

# STORIES of HOPE

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The best Christmas gift there is...

*Sara*

has a new life,  
thanks to you!



## DON'T MISS...

**2** The Joy that Comes from Christ

**3** The Real Me

**4** We need your help!



# THE REAL ME

When Sara first walked through the doors of Gateway Mission, she felt lost and broken. “I was used to always being the helper, not the one who needed help,” she says. “I was scared and angry, and felt like I had thrown my life away.”

Sara grew up in church and went to Christian schools. She had a wonderful, supportive family. After high school, she pursued a career as a paramedic because she “wanted to help people.”

But Sara found the stress difficult to cope with. She started gaining more and more weight. Worse, she turned to alcohol. “Once alcohol becomes a thing, it’s hard to make it not a thing. Eventually, I had to quit the job I loved.”

By 2014, her weight had increased to 400 pounds. She had gastric bypass surgery and lost almost 200 pounds, but then she became addicted to pain pills. At one point, she overdosed and almost died. When she walked out of the hospital 10 days later, she was determined to return to her career as a paramedic – but she also returned to alcohol.

“Last April, I quit my job again... then I got arrested for a DUI. My family wouldn’t let me come home unless I got help. That’s how I ended up at Gateway Mission.”

While Sara struggled at first – feeling scared and no longer having control of her life – she stuck it out. “I grew in ways I didn’t think were possible,” she says.

“Even though I grew up in church, my eyes opened to what my faith actually means for me. The Mission gave me the chance to learn what really matters in life and to see the real me. I’m just someone who struggles, but my struggles don’t define me. I feel

so blessed!”

**Sara is excited to celebrate the restored hope she has been given this Christmas – and wants YOU to know just how grateful she is.** “I thank God for people like you. You changed my life.”



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CHANCE TO LEARN WHAT  
REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE.”





# Give 2X the help on GIVING TUESDAY

Tuesday, November 29

A Message from  
DARRYL BARTLETT

## The JOY that Comes from Christ

Don't you just love the words of John 1:14? *"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

As we rejoice over the birth of our Savior, it's such a blessing to know God fills our hearts with joy everlasting – today and every day. His faithfulness sustains us through every circumstance and His grace offers renewal in our lives... as well as in the lives of those we serve.

While we do provide Christmas gifts to the guests in our care, what's most important is that they know about Jesus' sacrifice and the gift of salvation that is freely given to us all.

Thanks to your friendship, we're able to share the "good tidings of great joy for all people" during the holidays and throughout the year. Your fervent prayers and ongoing support help restore lives – and wrap local men, women and children in God's loving embrace.

Just like Sara, whose story we've shared on page 3, God still works miracles in the lives of people all around us.

This Christmas, I hope your heart overflows with peace, joy and love as your blessings abound.



Darryl Bartlett  
Executive Director

## SHARE A CHRISTMAS MEAL...

You can help make this Christmas a time of celebration for our neighbors who are hungry and homeless. With so many obstacles to overcome during this season of hardship, they need a helping hand and to experience God's love!



**\$2.05**

for 1 hot meal



**\$60.00**

for 1 night of safe shelter

**CAN GIVE SOMEONE**



**Please Send Your Christmas Gift Today!**



## HOPEBUILDERS: MAKE A MONTHLY DIFFERENCE

More and more people in our community are struggling with homelessness, emotional and mental issues, addiction and other challenges that they just can't overcome on their own. They need our long-term support.

**Our HopeBuilders provide that kind of extraordinary support each month for people overcoming homelessness, addiction and poverty at Gateway Mission.** Simply put... they make it possible to care for those in need, every step of the way!

Men, women and children experiencing homelessness need YOU! Provide the support and care they need each month as they change their lives through God's love. **Please – become a monthly partner now!**

To learn more about becoming a member of this extraordinary group, contact us at **(616) 396-2200** or email **info@hopefoundhere.org**.

To join our HopeBuilders now, visit **hopefoundhere.org**.

*“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”  
-Philippians 4:19 (NIV)*

## May the Lord bless you abundantly this Christmas!



As we prepare our hearts for the miracle of Christmas, we just want to thank you for being a tremendous blessing in the lives of our hurting neighbors. **In this last year, your generosity has opened the door for healing and transformation through God’s unending love by providing:**

- 97,887 nourishing meals
- 32,309 nights of safe shelter
- 10 lives changed in our life recovery programs
- Over 12,400 hours of classes/counseling/job training

Just as you have given generously to help the Mission meet our needs, may God meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory. *Thank you for your caring and compassion, and have a wonderful Christmas!*

# We Need Your Help!

The holidays are just around the corner, and we’re getting ready for this very busy time of year. We will be hosting special meals and events, adopting families in need in our community and celebrating God’s love and the holidays. **We need your help to make it all happen!**

We are seeking volunteers to prep food, deliver meals, serve, clean up or to donate holiday supplies.



If you, your church or organization are interested in volunteering this Thanksgiving or Christmas season, please call Katie Taylor at **(616) 928-3451** or email **volunteer@hopefoundhere.org**.

