

**MORE
THAN**
a shelter.

RAISING UP

THE GOOD NEWS OF HELPING UP MISSION



Derailed to Discovery

“Before I came to Helping Up Mission (HUM), I had a demon inside me when I drank alcohol,” says Steven, 48 (in the left photo). “I grew up in Shelby, North Carolina, where my mother crammed religion down our throats. I’ve always been a believer, but I still have questions about my faith. At 12, I started smoking marijuana, and at 16, I was busted for possession. I didn’t want that life, so I joined the Navy at 18.”

“Turns out, there were more drugs in the military! I finished my service 10 days before 9/11. I remember my dad waking me up as the second plane hit the World Trade Center. During my time in the Navy, I worked on aircraft carriers focusing on planes. I transitioned to the civilian field of aviation. In 2006, the airline industry was failing, so I sought work in railroads. At the time, they were training college engineering graduates to manage, and that plan wasn’t working. They started a program that took people with heavy industry backgrounds in management and taught us how to railroad. Once again, alcohol was part of the culture.”

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The Faithful Servant
In Memory of
Bruce R. Mortimer

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“My territory was 450 miles surrounding Atlanta, Georgia. It was the second-busiest territory in the nation. There were a lot of train-involved accidents. The overwhelming majority were due to civilian error, with some occurring on purpose. As the locomotive manager, I was required to respond to and represent every one of them.”

“I have PTSD from my time on the railroad and in the military, where I witnessed countless horrific incidents. We hit everything from school buses to homeless men sleeping on the tracks and were involved in major derailments and fatal fires.”

“Before I came to Helping Up Mission (HUM), I had a demon inside me when I drank alcohol.”

“In 2023, because of drinking, my demon came out, and I woke up in jail. One night after praying, I had a vision: someone stood in front of me, saying HUM was where I needed to go. I couldn’t fight it anymore, so I enrolled in the Spiritual Recovery Program.”

“At HUM, I’ve been working to understand why I drink. I took CCAR training to become a Peer Recovery Specialist. I also joined the Ally program and met my mentor, Rusty. He feels that I should remain open to returning to railroading and leading recovery groups there. Recovery is my goal, but I’m also here to figure out who I am. Maybe going back to the railroad is where God puts me—I just need to trust in His plan and slay my demon.”

“What HUM donors make possible is amazing. Thank you for helping me find me.”



Hope Restored. Lives Rebuilt.

Daniel’s Monthly Update

Dear HUM Family,

As we enter 2025, it’s an opportunity to reflect on your investment in the lives of those we serve at Helping Up Mission (HUM). Steven’s story this month shows the depth of the need and the impact of our Spiritual Recovery Program to get to root causes and issues. His story also shows the value of a trusted mentor in the recovery journey and the process of re-discovering purpose and God-given identity.

These efforts to offer a holistic approach to recovery in the context of a long-term residential community of hope are resource-intensive. HUM’s programs rely on partnerships from donors to volunteers to community agencies who provide additional resources for our clients.

So, thank you for standing with us through your volunteer involvement, financial support and prayers as we look forward to a 2025 full of recovery and life transformation. Thank you on behalf of those like Steven who walk through our doors seeking hope and change.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Daniel Stoltzfus'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

K. Daniel Stoltzfus, CEO
Helping Up Mission

**This hope is
like a firm and
steady anchor
for our souls.**

– Hebrews 6:19



Focus on Recovery

Mike Rallo – Director of Spiritual Life

In 1 John 4:4, the Bible says, “Greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world.”

This month’s feature story is about Steven, who shared, “Before coming to the mission, I felt like I had a demon inside me when I drank alcohol.”

Raised in a faith-filled household, Steven experienced deep trauma and pain, leading him to seek escape through drugs and alcohol. Whether influenced by evil forces or the harsh realities of a fallen world, Steven allowed those struggles to dictate his life.

“I’ve been working hard to understand why I drink,” he said. “It’s not just about sobriety—it’s about uncovering root causes.”



Through the mission’s Ally Program, Steven began opening up to his ally, Rusty, realizing, “This is part of God’s plan. The demon can be slain, and I have more to live for than I ever imagined.”

Steven is now embracing abundant life.

Still Hoping

In November, 100 Spiritual Recovery Program graduates, many with families, attended HUM’s inaugural Alumni Gathering. After trivia in the chapel, Board Member and graduate Demetrie Garner inspired attendees to pursue hope. The event, themed On the Path Forward: We are Stronger Together, ended with a BBQ feast prepared by HUM’s kitchen and led by graduate Richard H.





Toiletry Drive

Even with the holiday season behind us, we urgently need full-size toiletries to support those we serve.

Hosting a toiletry drive at your local church, school, or organization is a simple and impactful way to help. We are accepting new, unopened items such as shampoo, body wash, and deodorant. For more information on hosting a toiletry drive or to view our current needs, please email Brian Murphy at bmurphy@helpingup.org.

To Donate Urgent Needs
helpingupmission.org/ways-to-give/donate-goods



The Faithful Servant – In Memory of Bruce R. Mortimer

Our greater HUM family lost a dear friend to Heaven on Dec 1st. Bruce Mortimer served on the board of Helping Up Mission since 2006 and as Board President from 2021 to 2024, overseeing the completion of the *Inspiring Hope Campaign* and the opening of the Center for Women & Children.

He contributed to key Board Committees, including Governance, Finance and Program, and was instrumental in creating the Alumni Support Committee. Bruce also mentored many men, offering guidance and encouragement to become graduate staff and leaders.



For these and countless other acts of selfless service, we are certain Bruce heard God say, “*Well done, my good and faithful servant.*” (Matthew 25:23a)

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

We currently face a volunteer shortage at the **Center for Women & Children** and need your help! Your time and dedication can make a difference in the lives of our community members—join us and be the change today!



helpingupmission.vomo.org/org/helping-up-mission

 **Helping Up
Mission**
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410-675-HELP (4357)
helpingupmission.org


Our Mission

Helping Up Mission provides hope to people experiencing homelessness, poverty, or addiction by meeting their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs.

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