



THE STAR NEWS

TRANSFORMING HEARTS AND LIVES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

I Walked Right into Hope

“BEFORE I CAME TO STAR GOSPEL MISSION I had zero hope in my life,” admits Eric. “But when I walked into that place during a Sunday morning church meeting, *I literally walked into hope.*”

Life was never easy for Eric. Orphaned at eight years old, his childhood was spent being passed around between family members and orphanages. As a teen, alcohol and drug addiction led to life on the streets and eventually, Eric found himself serving hard time in a federal prison for armed robbery.

Once released, Eric made his way to Savannah in hopes of being reunited with his wife. But police rearrested him and brought him back to Charleston where he was remanded into the custody of Marion Platt, executive director of Star Gospel Mission.

“When I first came here, I was so depressed. I was separated from my wife and saw no hope for myself. I kept thinking, ‘I’m never going to be okay.’ But the Mission took me in—a *stranger with a federal conviction*—and they just took me in without question! I have never seen a more caring, loving organization in my life.”

Eric stayed in the Mission’s lodge while receiving counseling at the Behavioral Health Center and spiritual discipleship from Marion. He got a job at The Big Biscuit and later took on a second job, sometimes working 60 hours or more a week.

“Everything Pastor Marion has asked me to do, I’ve done.

He’s the kind of guy that, if you step over the line, he will step on your foot. But his love is from God, and he showed me stability. He said if I gave 100 percent, he would give 100 percent—and that’s 200%! We would do it together. I decided I wasn’t going to let myself down. I made it my mission.”

Today, Eric’s life has changed drastically. He is living in one of Star Gospel Mission’s transitional apartments and has money in savings. But the biggest change has been the turnaround in his way of thinking: he no longer blames everyone else for his circumstances.

“More than anything, I just wanted peace. I had always blamed the world for what happened to me. But now I realize I did it to myself. Sometimes the problems in your life you cause yourself, but how you handle them defines you.”

At 61, Eric is redefining himself and realizing ... he still has a lot to offer.



FROM THE Executive Director

Friends, I recently learned a startling statistic: *over half* the calls that come in through the United Way helpline are not from homeless people in need of shelter, but from families and individuals who are facing eviction and need help just to stay in their homes.

These may be hard-working folks who have fallen on hard times because of Covid, job loss or some life-changing event. Others may be trying to break the cycle of generational poverty.

When I learned that North Charleston *leads the nation* in eviction rates, my heart broke for our suffering neighbors! At the same time, I know that with the Lowcountry's tradition of generosity we will not stand by and do nothing. We are in this together!

We are a diverse community, and it will take all of us working together, being aware, finding ways to help. I know that like me, you are committed to preserving the rich history of our wonderful city and ensuring that all its citizens have a safe place to sleep.

I see it every day at Star Gospel Mission—friends and community partners coming together, touching lives. When our volunteers, board members, financial partners, businesses and people of prayer join forces, **big things happen!**

A struggling mother receives groceries ... a homeless man is welcomed in from the summer heat ... an addict is shown compassion and a way out of their destructive lifestyle ...

YOU make these things happen.

Please pray for me and Star Gospel Mission's board of directors as we investigate ways to expand our services and increase our reach into this community. And as the Lord leads, please consider making a financial gift to the Mission so we can continue to meet the needs of hurting and homeless individuals. Thank you for standing with me!

Gratefully,



Dr. Marion Platt
Executive Director



Because You Gave

January – May 2022

3,681

Meals Served

3,661

Nights of Bedspace Provided

9

Men Successfully Moved into
Independent Living

367

Community Families and
Individuals Served



Don't Forget! We are always in need of food donations such as frozen meat, dry goods and coffee supplies. We also love donations of twin-size blankets and sheets, pillow cases, pillows and towels. Your new or gently used items can be dropped off at 474 Meeting Street.

Thank you!

Fighting Poverty in Charleston

AT A RECENT SGM BOARD RETREAT, a United Way representative shared some surprising statistics about the city's most prevalent challenges based on calls received through the 211 help line:

Requests from housed people who need assistance to stay in their homes: 56%

Requests from people who need shelter or other services for the homeless: 23%

Requests from people needing housing vouchers for permanent subsidized housing: 13%

Requests from people needing assistance with home rehabilitation: 8%

This is a changing dynamic in our city, but Star Gospel Mission is ready to respond! We will focus our attention on ways to assist families and individuals in danger of eviction. By expanding our annual Thanksgiving food giveaway to include more emergency assistance and case management services to hurting families, we can explore new ways to combat the devastating effects of generational poverty.

With your help, Star Gospel Mission will provide critical resources for so many living on the edge of homelessness, enabling them to stay in their homes!

Board Spotlight

JIMMY KERR HAD KNOWN about Star Gospel Mission since he was a child, so when a friend asked if he would consider joining the Mission's board of directors, he didn't hesitate to say yes.

Jimmy and his family always look for ways to support causes that provide healthcare, education, food and water, and housing to vulnerable individuals, and Star Gospel Mission fits the bill.

"We also look for organizations that use over 85 percent of funds raised in pursuing its mission, where the rubber meets the road."

And when it comes to offering the message of hope through Christ to those in need of a second chance, Jimmy and Star Gospel Mission are in total agreement.

Thank you, Jimmy, for bringing your heart and passion for helping others to Star Gospel Mission!



Look What You Did!

WHEN GENEROUS COMMUNITY PARTNERS team up with Star Gospel Mission, big things happen! We couldn't do what we do without the hard work, resources and creativity of our giving community. Here are just some of the ways our friends have come together to make an impact on the lives of the folks we serve:

SUMMER GRILLING

Nothing beats throwing some burgers on the grill with friends on a summer evening. And thanks to YOU, Star Gospel Mission's guests are now enjoying this great American tradition! The new gas grill you have provided is cooking up some great summer meals along with plenty of good times and fellowship. Thank you for making this possible!



FOOD RESCUE

Thank you, Cuisine Rescue and Charleston RiverDogs, for the many pounds of prepared, leftover food you donated! Thanks to you, the trays of steak and rice, shrimp and rice, asparagus and Brussel

sprouts that would have ended up in a dumpster provided many meals for the hungry and homeless instead. We appreciate this vital service you provide!

CLEAN SHEETS!

A big THANK YOU to Mohammad Green and coworkers at AGFA who donated more than \$7,000 in sheets, pillowcases and blankets. Because you cared, our homeless guests have clean, comfortable beds to rest in.



WAYS YOU CAN GIVE

TOP VOLUNTEER NEEDS

- Breakfast Prep
- Sunday Morning Worship Team
- Group Counselor (training provided)
- Case Management (training provided)

Contact Dr. Marion Platt at (843) 722-2473 or marion.platt@stargospelmission.org to learn more about volunteering.

MAKE A GIFT

We accept and appreciate contributions of:

- **Cash** – whether it's a one-time gift or a regular monthly donation, your generosity will help us continue to provide clean beds, daily meals, hot showers and other essential services to our neighbors in need
- **Appreciated stock, bonds or mutual funds** – avoid capital gains tax and deduct 100 percent of the value of your contribution when you transfer stock directly to the Mission
- **Non-cash assets** – donate a car, boat or other non-cash asset. You determine the value of the gift. (Please contact us first if you have something to donate.)
- **Bequest through will** – you can bequest a dollar amount, specific property, or a percentage of your estate

Please discuss these and other planned gifts with your tax attorney or financial planner.

Thank you for giving generously!

DONATE ONLINE

To donate online, visit
stargospelmission.org/donate

or scan the code
for a direct link



474 Meeting Street | Charleston, SC 29403
(843) 722-2473 | stargospelmission.org



@stargospelmission