



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Community Day
see page 4 for more

Steven Finally has a Family



"If you think positively and do the right thing, God is always with you!"

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Bob Gehman's Monthly Update **2**
- Photo Story **2**
- Focus on Recovery **3**
- Community Day **4**

Steven, age 56, was born and raised in Petersburg, Virginia. "I was the youngest child of seven," Steven recalls. "My dad and mom worked hard. I grew up in a spiritual family. My dad always took us to church, but my mom did not go. She thought that she did not have to go to church to believe in God. Where I thought that God was just there with no emotional attachment. And after church, my dad would go to the civic club to have drinks with his buddies. Witnessing my dad's drinking and the fights between him and my mother made me feel abandoned and alone. In tenth grade, I realized that my dad was an alcoholic."

"In high school, I was different. And being who I am, and dealing with family trauma, I did not socialize a lot. I tended to be a loner. At age 17, I had my first drink. I snuck out one night, went to a nightclub, and had a bourbon. I was horrified because I was scared, but happy. I quickly discovered that drinking allowed me to not care, loosen up, and have a fun time. But soon, I realized that to enjoy myself, I had to numb myself."

"When my dad passed away in 2014, I remember getting drunk immediately after the funeral. Not knowing why my dad was the

way he was, I did not want to feel anything. My 'rock-bottom' really hit a year later in 2015, when my mom passed away. My mom... was my everything. She understood me and made sure that every one of her children had support. She was the rock of our family. She kept us together. Gone were the family get togethers, Christmases, Thanksgivings, and phone calls. The family dynamics broke up. So, my response was to start doing drugs."

"I started using cocaine and then a friend introduced me to crystal methamphetamines. "Meth" was a whole new ball game that made me not care. It made me feel like I was in control, while it ruined my standard of living. When I realized that I was getting too deep into drugs, I moved to Charlotte, North Carolina to live with my sister. I grieved my parent's deaths, processed my addictions, and sought help. I found a church that I enjoyed and started attending. My 'recovery' was going to church. After two years of doing my own recovery, 'I was good to go.' I packed my bags and moved (back) to Baltimore."

"I was back in a familiar environment with old friends that I used to party with. I met someone and became great friends with them.

> 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,

As the beauty of fall arrives each year, we know that the cold of winter is not far behind. The need for our services will rise sharply as the thermometer drops. HUM was founded in 1885 to offer emergency shelter so that men wouldn't freeze to death on the streets—and that part hasn't changed. Today, our Overnight Guest Services still provide a warm bed, two hot meals, a shower, and fresh clothes. But now we have so much more to offer—we can help men and women to transform their lives, reconnect to their families, and once again become contributing members of our communities through our Spiritual Recovery Program.

In the past 137 years, there were many lean winters. In my nearly 30 years at HUM, I have seen my own share of winters where we prayed very fervently that the Good Lord would help meet the needs of suffering souls, and bring them in off the streets. A board member was recently reminding us of a night many years ago when the only dinner we had was turkey necks! We may have come a long way since those days, but as I look toward this winter, I once again find myself praying that the supply will be great enough to meet the needs.

These tough economic times mean that the cost of food, utilities and the maintenance of our facilities is rising sharply—and just like any household, it is taking a toll on our budget. This is hitting us especially hard because just as costs are rising, so is the need for our services. As I write to you today, there are nearly 500 men and women in our care at our two Centers. Every day we are bringing more people in from off the streets with our street outreach program, and we know for sure that cold weather will bring even more souls to our doorstep.

Challenges like inflation and sky-high housing costs are just too much for people who are already living on the precipice. Tragically, economic downturns have always led to an increase in alcoholism and drug-abuse; this could not come at a worse time when the pandemic has brought overdose deaths to record highs.

Thank you for your support over many winters, and if you are able, I ask you to please stand with us again this winter. *For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.* We are taking a leap of faith and preparing to help record numbers of people this winter, and we hope we can continue to count on you to help us bridge the gap and show hospitality to every stranger at our door.

With gratitude,

Bob

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

** Have you considered placing Helping Up Mission in your will?
Visit: <https://helpingupmission.org/legacy-gifts>

Horsing Around

On September 19, 11 men from our Spiritual Recovery Program (SRP) visited The Hughes Family Ev'ry Last Scent Farm in White Hall, Maryland and were treated to a beautiful day outdoors while enjoying Equine Therapy. The men cleaned, groomed, and walked the horses - Georgia, Danny, and Kiwi to name a few. "It was a dream come true to be able to spend time with the horses," said Ron, an SRP client. Opportunity for this idyllic day was provided by Hughes Family.



We lived together and I thought that we had the same intentions of building a future together. It started great, but ended with them taking advantage of my finances, my emotions, and my needs. It got to the point where I was trying to save something that was not savable. I lost everything and my own world to live in. The only good thing that they ever gave me was the idea to seek help at Helping Up Mission (HUM)."

"I came to HUM in 2019, scared to death. I had been on my own since 1994. Walking into a building that housed 400 men scared me. I had a lot of uncertainty in myself and my life. All that I knew was that I was going to get back what I had lost. It was the week before Christmas, and I had spent years not being able to celebrate with my family. I was grateful to be in a building where I felt safe and could go to

sleep. My initial thought was to stay just 30 days. But 30 days came and went, and I agreed to stay 60."

"I started noticing people and the mechanics of how things work at HUM. I noticed people smiling in recovery – who does that? And in return people started appreciating me. In response, I started letting my guard down. People began liking me for me. I started my work therapy in the laundry room. Then I moved to the library. I took pride in my job and the staff and clients started to come to me for help. My hard work paid off and I was asked to work in the treatment office. Pamela Wilkerson, Director of our Center for Women & Children, started working in the treatment office while the new center was being built. Pam is like family to me. Pam is awesome. She cares about the staff; she cares about the clients. I came here

without a family, and today Pam is family. And when the new building opened Pam hired me as her Administrative Assistant."

"In my time at HUM, I have freed myself from overthinking. I met a group of people who care about Steven and push me. We started a group called "Brothers in Prayer," who get together and celebrate life. Along with Pam, I met Laura Staroneck, Assistant Director of the new center, and my new family grew. I attend church every Sunday, but I believe what my mom told me about being in church to believe in God is true. If you think positively and do the right thing, God is always with you!"

"I would like to thank the donors for making such an incredible place possible. You do not get this type of help in high school or college. HUM actually changed my life in my 50's! I never would have thought that I could live my life drug-free!"

To read more of Steven's story, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/steven

Focus on Recovery – Vic King – Assistant Director of Spirituality



Before Steven came on staff at the Center for Women & Children, he worked with me in the treatment office. First, it was his work therapy assignment, and then he became a graduate intern. It was there that I saw his transformation.

Like many of us, Steven struggles with "people pleasing." And here he was, working in an office that handles hundreds of appointments each week. When you're in constant contact with clients in every possible state of mind, it's easy to get exhausted. And at first, that's exactly the trajectory Steven was on. But as he got to know God and himself better, he realized that he didn't need to ride the rollercoaster of other people's approval.

Many of my colleagues here at HUM (Helping Up Mission) are graduates of the Spiritual Recovery Program. And I'm so thankful to serve alongside them. It makes such a difference to have program graduates as key players in every area of our organization. But amazing souls like Steven face a unique challenge.

In any mission-driven organization, there's a danger of losing yourself in the work. It's easy to become absorbed by it, finding your primary sense of identity in the ministry. You run the risk of denying your God-given human limitations and burning yourself out.

It's a path I've walked before and by grace I don't intend to walk again. This path has an especially strong pull when you're working for the very mission that God used to save your life. And if you're living on campus, like Steven is, the stream of demands on your time can be near-constant.

So, I've looked on with joy as Steven has grown in his ability to set healthy boundaries. I've watched him love and serve others faithfully, even as he honors his creaturely limits. He's an inspiration to me as we seek to love God and serve others here at HUM.

Thanksgiving Meals

You'll be hard-pressed to find a better deal anywhere in Baltimore!

Just \$2.10 is all it takes to provide a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at Helping Up Mission. And for a man or woman battling homelessness or addiction, that meal can be the first step toward a transformed life and a fresh start.

Please continue your faithful partnership today by giving to help our most vulnerable neighbors:

\$48.30 to feed and care for 23 people

\$100.80 to feed and care for 48 people

\$174.30 to feed and care for 83 people

Thanksgiving will be here soon. With so many people struggling from the spike in costs for food and other life essentials, your help is especially needed this Thanksgiving season to serve more than 82,000 meals.

Please don't let our hurting neighbors be forgotten this Thanksgiving. Please take a moment to give now. At just \$2.10 per meal, imagine how many lives you can touch.

Thank you... and Happy Thanksgiving!

I'll HELP hurting neighbors NOW by visiting helpingupmission.org/meals



Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Helping.Up.Mission](https://www.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

Community Day



The Historic Jonestown Committee held its second annual Community Day on September 17. Jonestown residents celebrated with Jonestown businesses throughout an afternoon filled with food and experiences. Magic shows, karate demonstrations, basketball drills, face painting, science experiments, and music performances, packed the schedule with enjoyable entertainment.

Helping Up Mission, a member of the Jonestown community since 1954, provided grilled hot dogs and hamburgers, The National Aquarium gave tours of their own "treatment" facility throughout the day, and Maryland Food Bank gave away shelf-stable food boxes.

"Community, family, and friends came together to celebrate this wonderful neighborhood of Historic Jonestown," stated Chloe Ring, Development & Community Engagement Manager of the Ronald McDonald House. "Kids were laughing, adults joyfully conversing, and families dancing to our wonderful DJ 5 Starr. A whole committee of wonderful people and organizations that included the Ronald McDonald House, HUM, the National Aquarium, The Women's Civic League, and the Jewish Museum, among others, got together and planned this event. A lot of hard work and big hearts went into it."

This was a truly magical day as the Jonestown Community came together to celebrate its beautiful people, places, and culture. A culturally rich historic Jonestown that has spanned 290 years and is the oldest neighborhood in Baltimore!



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