



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Volunteer Fair
see page 4 for more

Angela Feels HUM is Like Home



"There was so much food that you couldn't fit it all on one plate!"

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Bob Gehman's Monthly Update **2**
- Photo Story **2**
- Focus on Recovery **3**
- 2022 Team HUM Recap **4**

Angela, age 51, was born in Baltimore, Maryland and raised in the former George P. Murphy homes in West Baltimore. "I was the youngest of three girls," recalls Angela. "My mother was a hard worker, but she was also an addict. I know the man that my mother told me was my father. Before I was born, he told my mother that if I came out as a black baby, I wasn't his. He was very light skinned and as a child, he rejected me before I was born. That rejection would shape a lot of the decisions that I made. I was searching for the acceptance that I never got from my father. The only time that I would see him was in the middle of the night to remove me from my mother's bed. And I thought that it was okay for him to treat me that way because he never believed that I was his."

"I was raised as a Jehovah's Witness. As a young child I was forced to go to church. I had questions about faith that could not be answered, and I would be shunned. But I always knew that there was something out there greater than me."

"In school, I was an honor roll student. I got pregnant at age 13 and had my first child at age 14. I stayed in school the whole time. I

started smoking marijuana at age 13. One night I came into my house after smoking and saw my mom and my sisters rearranging the living room. They just looked at me, I put my head down, turned the corner, and went to my room. My mother later told me, 'if you want to smoke marijuana, then I prefer you do it in the house.'"

"I got pregnant with my second daughter at age 15. My second daughter's father was very abusive; mental, physical, social, financial, and spiritual. I was introduced to heroin at age 16, cocaine at 19, and by 25 I had a needle in my arm."

"My life got as bad as it could get. My mother would look at me and say, 'you're too young to be this unhappy and depressed!' I struggled with addiction for the next 30 years. I worked a lot of jobs, and I was a functioning addict until I wasn't."

Trying to find help, Angela would eventually seek treatment. "I went from a crisis center to a 21-day detox called Hope Horizon. While there, another client told me that Helping Up Mission (HUM) started a new Spiritual Recovery Program (SRP) for women. But then the Covid pandemic hit, and I was not able to

> continued on page 3



NOW IT'S UP TO US

1029 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-4705
410.675.7500
410.675.HELP





NOW IT'S UP TO US Bob's Monthly Update

Dear friends,

During the holiday season, so often our celebrations and plans involve a good meal. Growing up on a Pennsylvania farm as I did, generous helpings of good and wholesome food fill my memories of holidays. It's amazing how a smell can trigger a memory—a friend recently told me about the smell of sauerkraut reminding him of Thanksgiving.

Holiday meals are also milestones for my three decades here at HUM: early years when we worried about how to get all the turkeys and hams cooked in time; the year that our kitchen was being renovated and we needed someplace to hold our meal; the year that the local news highlighted our wonderful dinner volunteers. I still feel very young until I look back at the video clip of me on the news that year!

In our cover story, Angela tells us that she arrived at HUM last year just before Thanksgiving. She traveled a difficult road to get to us, even living in a vacant house. She tells us that the food she received last Thanksgiving helped to make HUM feel like HOME for her. She was hoping for some ham that day- and got that plus all the fixings! She tells us that her work therapy in the kitchen gave her the gift to be "able to serve someone else, without expecting anything in return." She says that "was what I needed."

That is what we all need sometimes, isn't it? To be able to give selflessly to someone else. I can't count the number of volunteers at HUM who have told me they were having a tough time in their own lives, but coming to HUM to serve others filled them back up. That is just how God works in our lives—when we give expecting nothing in return, we get back far more than we ever gave!

You, my friends, are doing just that when you give generously to support the men and women at HUM. Your gifts help someone whom you may never meet, someone whose very food, shelter and hope for a better future are made possible by you. I am grateful for your support in this season, and every single day of the year.

I hope you will join me in praying that this Thanksgiving, someone will come in off the streets for a hot meal with all the fixings, and decide to stay and start a new life in the warm community you make possible with your contributions.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Bob

Volunteer Fair – Led to Serve

Last month Helping Up Mission's Center for Women & Children hosted a volunteer fair for women interested in serving. The event was well attended. Prospective volunteers were provided an overview of volunteer opportunities, and updates on strategic initiatives, and enjoyed the lite fare. If you are a woman, feel led to serve, and are interested in becoming a volunteer at our Center for Women & Children, please contact Andrea "Andi" O'Connor at 410-675-7500 ext. 1218 or by email at aconnor@helpingup.org.



* Due to an overabundance of kindness, we are not accepting women's and children's clothing through December 31st.

** This holiday season you can select HUM as your charity of choice at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 5% of your purchase at no cost to you!

join. I walked out the door because the stress of the pandemic was too much to handle. As soon as I got home, I called HUM, and they told me there were unconfirmed Covid cases and intake was being shut down."

"My breaking point came when I was living in an abandoned row home. I picked one room, which was the living room, and cleaned it up. I took a mattress and a box spring from another room and that is what I called home. I was peeing in cups. I lived in those conditions for a whole summer, but when it got too cold, I moved in with a friend of mine. Over the Memorial Day weekend, he died from Covid. I stayed as long as I could. I have seen every state in this beautiful country, but the world was reduced to me and my drugs in the bathroom. Later, because I wasn't on the lease, the property owner kicked me out."

"That is when I said, 'oh God, help me. Please help me. I know that this is not the life You want for me.' I arrived at HUM in

November of 2021. It was exciting and new. HUM was love there is a unity in this building."

Angela arrived just in time for Thanksgiving. "We were allowed to go down to the men's Center and Baltimore Ravens players served us. We took pictures around the Christmas tree. It was a joyous time. I was still on the 60-day no communications black-out and wasn't allowed to be with my immediate family. But HUM felt like home! And the food! All that I wanted was some ham, but they had all the fixings. There was so much food that you couldn't fit it all on one plate!"

"Today I pray, go to meetings, and I don't pick up. They have a saying around here that if you stay long enough, you'll change without your permission. But the thing that changed me more than anything was on the second day in the SRP I started working in the kitchen. Being able to serve someone else, without expecting anything in return, was what I needed. A HUM

client Ms. Judy taught me that you don't have to like it, you don't have to like them, but you have to love them. That is when God gets the most glory! Now I am the intake intern and I love it! I picture myself being on the other end of the call helping women like I wanted to be helped"

"I like watching my prayers come true at HUM. I am excited about the next phase of my journey. I will be the first graduate of the new Center for Women & Children's year program. I am getting my teeth done and my cheeks are going to hurt for a week because I am not going to stop smiling! I want to get my license as a Peer Recovery Specialist!"

"Thank you to the donors, you are appreciated for making HUM possible. To the ladies who are struggling, the only thing that overrides fear is faith and speaking from experience, coming to HUM is one of the best decisions that you can make!"

To read more of Angela's story, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/angela

Focus on Recovery – Laura Staroneck Assistant Director Center for Women & Children



"We thank you, God, we thank you—your Name is our favorite word; your mighty works are all we talk about." Psalm 75:1 MSG

As we enter this season of Thanksgiving our hearts are reminded of all the things we are grateful for. I have observed many fighting the battle of recovery this past year. Some days it is hard to find something to be grateful for as the battle can seem bleak and hopeless. Seeing women battle between where God found them and where He is taking them is powerful. Angela is no exception to this very notion. As she battled through seasons during her time at Helping Up Mission and in her own heart, those around her have seen greatness; both in her overwhelming sense of who she is in Christ and in how she points us to God and His greatness. The road traveled in recovery is lifelong. Even through the seasons or phases where it is hard to find something to be grateful for, lean into the greatness of who God is and how He is changes each of us every day. He promises us all greatness.

The challenge is this: as we all take time this holiday season to be grateful for all that God has given us, may we stop in the simple moments that often seem ordinary to reflect on God's greatness. Recovery for Angie has been filled with gratefulness as we have all seen her steadfastness day by day. Through this we have all witnessed the greatest of our God. And this my friends is a reason to be thankful.

As you sit amongst family and/or friends this Thanksgiving remember those that are continuing to battle within and turn to drugs and alcohol to meet the need only Christ can fill. The battle is there but there is hope. May His greatness speak deeply into your soul this season, and may you be grateful for where God has brought you from and where He has you going in the days, weeks, and months ahead. This my friend is good news.

"Let me shout God's name with a praising song, let me tell his greatness in a prayer of thanks." Psalm 69:30 MSG

Everyone Deserves a Meal This Thanksgiving Season

No one should go hungry... especially this Thanksgiving.

People who were already on the edge of poverty are being pushed to the brink by the soaring cost of food and other life essentials. And it's crushing those who already felt trapped.

Every \$2.10 you give today will provide a complete Thanksgiving season dinner for someone struggling with homelessness or addiction. You'll bless them with turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, pumpkin pie... the works!

You'll do so much more than just fill an empty stomach, because Thanksgiving season dinners at Helping Up Mission are so much more than meals. For the men and women in our recovery program, they bring a sense of community... of belonging... of family. And these meals are a step toward new life filled with hope.

Your help is urgently needed to serve up more than 82,000 meals and care this Thanksgiving season. At just \$2.10 per meal, just imagine all the lives you can touch.

\$50.40 to feed and care for 24 people

\$100.80 to feed and care for 48 people

\$174.30 to feed and care for 83 people

Thanksgiving is almost here. Please give now to bring joy to hurting men and women who need to know they are not alone. [Helpingupmission.org/meals](https://helpingupmission.org/meals)
Thank you!

 Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/Helping.Up.Mission

 Follow us on Twitter @helpingup

DONATE NOW

 Mail us your gift

 helpingupmission.org/donate

 410.675.HELP

Donate your car:
helpingupmission.careasy.org/

NOW IT'S UP TO US

2022 Team HUM Overcomes the Challenge!



Helping Up Mission was well represented at the Baltimore Running Festival on October 15th. With over 100 runners and walkers proudly wearing their orange Team HUM shirts, we could be seen anywhere and everywhere along the course!

If you participated, you probably saw a few of the 100 clients who volunteered stuffing race bags, setting up the expo, setting up Celebration Village, and even driving the marathon's SAG vehicle. It is just one of the ways that we give back to Baltimore during race week.

We had an amazing community response in our effort to **Face the Challenge**. Through sponsorships, peer-to-peer fundraising, and your gifts, over \$170,000 was raised. These critically needed funds provide hope to men and women experiencing homelessness, addiction, and poverty, and we could not do it without you.

It was another amazing year for Team HUM, and we would like to thank everyone who supported us in this endeavor! You are a vital part of the whole-life transformation taking place in thousands of men's and women's lives each year.

Mark your calendar for next year's race on October 14, 2023!



Our Mission

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

1029 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-4705 • 410.675.HELP