

FAMILIES IN THE MISSION

ARTICLE BY STEPHEN WELCH

WE SERVE WITH THE
COMPASSION OF CHRIST
AND MINISTER WITH THE
TRANSFORMING MESSAGE
OF THE GOSPEL.

WHEN I THINK OF MY CHILDREN, I think about how much joy and happiness they have brought to my life. I am reminded often how God provided a stable environment for them to grow up in. We went to church, and then to school, we played together and stayed together. There was a bedtime routine with every child as we said good night to the day. As a family we made mistakes, overcame conflict, learned values and grew up together. Now adults, I ask myself if I did all I could to teach and protect them.

As a senior I wonder what life would be like if I made different decisions with my time and career. Could I have spent more time with the family I want to spend eternity with?

What would their lives be like today if I hadn't cared about them? More importantly, I wonder what if I hadn't been able to care for them? The latter statement is a reality in our world. This year in America, more than 2.5 million children & their parents will experience homelessness.

The phrase, when I think about my children, echoes with me because I often meditate on how God thinks about His children—

Faith (above) and her mother Marilynn came to Pacific Garden Mission for refuge. Mom is in the New Life Program. Jesus Christ has touched both of their lives while they live here.

continues on page 2



Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that

Continued from page 1

and yes, I realize that God doesn't think because He knows everything. Yet, in the nutritive environment of Pacific Garden Mission we are all God's children in various stages of spiritual development. We want to use the February newsletter to report what God is doing at PGM in the lives of families by looking at Marilynn's testimony.

At the time of this writing we had 21 children and their families in the mission. Many adults at Pacific Garden Mission remember growing up facing tremendous difficulties. God is now using the past, both good and bad, to serve those who walk through our doors. Romans 8:28. We want to dedicate the February PGM News to the youth who are homeless and need Jesus Christ.

Marilynn is a 20-year-old single mother who came to Pacific Garden Mission this past October with her two-year-old daughter Faith. She was searching for something that she had been desperately seeking out in the world her entire life but in all the wrong ways. She was seeking love.



Marilynn, Faith's mother

"I grew up with no mom or dad. My mom was on drugs and so my auntie took me in and adopted me. I appreciate her for that, but living with her was an unhealthy environment. I grew up with low self-esteem, no hope, and no confidence. I am smart though, and when I was in high school I was on the honor roll with A's and B's. But I went out into the world looking for love.

When I thought I had found love it distracted me from school, from doing what was right. When I dropped out of high school my auntie put me out at the age of sixteen."

Dropping out of high school Marilynn moved in with her boyfriend. With tears in her eyes, she recounts how it was an abusive relationship. "I thought it was love because I didn't know how to love myself. Nobody ever showed me how to love myself. I just wanted to be with him so that I could be loved and held onto by someone." Two years into the relationship she had her daughter Faith.

Eventually Marilynn realized she had to somehow escape from the unhealthy and abusive relationship. "I came to a time when I didn't want to be with him, but I had brought my daughter into this world. I didn't know how to be a mom because nobody showed me how to be a mom. When I came to the mission I was lost in the world. I was struggling with lust, smoking weed, partying and not putting my daughter first. Not putting my priorities first. I was just out there in the world trying not to think about what was hurting me."

Marilynn knew there was something in her that needed to change. There was a void in her that she was never able to fill no matter how hard she tried. "I felt it, a dark spirit in me. I just felt like I had no hope, no confidence. I felt like the devil had a tight grip on me. I didn't know how to love my daughter and I didn't know how to love myself." It was this insight along with a broken and defeated spirit that she finally surrendered to God and joined the New Life Bible Program here at PGM.

As Marilynn shares her testimony, tears of grief and pain flow out uncontrollably. You can see the hurt and uncertainty in her eyes as she looks back to her past. But then a remarkable thing occurs.

Through the tears start to shine a light of strength, determination, and confidence. Her tone becomes bolder and more self-assured, "So I got into the Bible Program, Thank You Jesus. It changed me a lot. God gave me life. He is so true. I can smile now, I can be myself, I can look at people in their eyes and I have confidence. I can love my daughter now.

God has given me wisdom, so much wisdom. He gave me the love I was look-

*heaven their angels do always behold
which was lost. —Matthew 18:10-11*

ing for, and I am slowly getting to know Him, and I am slowly trying to be faithful to Him. Pacific Garden Mission is a great place to be. I love the people here, and the staff are nice. They help me be the best mom I can be with my daughter. I tell them my problems, how I never had a mother to show me how to be a good mom, and the ladies here help me try to be the best mom I can be.”

LIKE MANY OF THE WOMEN who come to PGM, Marilynn has undergone a miraculous transformation, from desperate and destitute to being determined and directed. She sees a brighter future. Along with Marilynn’s increasingly positive outlook, her daughter Faith has also been blessed with a new mother, who is learning to love with the love she didn’t have growing up, with God’s love. “And I have a bible verse, Philippians 4:13, ‘I can do all things through God who strengthens me.’ I can believe that verse now because God has given me that self-esteem I need, that confidence, that hope. I feel God all the time now. Pacific Garden Mission is wonderful because they brought God to me, and I didn’t know that I needed Him, but I need Him every second of my life.”

As I continue to serve at Pacific Garden Mission my life becomes more personally involved with those I serve and work with. I am finding that my new family is right here at Pacific Garden Mission. We worship, pray, learn, teach and live together in large numbers. We love one another because God first loved us. 1 John 4:19. The Holy Spirit is moving in us daily through the Great Commandment that Jesus gave to us.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:34-35

There is no doubt in my mind that this is how God planned it. Other staff members feel the same way, but it is more than a feeling. The Bible says, “...for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord

Marlynn and Faith enjoy celebrating Christmas, opening gifts, and playing with other children at the mission. They also enjoy meals with other families in the Pacific Garden Mission cafeteria.



Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, (KJV)

Finally, we are a large family here at PGM because of Jesus Christ. We are more than a soup kitchen or homeless shelter. Lives are being transformed as they were when Sarah Dunn Clark opened the mission in 1877. Stop

by and visit and we will show you what God is doing here every day.

Stephen Welch and Little Faith Invite you to visit PGM



PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION FACEBOOK PAGE

managed by Daniel Woolman



Please “Like”
(thumbs up icon)
our page.

Video and
photography
in real time.

If you would like to stay informed on the latest events inside PGM, visit us on Facebook. We are uploading news, video and photographs several times a week. Pacific Garden Mission is like a little city in and of itself, and from special dinners to visiting speakers, many interesting and memorable events take place here every day, and we hope to share them with you.

On our Facebook page you can watch videos, look at photos, read about the events taking place at PGM, and stay up to date on the weekly PGM TV Program. Whether it is through a sermon by Pastor Phil that changes your perspective about something in life, or through a simple photo of a smiling child receiving a warm meal, we are sure that you will be encouraged by what you see.

We want you to see what Jesus is doing and what is happening in a front line Gospel rescue mission. It is a ministry that you support, where many come who are at the end of their rope. But as you become aware of the miracles taking place here every day, and the lives being changed by Jesus Christ, the mission becomes a light in a dark world.

Keep up to date
on Facebook.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

—Matthew 5:14-16

WE ENCOURAGE YOU to help spread the word about what God is doing at Pacific Garden Mission. Through the love of Christ alone, it is transforming lost souls who were once homeless and helpless into well grounded, faith-filled, productive members of society. Share our page and let people know about the positive changes taking place here. By someone you know visiting our page, the seed of faith might even be planted in a lost soul who still hasn't received Christ as their Savior.



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

The TRUTH Shall Make You Free

Recently I saw one of our recent graduates in the hall. Her name was Melissa; she was working in the culinary field, living on her own and serving our wonderful Savior.

I thought of the vision of Pacific Garden Mission in making people fully functioning followers of Christ. We are not a “soup kitchen” but desire to take people from hopelessness to hope. Melissa was dropped off at PGM by the Department of Human Services; she was homeless, had suffered from depression, and was scared. After a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, she enrolled in our New Life Program, where she grew in her faith and learned discipline. She enrolled in our GED class, and after much effort she obtained it. After graduation from our program she applied to Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, and was accepted. After graduation she was placed in a job that she continues to work at today.

Melissa is an example of our vision, to introduce people to our Savior and then equip them with the proper skills to make it in society. We want to deal with the root causes of homelessness, and not have people remain here unchanged, but see them transformed into the person God wants them to be by the power of the Holy Spirit. What excites me about PGM is the opportunity

we have to see lives changed. Some missionaries travel the world looking for people to minister to, but at PGM they come walking through our doors everyday asking for help. We need to help them not only spiritually, but also to equip them with the skills to make it. Years ago a man graduated that was the father of two; he called me and said, “Pastor, you guys taught me how to find John 3:16 in the Bible, but I took the test at Motorola and failed, they won’t hire me.” We are committed to John 3:16, seeing people come to Christ; that is the most important thing, but we are also committed to equipping people with the life skills to make it in today’s world. As I saw Melissa I rejoiced because she is on her way.

In 2016, continue to pray for us, because many more like Melissa are walking through our doors every day; men, women, children, all seeking an answer, and we have it in John 8:32, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

New Day Program and New Life Program combined – Marilynn, Faith’s mother, is front row second from the right





INVITATION TO VISIT PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION IN 2016

PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION

Transforming lives since 1877

We look forward to sharing what God is doing here at Pacific Garden Mission in 2016. Call 312-492-9410 to R.S.V.P.

SATURDAY SCHEDULE

- Tour the mission – individual or group tours.
 - UNSHACKLED – radio drama recorded live
 - Dinner
 - Evening Service—Praise and Testimony recorded for PGM TV
- Attend as little or as much as your schedule allows

FINANCIAL UPDATE **Arthur Barrett, Chief Financial Consultant**

Pacific Garden Mission wants to thank for your kind and caring support. December giving was great, and we accomplished a lot with your support in 2015. Your investment is transforming lives every day.

I think of the words of Proverbs 19:17, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Remember the Mission these coming months, we have several challenges in 2016. During the winter season our costs rise due to the increased number of residents which affects so much—meals, and now our new water costs that the city is charging us range from \$21,000-\$25,000 per month. With our mortgage, and now this overwhelming water bill, remember the Mission.

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 (December)

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**822**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**109**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**55,596**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**118,705**

Number of patients treated in free medical/dental clinic....**287**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**115**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3127**

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