

## THANKFUL LIVING

*"Oh that men would praise  
the LORD for his goodness,  
and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice  
the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing."*

—PSALM 107:21-22



ARTICLE BY STEPHEN WELCH

**W**E DECLARE HIS goodness and wonderful works with rejoicing as we offer "the sacrifices of thanksgiving". Since 1877 we have declared His works with thanksgiving as we shared thousands of stories of God redeeming the hurting, the lost, and the hopeless over the years. We love sharing the stories of lives transformed by Jesus Christ, and we declare His goodness every day here at Pacific Garden Mission.

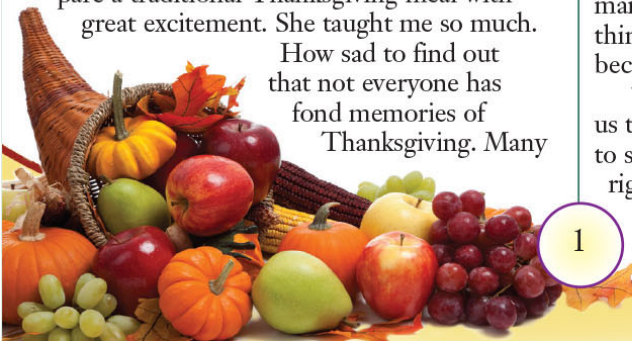
For me, there is an excitement in autumn. Some of my best memories are of the fall and the anticipation of Thanksgiving dinner with our relatives. I remember helping mother prepare a traditional Thanksgiving meal with great excitement. She taught me so much.

How sad to find out  
that not everyone has  
fond memories of  
Thanksgiving. Many

I have met and shared with that have walked through our doors never had a Thanksgiving dinner in an atmosphere of love and peace. Some lived in abandon buildings, or in broken homes, with dysfunctional parents, and considered themselves fortunate to have just survived.

We thank God that collectively we can look forward to the only family Thanksgiving meal some have ever known—the one at Pacific Garden Mission. And so looking forward instead of behind we gather together in an attitude of gratitude resting on a promise in 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The compassion of Jesus Christ gives all of us the opportunity to gather around the table to share a special meal on Thanksgiving Day right here at Pacific Garden Mission. We get together and thank God for His son Jesus Christ and all He is doing in our lives.



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**Thankful Living—Continued from page 1**

Many believe that only God can and will help them in their greatest time of need, and they are truly thankful.

Maybe we should all think about how we can transfer our Thanksgiving Day into Thankful living every day all year? Well, we're to offer to God what the Bible calls the "sacrifices of thanksgiving."

There was a day when I struggled with the logic of offering back to God what was His. I'm referring to the time, talent, testimony, and treasures that God has blessed me with over the years. It wasn't until I came to PGM and experienced His ministry that I realized that God uses everyone and everything. I watched as God used all of my past good and bad for His Glory. I

realized that nothing is too small for God to use in a mighty way. I began to realize that I'm nothing without God. Like many of you, I decided to put my life and trust in God for His purposes, not mine. What a humbling and rewarding experience.

This Thanksgiving as you are sensing the holiday aroma coming out of the kitchen think about the pleasing aromas God finds in this wonderful life changing ministry known as Pacific Garden Mission. Think about how He has used you to touch so many over the years. Together may we find and embrace Thankful living this Thanksgiving.

I am grateful for a safe place like PGM where Jesus could work with me and countless others. Here is just one example of Thankful living to share this Thanksgiving.

**DAVID'S STORY**

**D**AVID GREW UP in a very dysfunctional Christian home in Arizona. He made a profession of faith at the age of 6. His father tried to start a church, but the struggles of ministry took its toll on his marriage. When David was just eight years old, his mother left with his two younger siblings and moved away, leaving him with his father. David had begged his mother to stay, but she was determined to leave. He was devastated and soon after his mother and siblings absence his father became very abusive. The home became a home full of fear and anger. Life was very confusing for David as his father said he was a Christian. It became routine to play "Sunday Christian", then at home it was very different. The anger that built up inside of David carried over into his adult life as well as the abandonment issues from his mother leaving. As an adult, David always worked but was introduced to drugs and alcohol at the age of 21. He began to party nearly every day for the next eight years. Relocation, marriage, and even having children did not stop him from this self-destructive behavior. He would attend church occasionally but was not yet willing to surrender or repent. One day in the summer of 2014 after his wife of 6 years had left him he decided to call his Aunt Sherry who had always been a "spiritual mother" to him. She had always shown him the love of Christ, so he figured he would reach out to her for help. She spoke to him briefly, and she shared that his grandparents had been praying for him for years and that they believed Pacific Garden Mission was the place where he could finally find healing. David soon



**David married Yadira on August 20, 2016. Families are reunited through Christ at the wedding. David now lives with his lovely wife. David's Godly and Thankful living brought much Thanksgiving.**

**Recording the Gospel message preached by Pastor Phil at Saturday night Praise and Testimony. David records and edits the PGM TV program that airs every week.**

decided to leave his home, job, child, and all of his things to come on a journey to Chicago not knowing what God was going to do in his life. The Monday after arriving in Chicago he decided to join the Men's Bible program and completely surrendered his life to Christ. God performed a miracle in his life and instantly delivered him from drugs, alcohol, pornography, gambling, cigarettes. The Biblical counseling he received here allowed him to heal from his wounds and become victorious through Christ! He began to grow in Christ through the one-year Bible program and eventually graduated a year later with a Diploma of Biblical Studies.

"I am eternally grateful for God guiding me to a homeless shelter of all places. He has used this place to allow me to grow in my relationship with God. I now have a new identity in Christ, I am no longer a drug addict or alcoholic, I am a follower of Jesus Christ walking in victory! This ministry has provided me with everything that I've needed. I am immensely thankful for the blessings that God has given me. I know that I do not deserve them but through learning to deny myself God has continued to meet my needs and so much more! I now work here at the mission in the TV ministry,

and I believe God is using me here. Through the one-year Bible program as I worked as a volunteer, I learned to die to myself and truly become a servant, always looking for an opportunity to help someone with the love of Christ. PGM has helped me to have a heart for the lost! They have equipped me to fulfill the Great Commission. I am now discipling men both in my community and here at the mission. God opened the doors for me to preach the Gospel on an Internet radio station. I spent last year working with a children's ministry here in Chicago. What a blessing it is to be transformed from a selfish man serving the world to a servant who desires to serve the King! God has blessed me with an amazing wife, a new church home, and a new family. My six-year-old daughter has now been able to see a sober father who loves the Lord. I am thankful that now I can enjoy holidays sober and remember all these phenomenal memories I've been missing all these years. God has renewed my mind and given me a new focus. The power of the Gospel has changed me forever!"



# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

REMEMBERING THE GOODNESS OF GOD  
THROUGH OUR DONORS

THIS THANKSGIVING SEASON we wanted to share what God is doing in our midst. We wanted you to read about the gratitude expressed by David who is just one of so many who have come to know Jesus Christ while at Pacific Garden Mission. We have all experienced abundant miracles, and as we stay here, we grow here, and God uses us to reach others. The Mission has always been the Great Commission.

We also wanted to thank you for your part of supporting this ministry in faithful prayer and faithful financial support. Without your help, we would not have a nutritive environment for those in need of help to stay planted in and grow to their full potential in Jesus Christ. Thank you for letting us share this story of a life forever changed. May we all continue to demonstrate thankful living this Thanksgiving and beyond.

**Chefs preparing the meals**



**Tables were set with love and blessings to nourish, in our large bright dining room.**

**Pastor Phil getting assistance from excited children.**





Everyone enjoyed the Thanksgiving Day meal from staff and volunteers, through both programs to our overnight guests. We start with salads, bread, and juice. The room is filled with joy and thanksgiving.



Our fastest growing group, mothers, and children, are grateful you care.



Guests hold up placemats personalized by donors demonstrating God's love for those who shared the Thanksgiving meal.

## CELEBRATING THE SEPTEMBER 2016 NEW LIFE PROGRAM GRADUATING CLASS

Bottom row left to right: Jessica Malone, Reda Bolden, Laurinda Pye  
Middle Row left to right: Jeremy Washington, Joseph Thompson, Montrice Hardaway  
Top Row left to right: Mark Wilson, James Black, Taft Dean, Jerry Hellinga





## **A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski**

*President, Pacific Garden Mission*

### **Thankful to Serve**

**2 Cor 9:11—Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.**

**2 Cor 9:12—For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;**

**W**E HAVE MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR this year. I think of the number of men, women, and children that have walked through our doors looking for a place of rest and have found hope. A man by the name of Delrick said to me the other day he was thankful for two things, first that he was led to Christ and second he was made to believe in himself again (his words). Delrick was an overnight guest that had basically given up on work. We continued to encourage him, and I saw him walk in our day room with a suit on telling me that he had been hired by the C.T.A. (Chicago Transit Authority). He came here hopeless and now is a saved productive member of society, having much to be thankful for. Kebo was a child about 11 years of age; he was living in the Mission with his mother who was dying. I would see him walk down our hallways after school with a smile on his face oblivious to his difficult life situation. He came to me after school and said that he received some "A"s on his report card. I rewarded him with a small computer someone had donated and he was amazed. When his birthday came the staff got together and gave him presents and celebrated; he got a bike that was donated and having never learned to ride he was excited at the prospect. Seeing an 11-year-old boy with no father in the picture, and a mother that did not have long to live, finding hope and comfort here at Pacific Garden Mission made me thankful for a place that can give hope to hopeless situations.

I think of Virgil, an eighty-year-old man that was sitting in our day room that was approached by our counselor and was asked what prayer requests did he have. Virgil said that he

had not seen his daughters in 40 years and now that's all he thinks about. We were able to track down the daughters, and they came here and were reunited with their father after forty years. The reunion was full of hugs and many tears as a family that was torn apart was now put back together. They had hired private detectives that could not find their dad, but God had him right where he needed to be. After reuniting, they came and took him home. I am thankful to be a part of this.

I think of Mohamad, a Muslim of Palestinian descent coming to me one night and saying he was ready. He bowed his head and confessed that Jesus Christ was his Savior and the Son of God. He is still here being disciplined, even though after telling his family about his conversion he was spit at and rejected he has a family here.

I could go on, but I am so thankful for you that support this ministry and our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who is still changing lives.

## **PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION** Transforming lives since 1877

### **PURPOSE**

To reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

We serve with the compassion of Christ and minister with the transforming message of the Gospel.

### **VISION**

We offer life answers through faith in Jesus Christ, through any season of life, so that our guests become fully functioning followers of Christ.

### **CORE VALUES**

Faith • The Word • Truth • Love

*Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.  
— Psalm 119:140*



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

*With a thankful heart, I write this PGM Newsletter the last week of September where we turn towards the end of the 1st quarter of our fiscal year, and we find ourselves blessed with an increased number of donors. However, we continue to lag in total donations needed to fund our operations. Not only have we faced a substantial rise in health insurance premiums but other legacy costs now represent nearly 7% of our total budget.*

*For several years PGM heavily relied upon Estate and Grant gifts to fund our operational shortfalls. Unfortunately, those gifts have not been coming in.*

*As we move into the busiest part of the year for us, pray that we might meet the needs of everyone who walks through our doors of hope. Our purpose is to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ. We do that 100% of the time to 100% of the people who God calls here. Beyond that, there are great physical, emotional and even mental needs that people have and we are now addressing. We are still overwhelmed and understaffed.*

*As we head towards the end of the year, would you prayerfully consider a tithe and partner with Pacific Garden Mission? You may have full confidence that we are committed to faithful stewardship of your gifts.*

*We are unable to express in words our gratitude for your faithful prayers and your ongoing sacrificial financial support. Without you we would not be operating, because God has chosen His means of support. Remember when you give to Pacific Garden Mission you are not giving to the Mission but through the Mission to the ones that need it the most—like the ones that you have read and experienced in the testimonies we share. You are making an eternal difference.*

*May God bless you this Thanksgiving as we partner in this ministry that affects so many.*

## **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 (SEPTEMBER)**

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**646**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**100**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**28,766**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**31,575**

Number of patients treated in our free medical/dental clinic....**170**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**256**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3,119**

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