is Katrina. She has made such an impact on my life. She meets with me on a regular basis, encourages me, and I feel like I can trust her.

She and I have worked on a plan to help me figure out my next steps. I've found employment at a local Sports Park, and my goal right now is to save up some money for an apartment. It looks like I might even have enough to move into my own place in a couple weeks.

I think the key to all of this is to stay positive and not give up, even when you don't feel like it. Just before I came to the Mission, I knew I wanted a different life and I had already set my mind to the things I needed to do. I think that helped my situation go faster than others. Katrina saw that in me and knew exactly how to come alongside me and help me with the resources I needed.

Through all of this, God didn't give up on me so I will not give up on Him. My relationship with God is growing everyday. I dream about God a lot. I remember when I was 18, I wasn't really thinking about God and didn't feel very close to Him, but I had a dream one night that made a huge impression on me. Judgement day happened in my dream and I remember seeing people in white robes standing in line. I was scared at first, but my Grandma was standing next to me and said, "He's here, everything is going to be all right." In that moment all my fear was gone and just before I reached the front of the line, I woke up. To this day, I still think of that dream. I do believe He is in my current situation and everything will be all right.







You served 13,117 meals in September



CALLED TO SERVE

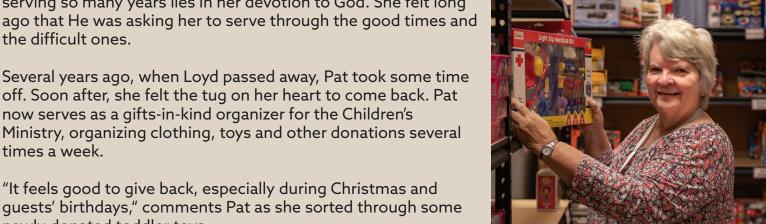
Pat has volunteered with Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries for over 13 years. She started her journey with KGM attending monthly auxiliary meetings, but it didn't take long before she and her husband, Loyd, had a desire to get more involved.

With a "hands-on" approach to volunteering, Pat has served in Rescued Treasures Resale, Credo Café, and Children's Ministry. Pat's motivation for serving so many years lies in her devotion to God. She felt long

the difficult ones.

Several years ago, when Loyd passed away, Pat took some time off. Soon after, she felt the tug on her heart to come back. Pat now serves as a gifts-in-kind organizer for the Children's Ministry, organizing clothing, toys and other donations several times a week.

"It feels good to give back, especially during Christmas and guests' birthdays," comments Pat as she sorted through some newly donated toddler toys.



Pat is a huge blessing to KGM and this community! If you are interested in volunteering, check out the KGM website at kzoogospel.org/give-help or contact Matt Furrow, Volunteer Coordinator at (269)345-2974 ext 203.

COLLABORATION WITH OUR COMMUNITY

With over two decades of engagement with the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, Helen and Carol, retired health professionals have devoted their time to help nursing students in our community gain an understanding of the homeless experience.

Each semester, Helen and Carol lead students from Kalamazoo Valley Community College as they volunteer their time in multiple areas of the Mission. "It's important for nursing students to understand that there are services in our community available for inpatient psychiatric patients when they leave the hospital. We want every student to know about the many community resources available," says Helen, "Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries if one of those vital resources."

Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries values our collaboration with organizations like Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Together, we are making a difference in Kalamazoo. If you are interested in partnering with KGM, visit kzoogospel.org/business-partners.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Meet Kathy, staff member, and a current guest staying at KGM. In May 2019, Kathy found herself facing homelessness, experiencing financial hardship after dealing with a serious illness. Feeling like she had no alternative, Kathy came to KGM. Even though it was challenging to face, Kathy knew it would be a short-term solution and made the best of the situation. She quickly made friends and offered to help where she could.

Kathy has had a long career in Administration, Marketing, and Sales. As a recent full-time staff member at KGM, she is utilizing all of her customer service and organization skills working at the Main Entrance Front Desk. Kathy loves her position and is grateful to work again, saving her money for an apartment and reliable transportation.



Kathy believes that the common bond at KGM is prayer. "It doesn't matter who you are or what your background is, prayer brings us together, knowing we are all going through something and in need for God to work in our lives." With a hopeful and positive attitude, Kathy looks forward to reaching her goals and seeing God continue to work in her life.



KGM UPDATE

John Simpson, MA, LPC Chief Operations Officer For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

I want to bring you up to speed on a few changes that have recently taken place here within the ministry. First, we have completed our new main entrance. It ensures the safety of our guests, staff, and volunteers while making sure each person is directed to where they need to be within the building. Come down and take a look, I would love to give you a tour.

Another area of change is in our Emergency Services Shelter. After research and consultation with like-minded shelters across the US, the national model is a 90-day emergency shelter maximum stay, which we have decided to implement. It has never been our desire to perpetuate homelessness, but rather, in partnership with our community, bring an end to it.

In the first 90 days, we meet with our guests regularly to encourage them to move into one of our individualized programs. Once a guest enters a program, he or she can remain at the ministry for as long as they need to and they are making progress towards their goals. All program guests are connected with a case manager who helps them identify barriers, set goals, and connect them with the necessary resources both within the ministry and with outside community partners.

Our heart as a ministry is to move our guests forward into their God-given potential. We will do our best to encourage all to move into programming, however, some may choose another path. We will be here to help when they are ready to take the necessary steps.

CHRISTMAS WISH LIST 2019

Would you consider rallying your friends or Church group and organize a gift drive? If you are interested in helping, please contact Tammy Clubb, Development Director, (269)345-2974 ext 211, or email her at tclubb@kzoogospel.org.



Kids Gifts: (Goal 100)

Character Toys: Paw Patrol, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Hello Kitty, Games and Books: Puzzles, Board Games, Picture Books

Clothes: Boys 2T-Small, Coats (infant-8x), Mittens, Hats, Boots



Teen Gifts: (Goal 50)

Gifts: Ear Buds/Headphones, Body Wash Set, Nail Polish, Men's Cologne, Small Bluetooth Speakers, Hoodies (Children's size 6x-14)(Adult size S-XL), Modern Jewelry, Purses or Drawstring Backpacks, \$5.00 Gift Cards To McDonald's.



Men's Gifts: (Goal 200)

Wallets, Reusable Water Bottles, Thermos, Socks

Women's Gifts: (Goal 200)

Large Purses, Chapstick, Hand Lotion, Socks



Stockings: (Goal 400)

Kids: Christmas Stocking, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Washcloth, Hot Cocoa Packets, Granola Bars, Candy Canes, Little Toys, Notebooks, Little Bibles. Adult: Christmas Stocking, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Mints, Little Notebooks.

EVENTS

Look for us in the

2019 Kalamazoo Holiday Parade
Saturday, November 16, 11:00am
Come cheer us on as we represent the ministry

Alternatives of Kalamazoo and KGM invite you to SAVE THE DATE for our annual "Life Is Good" Winter Concert Thursday, January 16, 2020 6:30pm gracespring Church, Richland, MI featuring Jean Watson, Violinist and Worship Leader.







KALAMAZOO GOSPEL MINISTRIES

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