

APRIL 2018

PGM annually serves well over a half million plates of food to the less fortunate among us.

# BOUNDLESS COMPASSION

## PGMNews

ARTICLE BY DANIEL WOOLMAN

**W**hat would you do if everyone you knew had given up on and abandoned you? Imagine making so many mistakes in life that all of your loved ones had turned their backs on you. In many of the testimonies we encounter here at PGM, it's a very common theme. Next, imagine that when the time came that you truly repented and wanted to turn your life over to Jesus Christ and were genuinely ready to change, no one was around to help. In many cases, this is what happens. In fact, most of the people that I know, including myself, who have had their lives completely transformed here through the power of Jesus Christ, were at one point completely on their own. Their bridges all burnt.

Even with motivation and a positive attitude it can be an incredibly difficult feat to start this new life without feelings of defeat and hopelessness. Most people that come here have no place to live, no documentation, no job, no resources, and many times, no one in their lives who are willing to lend them a

*Continues on page 2*

*And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*

—MATTHEW 9:11-12 KJV

*Among other truths here we learn those who are experiencing physical setbacks are much more receptive to the Lord's voice.*

*It is the sick whose lives can be the most profoundly influenced by Christ's love, and with His love, they can become born again with completely new and resurrected lives.*



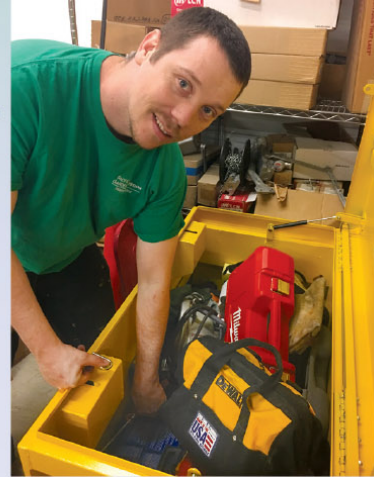
**Boundless Compassion—continued from page 1**

helping hand. But just as Jesus reached out and ministered to the outcasts of society, that is what Pacific Garden Mission is doing. It is safe to say that just about every group of people that Jesus associated with can be found under our roof. The stigma of this, just as in Jesus' time, can carry with it mixed opinions, but the reality is that this open-hearted and genuine assistance to the lost is the very essence of what Jesus taught. Your faithful support makes this possible. Together we provide a prime fishing ground for lost souls who are in need of the Gospel message. Remarkably, the souls come to us.

One man who is employed here but wished not to be named had been arrested 208 times. Yes! 208 arrests! In society's eyes, he was beyond hope. Everyone had given up on him, but through God's grace his heart changed, and he sought to repent. The doors of Pacific Garden Mission were open with loving arms, and he joined the one year New Life Bible Program. He completed the program, is working here full time, and even owns his own house now. When he was ready to change, he found the support here that he couldn't find anywhere else. He was saved through the love of Christ that he was nurtured through in this old lighthouse of hope.

This man's request for anonymity is also a powerful example of how our shame from the past can drag us down and become like quicksand. Whether from guilt or regret, mistakes that we make and desire more than anything to escape from, can pull us down the more we, through our own will, try to escape. It is only through Jesus Christ that

**Robert is shown here at work as PGM's facility project leader. After he experienced transformation in Christ at Pacific Garden Mission he now shares a promising future with his beautiful wife and daughter.**



we can be pulled free from the bondage of our past. Even with four years of sobriety and wholesome Christian living, this man is still ashamed of being arrested 208 times. Glory to God that he is a new creature now, and based on the man he is today, just as many whose lives have been resurrected, you would never expect these numerous arrests and drug addiction were part of his past

## ROBERT MCKINNEY'S STORY

**R**obert is just one of the many who had lost the support of those around him, and he found himself with no place to go. After a Christian father and son had taken him in with hopes that Robert would change, they found themselves having to make him leave after Robert got into a drunken fight. Fortunately, they dropped him off at PGM. Robert shared his story with us: "When I was around two years old I was taken away from my mother. I am not sure if it was because of drugs, but she was deemed unfit to take care of us. So, my sister and I were put into foster homes. Some of them were nice, but there was one, early on, where I was beaten up pretty bad, and my sister was abused. Ever since then I couldn't trust anybody. The foster care system tried to put me into other homes, but I wouldn't let them. This ended up getting me put into group homes. Eventually, the group homes were closed

**Photo: the employee who requested anonymity is shown here helping a homeless man in PGM's Day Room.**







and our daughter is two years old.”

Robert, who never really trusted anyone nor felt like he was at home anywhere finally found a family in Christ. He formed new healthy friendships and was continuously mentored by people that cared and nurtured his slow and steady growth in Christ. He has been employed at PGM for seven years and is currently our facilities project leader. Like many of us here, everyone he knew didn't know how to help him and out of frustration had stopped trying. But where man stopped Christ began.

due to a lack of funding, and I decided to join the marines. I had started drinking and smoking marijuana at a young age and figured joining the marines would help me to clean up my act. It worked for a little while but then I fell back into the same crowd and started making more bad decisions. I had depression and tried to escape from memories of my past, and that is why I think I used drugs and alcohol. Within a year I was kicked out of the marines and found myself lost again.

I ended up moving in with my friend who I had known in high school. He and his dad were Christians, and they kept trying to witness to me about Jesus a lot. I wasn't open to it because I wanted to keep using drugs and numb my pain and depression. One night while there I had got drunk and was beat up pretty bad. After this, they said that I couldn't stay there anymore. I asked his dad, "Well what do you expect me to do?" and his dad said, "You need Jesus." For some reason that stood out to me.

We ended up searching for places for me to come and that is how I found Pacific Garden Mission. I ended up going through the Bible program here, and despite facing some setbacks, I eventually graduated the program. I became a member of a church and met my wife there. After we got married, she became pregnant, and we had our daughter. We have been married five years now,

## AUGUSTINE'S STORY

**R**obert is a good long-term example of success and the power of Christ, but it is important to remember that in our building there are currently many who are still at that pivotal point where they are deciding whether to turn their lives over to God. Augustine, a man who resides in our day room as an overnight guest was hit by a train and lost





*Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: —ZECHARIAH 7:9 KJV*

most of his right leg. He had been walking down the tracks on a foggy night with headphones on and was unaware of the train until it struck him. Augustine is undocumented and therefore has been unable to receive any government assistance. Because his prosthetic leg does not fit him properly he has been confined to a wheel chair. Augustine is an example of one of the people in need right now seeking our help and being exposed to the Gospel Message daily. Regardless of what our past is, God can change us and give us a new life in Him. None of this would be possible without people like you who support us.

### ERIC'S STORY

**E**ric found himself having to come here with his mom and aunt after they fell into financial hardships and lost their apartment. He had been working for UPS but had his foot run over by a forklift. With his foot crushed he has been confined to a wheelchair for the last two years. Eric was a Christian when he came here, but he has said that being here has taught him to be humble and to appreciate the things that God has blessed him with. His walk with God has been strengthened here. Eric, his mom, and his aunt are all waiting for permanent housing to become available to them. Eric has debated whether to join the Bible program when his leg heals but until he does he is in a safe place where the love of Christ abounds.

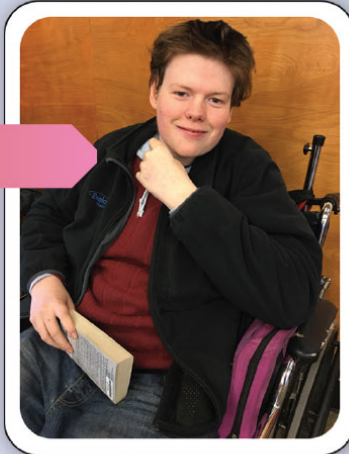
Writing about Robert, Augustine and Eric makes me think of the following verse from Ephesians 2:4-6: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

We may all be at different points in our lives and have different pasts, but the one and only answer is Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him. And He will raise us up together, no matter what we have done, and we will sit together in Him.

Jesus is there waiting, but in today's world it's not always easy to find Him. Pacific Garden Mission's purpose is to reach the lost with the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ. We have no other purpose. Sure, we feed, clothe,

shelter, sleep, counsel, and provide resources for children, women, and men but our purpose has and always will be to reach lost souls. As other shelters accept government funding, they slowly are losing the ability to preach the Gospel Message, but because we are solely supported by the eternal loving gifts from you the reader we can freely preach the Gospel Message and share the love of Christ.

Without your continued support, it would not be possible. We thank you for your help that is beyond any earthly treasure.



**Eric, with his mother (center) and aunt, have a safe place of refuge at PGM**





## A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

# Compassion & Charity

**AT TIMES WHEN I WALK** in our day room, I am struck by the number of men and women with disabilities. I recently spoke to a man that had some fingers amputated

because of frostbite. He made his way to the mission too late. Now the rest of his life will be spent without the use of most of his fingers. We have men and women confined to wheelchairs without legs, or, because of a stroke, without the use of one side of their body. Their families do not want the responsibility of caring for them, society has no place for them, they are truly homeless.

What made an impact on society in the first century was how the Church would care for the down and out. Rome was a cruel place, where society had no place for the weak and left behind. "Christianity exploded onto a brutal, heartless Greco-Roman culture. Believers in this radical new religion set a new standard for caring for the ill, downtrodden, and abused, even at risk of death. Through their transformed Christlike outlooks, they established counter cultural ways that lead to later innovations: orphanages, hospitals, transcendent art and architecture, and systems of law and order based on fairness, to name a few. In the early church, every congregation had a list of needy

recipients called a matriculum. Enormous amounts of charity were given."<sup>[2]</sup> "Pagan society, through its excesses, teetered on the brink of extinction. Christianity, however, represented . . . a new way."<sup>[3]</sup>

Compassion and charity are biblical ideals. "Early Christians set a model for their descendants to follow, a model that today's modern secular societies try to imitate, but without Christian motivation."<sup>[4]</sup> "We take for granted the notion that it's good to help the needy and oppressed, but wherever it's found, whether in religious or secular circles, it can be traced right back to Jesus Christ and His followers." When you view the huddled masses in our day rooms, you can't but help feeling compassion for the multitudes, "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." — Matthew 14:14

Every person here has a story, but for whatever reason, they came to the Pacific Garden Mission. Our ministry is to feel their pain and proclaim the gospel. God loved Nineveh enough that He sent Jonah, "Jon 3:2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." God loves Chicago and has set Pacific Garden Mission in the middle of it. When the homeless, the hurting, the handicapped have every door slammed in their face, there is one that is always open. Thank you for keeping the light at the Old Lighthouse burning.



**Pastor Phil shares a light moment with Augustine**

Barlowe, B. (2008) *Christian Religion: Good or Bad for Mankind?* Retrieved from <http://www.ukapologetics.net/09/goodforculture.htm>



## **FINANCIAL UPDATE** Stephen Welch, Director of Development

We celebrate your partnership in this ministry as we witness and report the lives you have helped change here at Pacific Garden Mission through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us "it is the power of God" in Romans 1:16

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."*

We rejoice that a place like Pacific Garden Mission exists because of you, our faithful supporters in prayer, volunteer hours and financial contributions. Your notes and cards are dear to us.

April, May and June are the last three months of our 2017-18 fiscal year and we are praying to make the \$7.2 million budget for donations. We need \$1.6 million over the next three months to meet our budget. We know that we can meet this goal if we all pull together.

Ask God what you can do as you partner with Him to advance His kingdom. Some day we will stand before Him together for all eternity and praise our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Won't you pray about helping us as we share the resurrected Christ with those who walk through our doors?

## **WHAT YOUR MONEY SUPPORTS AND PROVIDES**

Pacific Garden Mission's budget is completely donor funded. We receive no government funding. We are eternally grateful for the individuals, businesses, churches and foundations that make it possible for PGM to serve thousands of homeless men, women and children each year.

When you come along side of us financially you're not giving to the mission, but through the mission to the people that need your help the most. We are serious about demonstrating our stewardship, and we invite you to learn more by visiting Pacific Garden Mission, where lives have been transformed since 1877.

**Here are just some of the ways your giving is measured (FEBRUARY)**

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**450**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**98**

Mothers with their children sheltered at PGM....**24**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**47,654**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**24,677**

Number of patients treated in our free medical/dental clinic....**188**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**292**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3,084**

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