

A portrait of a woman with dark hair and bangs, smiling slightly. The background is a blurred cityscape at night.

Priya now lives in the security of Christ's love.



**PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION**  
Transforming lives since 1877

## “YOU CARED FOR ME WHEN I HAD LOST ALL HOPE.”

No matter how it might occur, once someone's life has sunk to the state of living homeless, it can be challenging to rebuild, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Overcoming the challenges can seem unfathomable or hopeless. Sometimes it can be done alone, but through the support you provide Pacific Garden Mission, it doesn't have to be for those cast by the wayside. In this issue, we share the story of a woman living in a tent, hopeless and addicted to alcohol, who has found a new life in Jesus Christ. She shares her story of coming to PGM and how

God works through her life today.

### PRIYA

“I was living in a tent behind the Des Plaines library. I had lost all hope in humankind. I think the only one I had faith in was my son. I didn't see the point in going through anything. I would go to shelters during the day, but there were no night shelters open, as COVID was still going on. Someone invited me to their tent, and I said, ‘Okay.’

“I was just going through the motions. I was still drinking. I had a very bad drinking habit; some might call me an alcoholic. I was using it as a comforter, just to get by and get

**“I didn’t have hope and now, every morning, I wake up with hope, and I feel like I have a future.”**



through another day. That is what I would tell myself, but I knew in my mind that was not the way.

“No matter how hard I tried, I couldn’t change. I couldn’t make it through another day. I would drink, pass out, get up the next morning, and do the same thing. It was pointless.

“One day, somebody came into the shelter and said there was a place they could take me and I didn’t have to stay behind the library in a tent. Right then, the police also came to disband the tents. I had enough money saved to buy a train ticket, and long story short; I became an overnight guest here at Pacific Garden Mission.

“I knew I was just going through the motions. I already had two job interviews lined up, and I thought I just wouldn’t drink, but then the stress got to the point where I felt I would not make it another day. One night I got some

alcohol, and I left my ID in the bottom of my locker. When I tried getting back into PGM, they wouldn’t let me in.

I sat outside of PGM, and I just broke down. It was very cold, I was freezing, and I said to God, ‘Just take me!’

“I didn’t see the point, and that moment felt like my lowest point. I really thought I was ready to let everything go and die. Eventually, the guard let me in even though he knew I was drunk, and the next morning, they called Irene, who is in charge of the New Day program. Little did they know that I had decided to do something new, and I knew I had to align myself with God. Those were the words that were put inside my mind. They talked to me about the program and asked if I was interested in joining. They explained it was a Godly 90-day program for addictions that would get me on the right track. So, I said yes.

“I had never believed in the death,

**“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” — Hebrews 4:16 KJV**



burial, and resurrection of Jesus in its most pure form. I had always thought it was just symbolic. I had never read the Bible or believed it word for word. So I had never understood or accepted the Gospel.

"I believe wholeheartedly at that moment I was out in the cold, God reached down and picked me up and said, 'No, I have a plan for you. You are not dying today.' I couldn't have done it myself. I know for a fact it wasn't me. I had tried before and been to rehab before. In the back of our minds, we always think it is just about willpower to stop using, but it's not about stopping; it's about inviting and accepting the power of God, and the only way to do that is through Jesus. Through His compassion and love, He can save us.

"After I finished New Day, I was invited to join the Bible Discipleship program, where I was told it would ingrain in me what Jesus was all about. The words came to me again: I had to



**Priya has formed new friendships at PGM and is surrounded by loving Christian support.**

have a relationship with God. Here we can live our lives according to what God wants for us. Life is more than just having little moments of fleeting pleasure. The only way to really fulfill your purpose is to continually, moment to moment, follow the will of God.

"That sounds simple, but living it is something that takes training. Jesus says all we need is faith the size of a mustard seed, and He will give us the rest and fill it until it overflows. So, I am just enjoying the discipleship program, and I encourage anyone to join. Now I have hope, and it's strong and is getting stronger. I didn't have hope and now, every morning, I wake up with hope, and I feel like I have a future."

**Since being at Pacific Garden Mission, Priya has found the peace she had spent so long searching for. Free from the stronghold of alcohol and the hopelessness of homelessness, she can focus on rebuilding her life on a Christ-centered foundation. With your support of our ministries, you are providing people like Priya with all the resources they need to succeed, and the Gospel is at the heart of this. Thank you for making stories like Priya's possible.**



**Priya takes a photo with Pastor Phil before the Saturday evening Praise and Testimony Service.**



## PGMTV-Spreading the Gospel

The PGM TV program was created to share the Gospel of Christ with others, and highlight the lives changed through the power of God. Today we have over 330 episodes with new episodes added weekly. If you enjoy reading stories like Priya's, we invite you to tune in and watch our program each week to see new stories of lives changed through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Our program can be found on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/@PacificGardenMission](http://www.youtube.com/@PacificGardenMission)) and at [pgmtv.org](http://pgmtv.org). See below for the stations and times our program airs on TV. Each episode includes two testimonies and a sermon from Pastor Phil Kwiatkowski, who teaches series on Bible topics such as faith, sin, anger, and forgiveness.

### **WVCY TV — Milwaukee and Southeast Wisconsin**

Sunday at 1:00 a.m. and 11 p.m. CT

Tuesday 11 a.m. CT

Thursday 8 a.m. CT

Saturday 1 p.m. CT

### **Total Living Network (TLN)**

Chicago/Northern Illinois

Comcast ch.138

Saturday 7:30 p.m. CT/PT

Tuesday 1:00 a.m. CT/PT

### **TCT Net — Total Christian Television Network**

Direct TV Nationwide — Saturday 9:00 p.m. CT

### **TLN West**

San Francisco ch.25

Saturday 7:30 p.m. CT

Tuesday 1:00 a.m. CT

### **NRB TV**

Friday 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. CT

### **Caribbean Gospel TV**

Friday 11 p.m. AST

**GIVE NOW** [pgm.org/donate](http://pgm.org/donate)

### **SPECIAL NOTE OF JULY EVENT:**

We are looking forward to our annual July 4th cookout we hold for our program students and transient residents. This is a wholesome time of fellowship and celebration where food, games, and the Gospel message will be shared.

Visit our website at [pgm.org](http://pgm.org) to learn more about PGM's multiple ministries to the needy.





A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski  
President, Pacific Garden Mission

## WHEN DID WE HELP, LORD?

**“When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” —Matthew 25:38-40 KJV**

The stories of personal pain, hunger, loss, or just being out in the elements with nowhere to go are always heartbreaking.

I recently heard a story that gripped my heart. A young married couple left Venezuela hoping for a better life elsewhere. While navigating the jungle’s difficult terrain, the husband slipped and fell to his death down a hillside. The wife went to his side and remained by his lifeless body for two days, digging his grave and burying him in the jungle. Being alone and pregnant with twins, she continued the

journey by herself.

After crossing the border, she met up with a group that threw her a baby shower, saddened by the loss of her husband but hopeful for the bundles of joy she would soon be holding. But soon after, the babies she was carrying died, and she was devastated. She arrived at the Mission with a suitcase full of baby clothes she would never use, a broken spirit, and a great need of help. Our ladies rallied around her, praying, crying, and doing whatever they could to help this young lady. She felt at home here and has since donated the baby clothes, and she volunteers to help other migrants who walk through our doors. She professes a strong faith in Jesus Christ, and is encouraged by the hope of life to come. Let’s continue to pray for this young lady and many like her who walk through our doors. **And thank you for your love, prayers, and support.**

## THE IMPACT WE MAKE TOGETHER

**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 support us financially, you’re not only giving *to* the Mission, but *through* the Mission to people who need your help the most. In April your support made a true difference:

On average, **472** homeless people received aid and Gospel services each day

About **24,940** plates of food were served  
**25,159** items of clothing were distributed

**3,154** media outlets around the world  
broadcasted *Unshackled!*

**44** men and women were enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board

**21** mothers with their children who were sheltered at PGM

**80** people professed faith in Christ

**With your encouragement and support, we minister hope to the homeless, addicted, and brokenhearted.**



## GODLY STEWARDSHIP

Stephen Welch,  
Director of Development

### Our Purpose – To reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ

With your support, we continue to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ locally at the Mission, before meals and before bed. When someone is born again or is coming back into fellowship with our Lord, we help them join one of three discipleship programs. The Word of God is our textbook in all our programs, and 53% of our staff are alumni of our one-year discipleship programs. The Gospel is reaching people around the world through the 3,143 radio stations that broadcast *Unshackled!* Our one-hour television program is broadcast in many states, reaching the lost with the Gospel.

The Mission is continuing to experience an influx of guests. Up to 38% are Venezuelan immigrants in need of safe shelter and resources, creating ministry opportunities and challenges.

- PGM continues to work on providing Spanish services to guests. This has required additional staff and unbudgeted expenses. Local Spanish-speaking churches have also come to the Mission to offer small groups and Bible studies.
- The Mission is seeing an uptick in women and children since COVID has subsided. We are working to provide physical resources and mentoring in

parenting, life skills, and addiction recovery. PGM needs more staffing for mothers and children; however, recruitment has been challenging.

- Over the last few years, mental health has added a significant level of complexity to PGM's treatment model. 85% of those who come through the doors are suicidal. They have exhausted every option and feel completely hopeless. Most have no quick answer, as it takes time to heal and become fully independent. PGM needs to hire staff with mental health training and proficiency.

### The Impact We Made Together

Since PGM shares the Gospel with those we serve, we receive no government funding. **We are eternally grateful for you** and the individuals, businesses, churches, and foundations that make it possible for us to serve thousands of homeless men, women, and children each year. Your support made a difference this fiscal year, which ends this month, in the following areas and much more.

**4500 people received aid and Gospel services**

**948 people professed faith in Christ**

**145 men and women enrolled in discipleship programs**

**45 mothers and children received care**

**364,321 warm meals**

**534,900 items of clothing**

**PGMNews** JUNE 2023 • Vol.88, No. 6  
Published monthly by Pacific Garden Mission  
Philip Kwiatkowski, President  
Stephen Welch, Director of Development  
Daniel Woolman, Editor • Paul Higdon, Design

1458 South Canal Street  
Chicago, IL 60607-5201  
P: 312.492.9410 F: 312.492.9414  
Email: [pgmnews@pgm.org](mailto:pgmnews@pgm.org)  
Websites: [www.pgm.org](http://www.pgm.org) [www.unshackled.org](http://www.unshackled.org)