

## GOD'S GREATEST GIFT TO MANKIND.

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. —John 1:14 KJV*

ARTICLE BY STEPHEN WELCH

*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. —Matthew 1:21*

FOR SO MANY OF US and I include myself, Christmas time can become a tradition. There are office parties, church events, multiple family gatherings, neighborhood decorations and shopping for others all innocently steeped in some form of tradition that can distract me from the Truth that Christmas represents.

At Pacific Garden Mission we believe Christmas affords believers with a great opportunity to exalt Jesus Christ. The heart of the Mission is the Gospel of Jesus Christ all year long, and December allows us a special opportunity to share the Gospel in the light of the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ—mankind's greatest gift.

Our greatest joy is to watch new believers experience their first Christmas at Pacific Garden Mission as a new person in Christ—apart from the worldly traditions and literally in Christ. They have very little, yet

they have everything. Having time to grow in a nutritive spiritual environment is all they need.

We watch men and women in our New Day and New Life programs grow in the Word of God, our only textbook, which has endured time and produced great results. Scripture is so complete that it totally transforms the inner person and then the real meaning of life appears clear and evident. What I've stated is an eternal gift and a miracle that begins here every day.

The Christmas season at the Mission reminds us of the great truths of the Incarnation. Remembering important truths about Christ and the Gospel is a prevalent New Testament theme. Truth needs repetition because we so easily forget it. We preach the Gospel three times a day. We celebrate Christmas to remember the birth of Christ and to marvel over the mystery of the Incarnation.

Christmas can also be a time for reverent worship. The shepherds glorified and praised God for the birth of Jesus the



# AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH,

**THE WORD MADE FLESH—Continued from page 1**

Messiah. They rejoiced when the angels proclaimed that in Bethlehem was born a Savior, Christ the Lord. The babe laid in the manger that day is our Savior, “for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings” (Revelation 17:14). We love God honoring music this time of year, and many church groups come to worship and preach.

Finally, people tend to be more open to the Gospel during the Christmas holidays. We should take advantage of that openness to witness to them of the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Christmas is chiefly about the promised Messiah who came to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). The holiday provides us with a wonderful opportunity to share this truth to the lost. We share the handwritten Gospel tracks which you have been sending in responding to our mailings. We distribute these tracks with your personal notes to our guests starting Christmas Eve. We value your spiritual and financial partnership in reaching the lost.

Although our society has muddled the message of Christmas through consumerism, myths and empty traditions, we should not let these distract us from appreciating the real



**Homeless men read special handwritten gospel tracts**



**Ladies of PGM's Women's Ministry celebrate Christmas**



meaning of Christmas. Let us take advantage of this opportunity to remember Him, worship Him and faithfully witness of Him.

I am grateful for a safe place like PGM where Jesus could work with me and countless others. The gift we receive is a new life in Christ as we reside here and let the word of God pour over us for a year or more. Jesus Christ is in the transforming business, and He has done it at the Mission for 139 years. As we reflect on the end of this year together, we are reminded of the support you have been to Pacific Garden Mission in 2016. We want to express a heartfelt thank you for being part of this amazing ministry here at Pacific Garden Mission. We thank God every day for those who support us in prayer, who volunteer and who extend their sacrificial financial support.

Here are just a few stories of the transforming power of Jesus Christ. May they encourage you as we finish up 2016 and celebrate the birth of the One who made all this possible, Jesus Christ.



## BONITA

BONITA WAS addicted to heroin for 25 years. When she arrived at Pacific Garden Mission, she was broken, sad, lonely and tired. Ashamed to go home in the state she was in Bonita planned to stay

here for a few nights until she sobered up. God had other plans for her. A lady from the women's division told Bonita about the Bible Program, and she decided to join. Shortly after joining she became aware of the other women praying together and the changes that were occurring in their lives, so she also started praying. Before coming to PGM, Bonita remembers waking up in the morning and not wanting to turn the lights on because she didn't want to see herself and what she had become, but now she wants the brightest light because of the positive transformation she has undergone. Bonita recently said, “With Him changing me it makes me want to help others change. I love to go soul winning. I love to tell somebody the goodness of the Lord.

Every day that God gives me breath, I tell somebody where I was and where I am



# AND DWELT AMONG US,



**Bonita at Graduation – January 2016**

at now. I thought I was going to die a heroin addict, but today I am healthy. All grace to God. It was Christmas 2015 that I came back to life here at Pacific Garden Mission. My family was restored that year by God, and we celebrated Christmas together right here at the Mission. Even my grandchildren were with me. I thank God for a safe place to stay and grow in Christ and look forward to what God has for me serving in the New Day program ministry in 2017.”

**Bonita is now serving as a counselor in the New Day Program. Bonita’s full testimony can be watched on our YouTube Channel Episode 65 and the title is “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled.”**



## JOSEPH

**GROWING UP** Joseph was troubled by questions of why his mother didn’t want him and why nobody taught him how to read. By the time he was a teenager, Joseph had

begun drinking and smoking and began learning how to, in his words, “manipulate the system.” Not being able to read he believed those were his only options in life. Drugs eventually took Joseph to a dark place, leading to the destruction of the family and his relationships with his wife and kids. Upon losing everything, Joseph traveled from Houston, Texas to Pacific Garden Mission seeking help. As miraculous as it may sound, Joseph was freed from his addiction to alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes from the time he arrived here. “When people say that God can remove mountains, He can. He will even give you the tools to climb those mountains.”

At the Mission, others helped Joseph learn how to read. Now he is a counselor in Guest Services and can share the Gospel every day. “Just the whole opportunity to be in the ministry now considering from where I started, is just amazing. I know now and have known that everything good that has happened to me I didn’t do. I know this change was

not me, but it was God. This time I experienced a life changed by Christ. Relying on my way brought me here but relying on God and trusting in Christ I can only imagine where He will take me from here. I am looking forward to a New Year with faith, hope, and courage like I never had before.”

**Joseph has found his calling in Guest Services where he reaches the lost with the Gospel of Christ in our Men’s Day Room. His life in Christ is evident as a servant in Guest Services. His main calling is to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ. Joseph’s full testimony is in Episode 62 at our YouTube Channel titled “Accepting Who You Are.”**



## ROSE

FOR THIRTY years Rose was addicted to crack cocaine. Her family had told her enough was enough, and she was left all alone, no family, no money, and no

friends. One night, while laying in her bed with two razor blades contemplating suicide, Rose remembered the words her pastor had told her, “If you can look up you can get up.” Rose looked up and asked God to come and help her because she didn’t want to die like that. The neighborhood she lived in is infested with gangs and drugs, and she knew she had to leave and be in a safe place to heal and grow. Pacific Garden Mission came to mind. She decided to come and surrender her life to God. Rose said she was tired of letting herself down and in her words letting God down, so Rose decided to do something about her spiritual condition, and she joined the women’s New Life program (formerly the Bible program). Rose would be safe here at the Mission but more importantly, being in the New Life Bible program allowed her to study more, stay focused on the Word, on God, and reflect on why she was here. Her goal is to graduate the one-year program and someday to work here. Her relationships with her mother and children have been restored.

“Today I am experiencing in my heart God’s love for me, His joy, His peace, and His presence. Never in my life have I ever



felt like this. God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Today my focus is on God and letting Him change my life, and since I have been here at Pacific Garden Mission, my life has changed. I truly want to experience a drug free, God fearing life! I believe, in my heart, that God can do this for me. God restored my family and me back together. Lord willing I will be graduating in January 2017. The upcoming graduation is a great start for a New Year since I have given my life to Christ and my life has truly been changed. There is no turning back for me! Glory be to God for great things he has done for my family and me! What a special blessing this Christmas will be."

**Rose serves meals in our Canteen where she sees most of our staff daily in her workplace ministry. More about Rose in a powerful testimony can be found in Episode 74 on our YouTube Channel titled "Forgetting Those Things Which are Behind."**



**Charles gives testimony of God's goodness at Saturday Night Praise and Testimony service. His full testimony is on Episode 59 found on our YouTube Channel titled "Overcoming Addiction."**

homeless. While sleeping on a bench, a man approached him and told him about Pacific Garden Mission. Charles heard about the Bible program and wanted to join it. First, he decided to join the 90-day addictions program which he graduated. Now he is in the New Life Bible Program. "I have changed. My mom was crying when I graduated the New Day Addictions Program and was happy that I am getting better. I am sober and feeling great. I wish I could take back what I did back in the days, but God has changed me, and I thank the Lord for everything. I thank Jesus for everything, for dying on the cross for my sins and changing me

**Charles, center, completes the New Day Program and now is in the New Life Program.**



right here.

Last Christmas I was in the New Day program and this Christmas I am in the Career Development phase of the New Life Bible program and I plan on graduating in January 2017. I now know the real reason for Christmas. I know that a person I'm studying about and love, God's Son, Christ was born on Christmas day. I have never felt this way in my life, being clean and sober, the first time in many years and having a relationship with Jesus.

I can hardly wait to see how God will use me and I am looking forward to how God will use me here at Pacific Garden Mission to minister to the overnight guests and others. I'm grateful for PGM, and I love it here. Jesus has changed my life."

Later in an updated television testimony Charles shared that he was once a member of the Gangster Disciples and through the Word of God he has become a member of the Gospel Disciples. He is a new creature. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17. One of the keys to our growth and life at the Mission is the Word of God.

When Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" He tied life to scripture. We live by the word of God. The Bible says in James 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." We have been given spiritual life through the scripture. The scripture becomes the divine supernatural reality that sustains that life.

We have been practicing biblical discipleship here at Pacific Garden Mission using the same Bible the mission was founded on in 1877. As we look back over the years and 2016 we thank God for His Son Jesus Christ and the living word of God and all who support the Great Commission through His work at the Mission.

*unto us a child is born*







## A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

### Creating Memories of Joy

**F**OR MANY PEOPLE, Christmas is a difficult time of the year. When some people think about Christmas, thoughts of family, presents, fireplaces and food flood their mind. But for others navigating the hard, cruel realities of life on the streets

Christmas can be a lonely, depressing season filled with unpleasant memories of what could have been but never was. I spoke to a young 22-year-old man yesterday that said other people think of spending time with family during the holidays, but I have no one. That is one of the reasons we try to make Christmas a special time of the year, to remember those that society and in some cases even their own families have forgotten. Yesterday I witnessed a young mother with twins strolling them down the hallway; I thought this would be their memories of the holidays, and I want them to feel like they do have a family that cares. James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)

How we treat the less fortunate is reflective of our real love and commitment to truth. "He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the LORD." (Jer 22:16) We offer an opportunity to hear life's most important message, the Gospel,

this message will set you free, Jesus is the answer. We also offer an environment where men, women, and children can feel safe, cared for and valued. Let the memories of the multitudes that reside here be one of joy, for some erasing the pain of a checkered past, being replaced by the love that the people of God have shown. On their behalf I want to thank those that have come along side us and provided a wonderful God-centered environment where people can experience the love of God, be cared for and be valued during this difficult time of the year.

Let's make this Christmas special for those that do not have anything, in some cases, not even family to share with and make it a Christmas where the Word made flesh made a difference in their lives.

*Thanks be to God and our donors for a Merry Christmas at Pacific Garden Mission*

**Needy families receive meals, gifts and special memories at PGM because of your generosity.**





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

*With your partnership, this ministry at Pacific Garden Mission accomplished amazing things in the last year. Many come here looking for a safe place to stay and a meal and find Jesus Christ. With a thankful heart, we share just a few ways you are making a difference.*

*Over 300,000 nights of safe lodging and almost 750,000 meals served. Helping an average of 800 people a day.*

*Program Services has grown this year. Twenty-eight (28) men and women graduated the New Day Program for substance abuse and alcohol dependency. Thirty (30) men and women graduated the New Life Bible Program. Twenty-nine (29) men and women are in our New Graduate Program preparing to transition.*

*Our purpose is to reach the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we have done that 100% of the time both in one-on-one counseling and in our three daily Gospel services. More than 1,200 people have professed faith in Jesus Christ this year.*

*We are trusting God for a strong finish in 2016 as He moves in your heart to remember the homeless and lost, and those of us who minister to them with the transforming message of the Gospel.*

*From all of us at Pacific Garden Mission we wish you a Merry Christmas as we behold the glory of Jesus Christ—God's precious gift to mankind. May your world be filled with Joyful Christmas blessings this sacred season.*

## **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 (OCTOBER)**

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**657**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**92**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**54,712**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**48,147**

Number of patients treated in our free medical/dental clinic....**161**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**345**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3,113**

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