

## Building Order Out of Chaos

REACHING THE LOST WITH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

JULY 2016



A quiet street in downtown Chicago attracts a different crowd. Pacific Garden Mission has been a light in a dark city since 1877. The men and women pass through security and some modern technology. They receive a Pacific Garden Mission guest ID card and a locker. The police and paramedics are ever present as the problems we face are sometimes too much for us to manage alone, and safety in a violent city is a concern we all share as we serve large crowds of hurting and hopeless souls hungry for Jesus.

ARTICLE BY STEPHEN WELCH

## MAN'S GREATEST NEED

Today is much like any other day at the mission. There is a beehive of activity both inside and outside of our doors. The seemingly endless swarm of people may seem unpredictable, chaotic or even uncomfortable to a novice observer. Hundreds and hundreds of men, women and children come to Pacific Garden Mission every day. Their needs are vast and various according to their accounts of perceived misfortune and tragedy.

The multitude of our dear friend's needs seems to match the size of the crowd. The needs that we hear, at least on the surface, are nothing less than impossible to meet.

Many who arrive here for refuge have a sense of impending doom. Their physical, emotional, financial and mental

needs scream for attention. They are often at wit's end. However, as we look closer into the unusual activity at the mission, we will see something organized by God that the casual observer may never fully understand—this is the deeper spiritual need for Jesus Christ.

The dear friends we meet are of all ages and abused, afflicted, hopelessly addicted, bankrupt and hungry. Many are so distraught that they are suicidal. Someone exclaims, "You don't understand. I've lost everything! I'll have no peace; there is no hope." How will we help these dear friends who come to the mission, where do we start and what is their greatest need?

Many of the people we see think it is a mistake that they ended up here at Pacific Garden Mission. They cannot see God's



#### BUILDING ORDER FROM CHAOS Continued from page 1

hand in their fate. It is common for them to ask how we are going to help them change their circumstances. They have no idea that they have walked into a spiritual hospital run by God Almighty, filled by the Person of the Holy Spirit and that the Chief of Staff is Jesus Christ.

**For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. —Luke 19:10**

As we build programs we ask ourselves, of all of the needs humanity has, what is the greatest need? Is it an education? If it were an education when the Lord Jesus came to this earth, He would have come as an educator. Is it finance? If that were true when the Lord Jesus came, He would have come as an economist, perhaps as a banker. If man's greatest need were peace, Jesus would have come as a diplomat.

Well, we don't have to guess about why Jesus came. The Bible tells us the answer in Luke 19:10. Jesus Himself said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."



Salvation is man's greatest need. To be saved is man's greatest need. I know that if you are a believer that you know inevitably that there are two categories of people, saved and lost.

When we talk about transforming lives since 1877, we are speaking about what God is doing right here at Pacific Garden Mission every day. This July 2016 issue of the PGM Newsletter chronicles such recent events, and so we pull back the curtains and share what Jesus Christ is doing here every day.

We start with a letter read by Pastor Phil Kwiatkowski, President of PGM, at a Praise and Testimony service on Saturday, May 28, 2016.

#### A LETTER FROM REVON JONES

**My name is Revon Jones.** I'm 21 years old, and originally from Arlington, Texas. My father was in prison for both me and my brother's births, and I saw him for the first time when I was in the 6th grade. When I was 8 years old my Mom made me stand in the corner all night after I came from my grandfather's apartment. She was mad because he wouldn't give her any money after I told him how she was treating me. I was supposed to call him when I made it home that night, but she wouldn't let me. The next morning I found out he died in his sleep. For the next 5 years she made me stand in the corner, sometimes all night if I did

**Every man, woman, boy and girl hears the Gospel of Jesus Christ and then enjoys a meal together.**



Two men enjoying a Gospel message in our auditorium



anything wrong. I was interviewed by Child Protective Services 3 times for abuse reported by my teachers. I still remember having to take my clothes off so they could take pictures of my bruised and scarred body. My Mom would not let me eat lunch or dinner, or sometimes both, if I got in trouble at school or

forgot to do my chores. So, I stole her check book and wrote numerous fake checks to order pizza for me and my brother. When she found out she told the pastor of our church and he gave her a choice, either kick me out, or he'll take me to jail. So, after church on a Sunday in August, she kicked me out outside of church and went on a cruise ship with the church. I walked 3 miles in my church shoes to my aunt's house.

From the ages of 13-16 my life didn't get any better. I could never have friends, nor go outside. I haven't had a birthday party since I was 7, and somehow I was always grounded on my birthday. I had my first-born at 17. In the spring of 2014, the mother of my son and I broke up after a 3 and a half year relationship. After that she took my son from me for 3 months with no contact (phone calls, text, pictures etc.). In June of 2015 I just gave up; I was tired of everything I was going through, so I sold my flat-screen TV and my PlayStation and bought a Megabus ticket to Chicago. I stayed with friends for 3 months, and then stayed with a girlfriend until February of 2016. I was dropped off

at PGM by Catholic Charities.

I never heard of this place, nor knew of the program. After a week of being in the day room, and Pastor Phil talking to me, I decided to turn my life over to Jesus. Since then I have had a complete 180 degree change. I went from 3 weeks with no shower to showering every day. I'm now in the Timothy phase of the New Life program, and the foreman on the 2nd floor dorm crew. Two months ago I was homeless and didn't have a clue on what was next for me, and by the grace and mercy of God, He brought me here, and I thank Him.

#### CHRISTOPHER LEE'S TESTIMONY

***I've always been a heavy drinker.***

Being from England, as soon as you turn 18, that's it, down to the pub. I started with drinking, and then in the early 90's, got involved with cocaine, ecstasy, and speed. That quieted down, and at the end of the 90's I met my wife online. She lived in Gulfport, Mississippi; we started talking over the internet, and eventually we decided to get married. I moved to the US in December 2000. Everything was good for about 4 or 5 years; I got my green card, started working, still liked to drink, but everything went south in about 2006 when I broke my leg. As opposed to the hospitals in England, they're a bit more free with the pain killers over here. They started me out on morphine, then oxycodone, then hydrocodone, and that's when I got addicted, which unfortunately ended my marriage in 2011. I was sober for a year; I did AA and rehab, which helped, but I was totally anti-Christian. I tried things like Buddhism and Taoism, trying to get my spiritual head together, but none of it worked. Then I fell off the wagon again with a big bang; the small jobs I could get I lost because I got drunk at work.

Then, as I was in a drunken stupor in a hotel room, I was flicking through the



channels, and I came across Pastor Phil on TV preaching. At that moment I decided to try this out, so the next day I asked a friend to take me to this place down on Canal Street. Pastor Phil said to me "What was I preaching about?", and I told him I couldn't remember, or what channel it was on, I was so drunk, I just remembered him preaching. I was totally out of my depth, I had never been homeless before, never been in a mission before. I remember sitting in the front row of the auditorium with a guy preaching and playing accordion and he looked at me and said, "This thing used to weigh 35 pounds when I first got it, and I swear it weighs 100 now." And I just laughed, and something clicked, and the next morning I went in to see Timothy and I said I want in, I want to join the

Bible program. I had nothing to leave, nothing to lose, and everything to gain. And now, having been baptized, and having graduated, I can't say enough about this place, it's changed

me for the better. It's incredible what God can do; the Bible is now my guide to life, it's my directions for living. You take your hands off the wheel and say, that's it, Jesus is in control of my life.

\* \* \*

Yes, the work seems impossible at times, yet as we look upon these few testimonies in this PGM Newsletter, which represent what has occurred here at Pacific Garden Mission daily since 1877, we witness, experience and live the prevailing truth in Matthew 19:26. "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

**"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."**

When we offer a solution to man's greatest need we see families restored, the unemployed finding work, the uneducated reading the Bible. The miracle to us is still salvation. Man's greatest need.

## May 2016 New Life Graduating Class

**THE NEW LIFE PROGRAM** is a one year long intensive Bible study program with classes and a work-place ministry assignment. Our desire at Pacific Garden Mission is to restore a person to their God-given potential. Approximately four hundred men and women will join the program each year. Those who complete this life-changing program demonstrate Christian character and have a tremendous future we wish to enable and ensure.

Please pray for the September 2016 Graduating Class currently in session. There are four women and ten men currently in the Career Development phase of the New Life Program that culminates in another graduation. Career Development consists of classes on Christian character in the workplace, life skills, computer lab, resume writing, interview skills, practice interviews and job fairs that allow pre-graduates an opportunity to talk to interested employers.



Left to right: Kalla Johnson, Dwight Tobler, Christopher Lee, Dustin Blackwell, Gregory Teamer, Alphonso Walton, Andraus Edwards, Opal Morris

*continues on page 5*



## A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

### Finding Healing Through Forgiveness

Recently, one young man gave a testimony and explained his drug usage by saying that he did not know how to “process the pain.” In many of our lives there is a lot of pain from the past, and we process it in various ways. I remember a man in his fifties recalling events that took place with his mother years

ago, and he was still bitter. My mind goes to Matthew 18, where Jesus deals with the topic of forgiveness: “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.” (Mt 18:21-22 )

We are called upon to forgive those that have wronged us. I like the quote by C.S. Lewis: “Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.” Forgiveness may seem difficult, but it is important. In the story, Jesus tells about forgiveness—the one that does not forgive will have consequences: “Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” (Mt 18:33-35)

Jesus mentions being given over to the

“tormentors” as a consequence for not forgiving, but what are they? Eph 4:31-32 states: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

I believe the tormentors could be depression, anger, and certain emotional issues for which the world has no answers. The best answers that the world has are prescription drugs that are an endless cycle. God’s remedy is to forgive those that have wronged us: “And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” (Ge 50:19-20)

Look at your hurt from a spiritual perspective, and forgive and let God heal your wounds. If you find it hard to forgive, remember when you asked God, and He forgave you of all your sins.

### Lives With New Purpose

We are praying for the promises in Ephesians 2:10 to appear in their lives like so many have experienced as graduates. Upon completing their year commitment, they are advanced into our New Graduate Program. To date 53% of our New Graduate Program residents are employed. They are members of Bible-believing churches with sound doctrine. With your help we are seeing God create role models in our society that are His salt and light. Thank you for your faithful support.

Pacific Garden Mission Vision Statement – We offer life answers through faith in Jesus Christ, through any season of life, so that our guests become fully functioning followers of Christ.



5

The PGM Career Development Board is a visible display of success stories of those who have had their lives transformed through Christ and are now witnesses to the world of His power.



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

*Many things happen when a crowd gathers. You probably see or hear about it on your favorite news media every day. Some crowds celebrate victories and other crowds face tragedies. However, as exciting or discouraging the experience, we must try to remember these events are temporal. We have an opportunity to make an eternal difference in the individuals that comprise the crowd that gathers here at Pacific Garden Mission every day.*

*In this PGM News issue I wanted to paint a picture of what your faithful support is doing here at Pacific Garden Mission. Through our doors walk men and women who are in dire straits. They have experienced indescribable pain and suffering and loss. Sometimes the crowds here are large and unmanageable, reflecting the brokenness of man in numbers. In 1893, Sarah Clark prayed the crowd would quiet down so the Gospel would be heard.*

*The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God and wherever the Good News is preached miracles happen. We can celebrate souls won to eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, families restored, dear friends free of addictions, and the graduates who are truly new men and women in Christ (2 Cor 5:17).*

*Your faithful support allows us to operate to reach the lost and help them become fully functioning followers of Christ. We are encouraged by the letters and sacrificial gifts received in early June to meet our budget shortfall of \$325,000. I hope to report on the outcome and our budget in August 2016.*

*The next fiscal year starting July 1, 2016 will be a challenge for us financially. We desire to be more efficient and effective in God's vineyard. We desperately need to hire more employees. We are literally overwhelmed and under staffed. Over the next few months I will share the challenges we face. Please pray for us as we serve and minister with the transforming message of the Gospel.*

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. —Ephesians 2:10*

## **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 (May)**

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**739**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**105**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**43,085**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**31,003**

Number of patients treated in our free dental clinic....**141**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**135**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3114**

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