

Star Gospel Mission

Fall 2013

The Newsletter of the Star Gospel Mission, Charleston, South Carolina

Shining brightly since 1904

Transforming hearts and lives through Jesus Christ



STAR GOSPEL MISSION
Providing Over a Century of Christian Service to Charleston

474 Meeting Street

The Rev. William K. Christian
Executive Director
Tel. 843-722-0980



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Design and layout:
Ben Bennett

Transforming a House into a Home

By Pastor Christian.

On May 23 Mayor Joe Riley was the featured speaker at the dedication of our newly renovated transitional housing property located directly behind the Mission on Nassau Street. This house was dedicated in honor of Dr. Guy Beatty and Dr. George Spaulding, two strong supporters of the Mission. Upon the completion of a seven month construction process by Palmetto Craftsmen, four former residents of the Mission moved into these beautifully furnished studio apartments that they can now call "home." So that you will know the impact this move has made upon their lives, I've interviewed each of these men. The following is an account of their impressions on what it means to move from dormitory living into a place of their own.

Chris Tangemann

How does living in your own studio apartment differ from living in a dormitory?

It's just day and night. I don't feel like I'm institutionalized anymore. I'm free to come and go as I please. I get to cook my own meals. I get to take a private shower. I live right around the corner from work. I absolutely love it!

Is it everything you hoped it would be?

It's just right for one person, not too big, not too small.



Left to right; Terrance Smalls, Chris Tangemann, Matthew Crooks, Derek Snook.

What changes, if any, has living at 89 Nassau St. made in your life?

I'm a lot more relaxed. I can come in and sleep when I want to; I can go out and smoke a cigarette when I want to, it's just very nice.

Tell me Chris, are you currently employed?

Yes sir. I work for Nelson Printing. I run a printing press. I've been doing this for 20 years now. My brother was a printer, and when I left

my job at the Sheriff's Dept., I was a Sergeant at the County Jail, he asked me if I wanted to learn to print and I said yes; that's how I learned.

Do you believe that it's providential that you're here at the Star Gospel Mission? That is, do you believe that God had a hand in your being here?

Oh, yes sir! I believe He has a hand in everything.

I've noticed that you still come to church at the Mission every Sunday. Why is that?

Because I want to, and because I need it. Spiritually it strengthens me to be here, it helps carry me through the week. I pray all the time.

Any final comments you'd like to make about the Mission?

I'm just glad the Mission was here for me in my hour of need.

Derek Snook

Are you currently employed and if so where and what do you do?

I work with IES Temporary Labor Services, I'm the president. We started in 2011 with

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A Word from the Executive Director

On behalf of our Board of Director's I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to those of you who have already made generous contributions to the work and ministry of the Star Gospel Mission this year. If you have not yet taken the opportunity to make a contribution this year, I would encourage you to do so, and you will find an enclosed envelope in which to do so. Please know that the Mission is a 502c3 organization and all contributions are tax deductible. I would also like for you to know that since we are solely "faith based", we do not receive any financial support from our local, state or federal government.

Every Sunday, in our worship service, before we take up an offering, I remind the men that all that we are and all that we have are gifts from God. I say that even our talents, our skills, our abilities, our intellect and all our financial resources come from God. God even gives us our power to earn! Out of our gratitude for those gifts we respond by saying thank-you. But our thank-yous are not simply verbal thank-yous, we also express our thanks by making a tangible gift to Him through our churches, or through this Mission. That tangible gift is what we place in the basket or offering plate, or the check we write and send through the mail. It's my hope and prayer that you will find it in your heart to make a special gift this year toward the ongoing work and ministry of the Star Gospel Mission. And remember, the primary beneficiary of the gift is the giver!

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. William K. Christian, III

A Word from the Chairman of the Board.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

---1 Thessalonians 5:11

Dear Supporters of the Star Gospel Mission:

2013 definitely has been a year of encouragement and building up! As you can tell from Bill Christian's report in this newsletter, we are very excited about the completed renovation and opening of 89 Nassau this past June. This new facility is the first physical expansion of the Star Gospel Mission since the main dorm at 474 Meeting Street was built following Hurricane Hugo in 1989. More importantly, with your support, we were able to take a blighted home that had been unoccupied for nearly 20 years and give it a renewed sense of purpose. It is a physical manifestation of

the Star Gospel Mission's purpose of transforming hearts and lives through Jesus Christ.

As we head into 2014 and beyond, our core vision as a board is to provide transitional housing for our men commensurate with the transformational steps they are taking to live increasingly productive and responsible lives. To this end, the Board of Directors is taking steps to transform the Mission to be of its highest and best use in the Lord's service. As Charleston's oldest Christian non-profit organization (1904), the Mission is examining how we can best serve Charleston's transitional housing continuum along with other housing focused organizations to give the strongest hand up to those on

our community's margins.

In 2014, the Board of Directors at the Mission goals are to:

- (i) Internally examine our organization by studying national best governance practices of similar Christian missions;
- (ii) revitalize our brand to

demographically in our community;

(iii) partner with Charleston's many housing ministries, churches and private enterprise to provide our men with the best programs to build them up avoid "mission overlap;" and

(iv) *Approve a plan to redesign our campus and add up to 16 new apartment units.*



L to R; Three generations of Buxton's; Lallie Lukens, Lucy Buxton Lukens, Jim Buxton, Anne Buxton.

empower the Mission to be relevant generationally and

We believe these bold steps forward will ensure the mission's strength and longevity, but we cannot take these steps without your support. As you look for faithful ways to make the strongest impact on your community at its margins, please consider a donation to the Star Gospel Mission.

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Respectfully,

Jim Buxton.



Pastor Christian and Matthew Crooks receiving annual Thanksgiving Dinner prepared by employees of Haynsworth, Sinkler, Boyd law offices.



Art and Ellen Rooney with monthly delivery of breads and pastries from Costco.



Group photo of all who participated in the 2012 food gift card distribution.



L to R; Tracy and Keegan Kennedy, Dana Goyak donating abundant food for Christmas dinner.

"We are all brothers, all of us, no matter what race or color or condition; children of the same Heavenly Father. We rise together or we fall together."

George Washington Carver



L to R; Zachary Burbage, Alexander Burbage, Janice Moore, Denise Bounds, Nicholas McIntosh, Abigail Roberts, Dennis Bounds with 25 gift bags for Mission residents.



Debbie O'Kelly delivers Christmas gift bags for Mission residents.

Always remember that:
THE PRIMARY BENEFICIARY OF THE GIFT IS THE GIVER.
Please join us in keeping the ministry of the Star Gospel Mission thriving by sending your tax deductible contributions in the envelope enclosed.



Eagerly waiting recipients of food gift cards on Monday morning following Thanksgiving.

Transforming a house into a home. (cont. from Page 1)

three guys going out to work daily and today we have 65 going out every day. My goal is to have one IES in every major city in the country.

That's a pretty ambitious goal!

It is, but I don't think we can put a cap on what God is capable of doing. It won't be because of us but because of what God is doing through us.

Do you believe it to be providential that you came to the Star Gospel Mission?

For me, I want to pursue the story that God's written for me. I'm trying to listen to God's voice and I hope it's providential that I'm here because it's where God wants me to be. My belief is that if I can help other people experience the story that's written for them, by doing that they're going to have to learn more about their Author (God) and, in turn, themselves. Between where every person is and the place that God wants them to be is an encounter with God. That's part of the reason why we call it In Every Story, because we want people to be able to live out the story God has written for them.

Can you tell me your initial impression of what it was like moving into a brand new studio apartment of your own?

It's great! I feel that if all the guys could get to the stage where they could move into a nice place like this it would be pretty special.

Describe what it's like living here?

It's got a lot of dignity, it's nice, it's clean, it's wonderful, it's brand new! For the guys that are trying to get ahead in life and work lower paying jobs with the skills they have, I'd be really happy if we could build enough of these places that all the men who are working at IES or living in the Mission's dormitory could live in such a wonderful place.

So, how do you like your new home?

I love it! Although I also liked living in the dormitory because of the community and interacting with all the other guys. I'm trying to put myself, as much as possible, in the shoes of the guys that we're trying to serve (at IES). If we can get our guys to live at a place like this then I'll be really happy. So, philosophically speaking, I love the neighborhood, I love the community, I love this part of the city and I feel as though it's our job to take care of it.

Any other comments your want to make about the Mission?

I'm excited to see the direction that the leadership is taking the Mission; the idea that they're trying to create additional affordable transitional housing in Charleston.

Terrance Smalls

What is it that brought you here to the Star Gospel in the first place?

What originally brought me here was that I was supposed to go back to Georgia and be with my wife, but at the last minute plans changed and it left me without a roof over my head. I had to hurry and check around to find some place to live and that's when I found out about this place.

While you were here you were attending school, is that correct?

Yes, it was an on-line school. I graduated in December of 2012.

Are you currently employed and if so where?

At SC works Charleston. I was a program assistant but that was a temporary position that just ended. I'm currently looking to get back into school and begin working on my Master's of Business Administration degree. I'm looking at on-line schools mainly, but I'm also looking into The College of Charleston and The Citadel.



Dedication ceremony for 89 Nassau Street.

GOD'S GOODNESS IS BIGGER THAN OUR BADNESS. GOD'S POWER TO FORGIVE IS GREATER THAN OUR ABILITY TO SIN.



John Wesley United Methodist Church youth group and sponsors preparing a monthly Sunday breakfast at the Mission.

"Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which they have overcome."

Booker T. Washington

Transforming a house into a home. (cont. from page 4)

When you moved from the Mission to the Nassau Street house, what were your initial impressions?

It was great! It's my own private place, so I love it! Being able to spread out a little bit and have my own privacy, everybody needs their own private space, and I'd been at the Mission roughly three years at the time I left so it was time.

Are you comfortable there?

Yes, very comfortable and I love the peace and quiet and tranquility.

What changes has living at 89 Nassau made in your life?

I get to cook again, which is one of the things I've always enjoyed doing. And my rest seems to be much more peaceful. I also like not having a curfew, so if there's something on TV that I want to finish watching, I don't have to worry about keeping anyone else up.

Do you believe that it was a part of God's plan for your life to come to the Mission?

I already had a personal relationship with the Lord before I came to the Mission, I was already saved. It was either here or at Salvation Army where I'd stayed before but there was just something about the Mission that pulled me in that direction instead. It was downtown, it was convenient to everything, so I thought I'd give it a try.

Are there any other comments you'd like to make about SGM?

Just that I think it's a really good place for men to be. It's a place where they can get the Word of God in them and, once they do, you can see a real difference, a real change in their lives.

Matthew Crooks

What was it that precipitated your move to the SGM?

I'd gotten tired of being sick and tired. I was sleeping outside and I finally figured out how to get enough money together so that I could stay at some place decent rather than the shelter or living under a bridge.

When was that?

That was in May of 2009.

Where are you currently employed and what do you do?

I am currently employed as the day manager at the Star Gospel Mission. I'm responsible for cleaning and maintaining the physical plant and providing the meals that are served. I assist with personal issues that arise and also insure that the rules and regulations of the Mission are adhered to by the residents.

Could you tell me your initial impressions of what it was like to move from the Mission into your newly furnished studio apartment?

It was the best gift I've ever been given, because I was given the gift of privacy! With my history that is a very valuable thing.

What do you mean by privacy?

I spent 20 years in the U.S. Navy. I spent 15 years of that under water on a submarine where there was no privacy whatsoever. What's more, it's a beautiful building, it's well appointed, I don't even hear my neighbors.

So how do you like your new home?

It's great, absolutely great!

Have there been any significant changes in your life since you moved there?

The biggest change is that I am no longer 24/7 on duty. It was not uncommon for me to be woken up in the middle of the night because of some antic that was going on in the Mission, or having people needing to talk to me, or answering the phone at all hours. Now when my day ends I get to go home.

Do you find that home a very peaceful relaxed environment?

Oh, it is laidback, it's a stress free zone.

Do you believe that, in any way, it was providential for you to come here to the Mission?

I don't believe in fate, I don't believe in providence, but every time something good happens to me I say thank-you to God. My attitude is: if but for there I go I would not have been, and had I not been there, I would not have received.

Are there any additional comments you'd like to make about the Mission?

For years I was going through life without a purpose; I now have that purpose again, be it as small as it is, it is still a purpose, and that is enough.

Thanks to those who provide regular support

- First Scots Presbyterian Church
- Second Presbyterian Church
- The French Huguenot Church
- Grace Episcopal Church
- St. Michael's Episcopal Church
- St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
- Congregation Beth Elohim
- Bethel United Methodist Church
- John Wesley United Methodist Church
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- St. Johannes Lutheran Church
- Catholic Charities of Charleston
- Good Cheer Fund of the Post and Courier
- Washington Light Infantry
- New England Society
- The St. Andrew's Society
- The German Friendly Society
- Strickland Marine Agency
- Hughes Lumber Company
- Piggly Wiggly Carolina
- The Guy E. Beatty Foundation
- The Verhagen Foundation
- The Benson Family Foundation
- The Coastal Carolina Foundation
- The Exchange Club of Charleston
- The Saul Alexander Fund
- Ashley Hall Girls School
- High Cotton Restaurant
- Haynsworth, Sinkler and Boyd
- St Andrew's Church
- St Matthew's Lutheran Church
- Woodmen of the World
- I'On Family Dentistry
- Morgan Stanley Financial Services
- Bi Lo Grocery stores
- Cathedral of St Luke and St Paul
- The Church of our Savior, John's Island

2013 Good Cheer Fund Program

Each year for the past twenty years, the Star Gospel Mission has been the grateful recipient of monies collected through the Post and Courier's Good Cheer Fund program. The gathering of resources supporting this fund runs from Thanksgiving through Christmas. Six not-for-profit organizations in Charleston are beneficiaries of these funds which total more than \$300,000 annually. The other five organizations that share in these resources are: Association for the Blind, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, Carolina Youth Development and the Low-country Food Bank.

All monies received by the Post and Courier are disbursed to these six organizations throughout the month of December. Each organization is required to disburse these funds back into the community by assisting needy persons throughout the holiday season, through the end of January. Any funds that are not given out must be returned to the Good Cheer Fund on January 31.

The Star Gospel Mission is committed to the distribution of the Good Cheer Funds in several ways. We begin by giving out \$65,000 worth of gift food cards (each card has a value of \$50.00) on the Monday following Thanksgiving. Quite often the line of those desiring the food gift cards extends half way around the block. Recipients often begin waiting in line on Sunday afternoon.

With the sale of so many Piggly Wiggly grocery stores earlier this year, including the Meeting Street store, the Mission will be purchasing our cards from Bi Lo. The cards will enable recipients to purchase groceries from any Bi Lo grocery store in the Tri-County area. In case you're wondering, the cards are printed with these words: *'A gift to you from the Star Gospel Mission. No alcohol, tobacco, or lottery products.'* That statement is necessary to prevent people from using the cards for the wrong purpose.

Giving out the food cards is not the only outreach ministry we offer through the Good Cheer Fund. The Mission also assists people with rent payments, utility bills, emergency medical or pharmaceutical expenses, eye wear, dental services, clothing and emergency transportation needs. The

There's nothing we can do to make God love us any more than He already does and nothing we can do to make Him love us any less!

Mission gives out over \$100,000 in assistance to the needy in our community each year!

Our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Post and Courier Good Cheer Fund, and to all the good people of Charleston who give so generously to make this incredible resource available to assist hundreds of needy people.

Pastor Christian



The line for the Star Gospel Mission food card giveaway 2012.



L to R; Todd Lant, Matt Ronchetto, George Sanford, David Adams from the Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul prepare dinner for the men.

Adversity introduces a man to himself and God.

“I can forgive, but I cannot forget’ is only another way of saying, ‘I will not forgive.’”

§

Henry Ward Beecher



John Wesley United Methodist Church families after serving Sunday breakfast to the men.

89 Nassau Street Dedication Ceremony



Newly renovated 89 Nassau Street house.



The Rev. John Paul Brown from Mt. Zion AME Church delivers the benediction at the dedication ceremony.



L to R; Rev. Christian, Charleston Mayor Joe Riley, Rev. Brown, Dr. George Spaulding and wife Dorie at dedication.

**My past
life
hide;
my
future
guide.**



Volunteers from the Church of Our Savior, John's Island, landscaping the 89 Nassau Street property.



L to R; Sarah and Bill Christian, Jodi and Capers Barr.



L to R; Lucy Buxton Lukens, Anne Buxton and Mayor Joe Riley.



Star Gospel Mission

474 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29403
Return service requested

Non-profit
Organization
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Over a Century of Christian Service to Charleston



A brief History of the Star Gospel Mission

The old Star Vaudeville Theater converted into the SGM, circa 1904

The **Star Gospel Mission** was established in 1904 in the old **Star Vaudeville Theater**.

The theater was closed by the city fathers in 1902 because of the undesirable element associated with it. Following a dramatic conversion experience, Obadiah Dugan, a successful furniture dealer, determined to devote the rest of his life to serving people who needed spiritual, psychological and physical help. He founded the Mission after petitioning the mayor to let him use the theater as a shelter for homeless persons. On April 24, 1904, more than 500 people came to the Mission for its first work-ship service.

Dugan's heart went out to the poor, the homeless, and disenfranchised men and boys of the City of Charleston. He invited them to sleep in the old theater because they had no other place to stay. After continuing his mission work among the homeless at the Star Theater for 16 years, Dugan acquired the abandoned Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church at 474 Meeting Street, which is where the Mission has been located ever since.

Following Obadiah's death in 1936, his son, The Rev. Ernest Dugan, a Methodist minister, continued operating the Mission. When Ernest retired in 1973, a third generation Dugan, Ernest, Jr., also a Methodist minister, became

JUST DO THE RIGHT THING, WHICH MEANS, DON'T DO THE WRONG THING!

Current Mission Needs
Men's clothing, pillows, twin size sheets, pillow cases, towels, washcloths, paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, meats and canned vegetables, cleaning supplies, toiletries, light bulbs, books and DVDs.