

ARTICLE BY DEAN LAKE / PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WELCH

# SUMMERTIME Street Picnic

PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION / TRANSFORMING LIVES SINCE 1877

OCTOBER 2015

s YOU KNOW, we have been sending you, on occasion, an opportunity to offer help through a Meal Ticket, a ticket that does literally offer you the opportunity to feed homeless individuals. Your response has been, well, simply put, a Godsend. Due to your wondrous response, we were able to create a special day—we initiated a Summer Picnic 2015 on August 8, a

Saturday. We coordinated your efforts with our staff, the Alderman, the Chicago police, and neighboring businesses to close down 14th Place for a PGM outdoor block party. We set up tables and chairs, set up two huge grills (on which we barbecued chicken and burgers), and set up several activities. The outcome and ministry were amazing—so

Picnic continues on page 2





Face-painting was a popular event for the children!

Over 800 men, women, and children were fed and ministered to. Homeless guests enjoyed fresh air, laughter, and the hand of friendship.

painting on their faces. Really, when one child finished getting his/her face painted, he/she turned to see the reaction of the other children and quickly ran to his/her mother. Yes, all the children laughed at the painting upon each child. I smiled too, yet there were still tears also in my eyes, for I knew the plight of the mothers whose feigned painted smiles on their faces were for their children.

As you know, Pacific Garden Mission has added a New Day program. As we have shared, our emphasis is not about warehousing the homeless: it is, and really has always been, about lives transformed through the life-changing knowledge of Jesus Christ. And this day, amid the turned burgers and charred chicken, the Gospel message was sent out. In fact, before the lines formed for lunch, our

own larger-than-life minister Pastor Green (seriously he is like six feet ten tall), director of our Men's Division, shared his testimony. He shared how he, back in 1995, arrived on the doorsteps of PGM, both his hands literally broken, as well as figuratively his heart. He spoke outdoors, on the sectioned off street, with the sun shining and a Chicago wind blowing; nonetheless, you could hear a pin drop as he spoke—his testimony is that strong and that beautiful. He spoke plainly and at the end offered an opportunity to the

Right: Homeless children were laughing and smiling and running to each small event before them. entire crowd before him to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. God-honoring music was played the entire day by a steel pan orchestra, and this group—One-Way Evangelical Ministries Steel Pan Orchestra—gave another invitation to receive Jesus. O, what a wondrous Lord we serve to hear such a testimony of the life-changing work of our Savior Jesus Christ twice!

And so, as you know, we not only have a Bible program called New Life, but also a program called New Day, which addresses those suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. Nonetheless, we so often are met with mothers with children. And we do have a mothers' with children ministry within our doors. And this Summer Picnic perhaps ministered most to these thanks to you. I really cannot put into words the images I witnessed that Saturday—so many children with painted faces running about and laughing with broad smiles. I think seeing these forlorn children smiling and laughing was a real miracle. I am writing this newsletter article past tense, but, you know something, tears are still lingering in my eyes. I guess we all here just truly want to say thank you for what you, our donors,



Left: Pastor Green sharing the Gospel.



our supporters, enabled us here at the Old Lighthouse to do in the very name of Jesus Christ. Not a long article this month—I want these pictures to give the testimony to your giving. Thank you so very much for your continued support for what I believe was the greatest of all gifts given—children with painted faces on a warm, sunny Saturday afternoon laughing and smiling.... Thank you and God bless you.

#### SPECIAL URGENT REQUEST: Bath Towel & Winter Coat Need

Just a note to let you know of an immediate need—we are in need of bath towels and winter coats (new or used is fine). Any donation of these items would be greatly appreciated.

#### FINANCIAL UPDATE

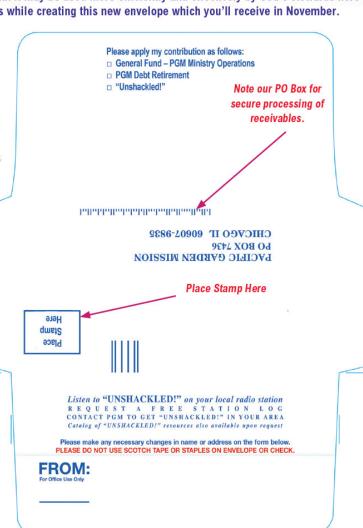
**NEW ENVELOPE AND POSTAL CHANGES:** Due to the record numbers of people we have cared for in 2015, we are improving our receivable process and our fiscal transparency with you, our faithful friends and donors. We want you to know that when you give to Pacific Garden Mission, you are not giving to the mission, you are giving through the mission to the people who need it the most. Our vision is to create fully-functioning followers of Christ. With this in mind, we plan to share more with you in the coming year on how we can partner in prayer and giving. We are redesigning our envelope that it may be used more efficiently and effectively by God's stewards here at PGM. We have addressed several issues while creating this new envelope which you'll receive in November.

First, we have simplified the areas of our ministry that your contribution may be applied to for those of you who like making that selection that is on the back of the envelope. We simplified the accounting procedures with three options which cover all of the donations we received last year. This means that no ministry will ever be neglected financially as we continue to seek God's will as financial stewards here at PGM.

Secondly, we have addressed handling your funds quickly and efficiently by working with our post office to eliminate delays. We realized that the majority of envelopes coming in to PGM had stamps on them, even though the envelope was already postage paid. So our post office recommended we eliminate our postal permit for nonprofit paid mail because it goes through a separate process at the USPS which can cause one to several days delay in the delivering of your gifts to PGM. Your stamp also helps our ministry reduce costs.

Thank you for your faithful support of Pacific Garden Mission.

The PGM management expresses its sincere appreciation for helping us become more efficient in several stages of our gift processing.





## A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

# Our Most Vulnerable

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Our Lord is interested in every individual who walks through our doors, but there is one group that stands out—children.

Luke 18:15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

This attitude was reflective of the attitude of the day: children were not valued. In ancient Rome, children were seen as disposable. One writer states, "An infant could be abandoned without penalty or social stigma for many reasons, including an anomalous appearance, being an illegitimate child or grandchild or a child of infidelity, family poverty, parental conflict (ob discordiam parentum) or being one of too many children. Sometimes they were given to friends, but more often than not they were abandoned to the elements, and death resulted from hypoglycemia and hypothermia. Sometimes the infant was devoured by the dogs that scavenged public places" (Colon, 2001, p. 91).

The Christians in the early church valued what society did not, and that was the

> most vulnerable amongst us, children. A historian writes, "In many instances Christians rescued exposed infants, and brought them up with the aid of community funds" (Durant, p. 598).

As I see the number of children here at PGM, my heart breaks. I just spoke to a young girl who is going into seventh grade, and she was excited about the prospects of school. She lives here at the mission. The thought of a young child living in such a difficult situation and yet feeling joy and security at being here brought joy to my heart.

Luke 18:17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Young hearts are open to the Gospel. As society continues to tear apart, children are often caught in the wake of the turmoil brought on by a culture that rejects God. Let Pacific Garden Mission be a place that many can

wash ashore and find hope and security in the arms of a loving Savior.

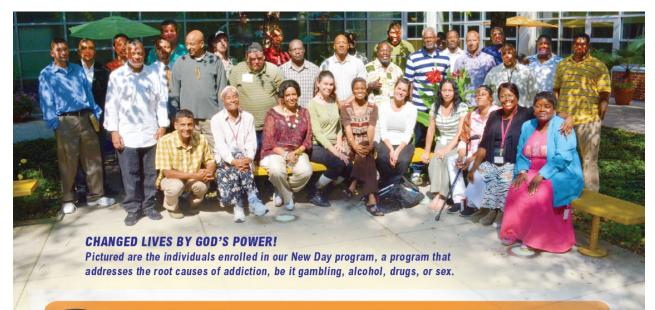
- A.R. Colón, A. R. & Colón, P. A. (2001). A history of children: A so*cio-cul*tural survey across millennia. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Durant, W. (1944). Ceasar and Christ. New York: Simon & Schuster











## WHAT YOUR MONEY SUPPORTS {August Numbers}

# Nights of Safe Lodging

836 • Daily average of homeless sleeping overnight.

## Bible Study Program

**114** • Number of men and women enrolled in our Bible Study Program and provided room and board.

# Meals for the Hungry

**46,778** • Approximate number of plates of food served.

# Clothing Distributed

**79,100** • Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions.

### Medical/Dental Aid

**61** • Number of patients professionally treated in our free Medical/Dental Clinic

## Professions of Faith

172 • Number of persons who heard the Gospel at PGM and committed their lives to Christ

#### Unshackled! Radio

**3,110** • Stations broadcasting in 14 languages (Albanian, Arabic, English, Farsi, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish).

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PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION does not charge for care.

Food, clothing, overnight accommodations, and medical treatment are totally free. Financial gifts from faithful supporters—and their prayers—keep this ministry alive.

PGM receives no city, state, or federal aid. Areas of ministry include the Mission for Men, Women's and Children's Division, Medical/Dental Clinic, "Unshackled!"

Radio, Bread of Life Outreach, Polish Evangelism, PGM Choir, and "New Day" Addiction Program.

PGM, producer of "Unshackled!", is a member of National Religious Broadcasters (NRB).





Please make a special note to visit us online at www.pgm.org. Please help us share the Mission. Tell your family and friends to contact PGM to receive this monthly newsletter and join with you in the support of this ministry.