

MAY 2018

PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION
TRANSFORMING LIVES
WITH THE GOSPEL OF
CHRIST SINCE 1877

Helping Mothers with Shelter, Guidance and Love

PGM News

ARTICLE BY DANIEL WOOLMAN

AT PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION, we reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ and offer Godly solutions through God given resources to those who are struggling through life. Single mothers especially are in need of our help, and your financial support provides ministry, and also answers the great and varying needs for these mothers and their children. You provide a safe place to stay, allowing children to attend school, meals and clothing, Christian counseling, and most importantly the Gospel.

At Pacific Garden Mission, we offer life answers through faith in Jesus Christ, through any season of life, so that our guests become fully functioning followers of Christ. We understand the value and importance of Godly mothers who have a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ, and the generational impact they can have on their children. This is what separates us from the world systems.

Often, the circumstances that have caused single motherhood are outside of the mother's control. One mother who is here with her twins was in a car accident at 28 weeks pregnant and the father of the twins was killed in the accident leaving her to raise and support her boys on her own. It is circumstances such as these which completely change

the course of lives, but God has also given opportunities for salvation and light to come out of some of these darkest moments. In the spirit of Mother's Day, we have interviewed several mothers to help share the individual testimonies of the people being helped by you.

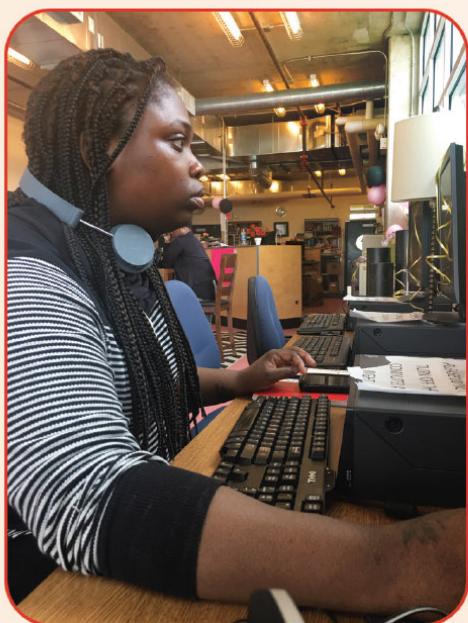
SHAMIESE

Shamiese came here one year ago during the week of Mother's Day. She is the mother of a two-year-old boy named Solomon and a three-year-old girl named Serenity. She is a

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*Shamiese is grateful for the love and kindness she
and her young children receives at PGM.*



Shamiese studying for nursing school.

single mother staying at PGM. Growing up Shamiese went through six foster homes until the age of eight when she was adopted by a Godly woman that introduced Shamiese to Jesus. As a single mother Shamiese now understands the importance of being a Godly mother, and she shared her story with us:

“My name is Shamiese. I am 26 years old. I came to PGM when I was 25, last May, during the week of Mother’s Day. What led me here was a lot of family and financial issues. When I first came to PGM, all I did was cry. It was my first time at a shelter of any kind. I have never been homeless, and it was devastating. I had walked away from God when I was 20,

and I felt like this was His way of punishing me because I had walked away for so long.”

I asked her why she had walked away from God back then, and she mentioned how at the age of 20 she had been active in her church and was getting ready to be a Youth leader, but events transpired which caused her church home to fall apart.

“It broke my heart, and I couldn’t understand why God would allow this to happen to our church. It wasn’t until I got pregnant with my daughter that everything fell apart. My biological family, who I reestablished relations with around that time, didn’t want me pregnant and turned their backs on me. After giving birth to my son they really turned their backs on me in anger, and for an entire year they wouldn’t even acknowledge him. This caused me to drift apart from my biological family and I started to have financial difficulties. My adoptive mom at this time was in assisted living and was not able to help even though she wanted to. My lease ended in May 2017 and I decided to drop everything and leave.

The day I left my family I had nowhere to go. My kids and I ended up sleeping on the train for shelter. That is when I found out about Pacific Garden Mission. The train conductor who noticed we were sleeping on the train told me about PGM. He mentioned he had been here once, and said sincerely he knew they would keep my kids safe and give us a place to stay. The next day is when I came to Pacific Garden Mission.

When I got here it was really difficult. I didn’t know what to expect and I was questioning my motherhood. I was asking myself how I could let this happen and I knew I was supposed to be providing for my kids



Shamiese contributes her voice talents and regularly sings in the PGM auditorium for various events.



and I couldn't so I felt a sense of defeat. The staff here really helped and encouraged me and would talk to me about God.

Since being here, I have enrolled in college for nursing. I am going to school full time and am in my second semester of school. I have got closer to God. We just started this mending the soul class that is for people that have experienced abuse in the past. I had experienced abuse at the age of seven."

Being here has enabled Shamiese to grow in confidence and plan for her and her children's future. Her decision to have her children even though her biological family was encouraging her to have an abortion was not an easy one. As she told me her story, I sensed someone that was strong-willed and dedicated to both God and her future.

"I am the first person in my family to graduate high school and I am going to be the first person to graduate from college. I am also the first Christian in my family." It just so happened to be a loving and Godly adoptive mom that first led Shamiese to the Lord.

She shares a dorm with four other moms and their children. She has applied for permanent housing. During her first Sunday here, which happened to be a Mother's Day, she rededicated her life to God after a church service.

"Being a single mom is hard. You are doing everything that a conventional husband and wife would do together all by yourself. Waking them up for school, doing their homework, making sure they are potty trained. It all falls on me. I am watching them, going to school, looking for a job, and there are only so many hours in a day I can do all of those things, so it can be overwhelming. Most of the time I am tired and I don't get a break."

While her days are long, she at least has the assurance and peace of mind that she and her children have a safe place to stay. Most importantly she is growing her spiritual roots deeper and stronger so that when she leaves PGM she will be the Godly mother her children need.

Closing our conversation I asked what it meant for her to be a "Godly" mother for her children. She said "Just as my adoptive mom was there for me to teach me about God that's what I want to do for my children. I want them to feel the peace of God and always know He is there for us despite the challenges we might face. I want them to witness through me that we can always turn towards Him. Now I go to church every week and I also want my children to experience Christian fellowship. I want my children to know that anything is possible if we have faith."

Shamiese spends time with her young ones in the PGM cafeteria.



"Her children arise up, and call her blessed..."

—PROVERBS 31:28A

"She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." —PROVERBS 31:26

BLAIR

Blair is a single mother who came here with her one-year-old twins two years ago. She recently shared her story about what led her here to the mission with her children.

"At 28 weeks pregnant I went into labor with my twin boys and was rushed to the hospital. They did everything possible and stopped the labor allowing me to continue on with my pregnancy. So after two days in the hospital it was time for me to be discharged. The twins father came to pick me up and while we were driving home a car ran a red light and crashed into us. I was ok but he died on the scene."

Blair was heartbroken and depressed after this event. After she had her twins she moved in with a longtime friend but the relationship turned abusive and eventually she had to leave. Trying to escape an abusive relationship Blair searched for shelters online and found Pacific Garden Mission.

"It was a 30-minute walk from where we stayed. So, I packed what I could carry, put the boys in the double stroller and walked all the way here and made it here by 9 o'clock that night. I was tired but I was free. During the time I have spent here at PGM the women here have shown me a lot of patience. They provide food, clothes, a place to sleep, and help baby-sit my kids. They helped me to get a job and, by grace, extended my stay here. When I felt like running away they would talk to me and the women staff would encourage me and tell me that God loves me and has me here for a reason. My twins don't have uncles, grandfathers or a father, but the pastors here and the program men are so nice to my boys. Pastor Percy gives my boys high fives, Pastor Green gives my boys candy and lifts them up as high as him. So even though I may get down sometimes, the men and women here at PGM mean so much to me and my boys. They keep my boys happy and smiling so that they don't realize that they are in a shelter. To them they are at a place where their family and friends are and I love PGM so much for that. God is using this place and these people to work with me and to show me that my hopes for the future are possible."



**Blair
at PGM
with her twins**

In a way, Pacific Garden Mission is a community in and of itself. It is a Christian sanctuary reaching out to those with no place else to go. We recognize that single mothers and their children are some of the most vulnerable and we are continually trying to better our facilities and resources for them. The longer I am here the more I realize the importance of not classifying groups such as "homeless" or "single mothers" into preconceived ideas or assumptions as to what led to those circumstances. Instead, they are individual children of God, with different backgrounds and choices, and God is always there for a repentant heart.

Another thing I have come to realize after recording over 300 testimonies at PGM is that a large percentage of those that come to PGM have come from broken families, many of which went through foster homes and faced abuse because their family unit growing up was not intact. With this in mind, the opportunity we have at PGM to assist mothers both spiritually and physically not only ensures a safe and nurturing environment for them and their children right now, but also helps to create a stable foundation for them to build a new family legacy upon God's promises. There are few places around today like PGM that take in the vulnerable and allow them to stay here while they get their feet back on the ground. It is you, the reader, that makes this possible.

Through your faithful giving God is using PGM to reach the lost with the Gospel Message. *Thank You!*



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

Motherhood: A High Calling

In Scripture God likens His comfort for Jerusalem to a child comforted by his mother. I asked some of our

residents to reflect on the memories of their mothers and the responses varied. One man writes: "One of my memories includes her selling her clothes to pay my tuition once." One man whose mother just recently passed away writes, "I understand that my Mom raised us the way she was raised—with an abusive dad, alcoholic mom, and gang and drug background from the family. My mother showed me so much love the last few years before her death, love that she never experienced as a child growing up. I wouldn't trade her for anything."

Another man writes, "My mother died when I was 18 yrs old. My father divorced her around the age of 10. I went to live with my father after he was awarded custody of us in court due to my mother's alcoholism. Finally, alcohol took her life, and she was found dead decomposed after three days dead in her apartment. I am now 64 years old, and if she was to stand in front of me now, I would put my arms around her and I would say 'I Love you and miss you Mom.'"

Another resident writes, "She

was everything, my friend, my mentor, queen, instructor, disciplinarian, teacher. She passed March 2004, and she is missed, I still hurt today." This one was sad: "She means absolutely nothing to me. She shot me with my first needle full of methamphetamine at the age of 12; she taught me how to cook meth. She abandoned me and my brothers and sisters; she kicked me out of the house at the age of 13."

For good or bad, our mothers leave a permanent mark on our lives. If you had a good Godly mother, thank the Lord for the example she set and if not, we as Christians are told to forgive. If you are a Mother, you have a high calling, and your actions will influence generations to come. Prov. 14:1 *Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*



The leadership of PGM is strongly committed to guiding all mothers who come to us to become fully functioning followers of Christ. Pastor Phil is shown with Shamiese and her children.



FINANCIAL UPDATE Stephen Welch, Director of Development

Thank you for your generous response to the Easter Meals and to our March PGM News financial update. We made the revenue budget for March 2018 donations of \$542,000. Praise God. We are very grateful that as our needs have grown God has met our needs through our donors. We accept no federal, state or city funding. Our funding comes from the faithful support of those who love what Christ is doing here every day. Those who understand that here know more money means more ministry which means more changed lives for all eternity with Jesus.

You are the co-laborers in Christ to reach the lost with the Gospel and provide resident programs that disciple men and women so they can reach others with the Gospel. That is the difference between a shelter and this Gospel rescue mission.

May and June are usually lower months for financial gifts. We are praying for \$1,100,000 in revenue to balance our Fiscal Year-end budget (June 30, 2018) of \$7,500,000 in donations to meet our expenses, which does not include the water bill, ramping up for summer, ministry needs and debt retirement.

The demands this Fiscal Year are great, but our God is greater. We continue to trust in God as Sarah Dunn Clarke did over 141 years ago when she founded Pacific Garden Mission. By 1893, her expenses grew to \$7,500 per year. As we preach from the same Bible she did, we have seen the faithfulness of Almighty God through you, our faithful co-laborers in Christ. God bless you as we serve together. To God be the glory, great things He hath done. *As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. — Isa 66:13*

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 (MARCH)

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services.... **439**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board.... **82**

Mothers with their children sheltered at PGM.... **29**

Approximate number of plates of food served.... **50,464**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions.... **20,529**

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

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ.... **413**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!".... **3,082**

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