



Nathaniel's rededication to Christ is producing significant Godly fruit.

A GOD OF SECOND CHANCES

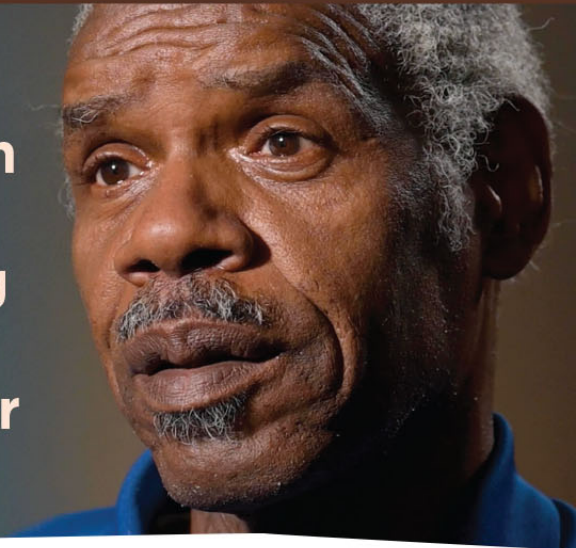
Not everyone who comes to Pacific Garden Mission for help gets it right the first time. It's more common than not for it to take several wholehearted attempts to overcome strongholds like addiction, anger, remorse, or depression. While some succeed on their first try, nothing is done in vain for those who don't. The Biblical wisdom and relationship with God they are first introduced to often lead them back for help after stumbling, where they eventually experience true transformation. This is the case for Nathaniel's story. We hope his story encourages you.

NATHANIEL REED

"I grew up in Chicago. In the '60s and '70s, we would steal out of stores and cars. After I went to Stateville prison for three years, I started getting into gangs. When I got out of jail, all I knew was to go straight to the gangs because they were all in the prison with me. That is all I knew. God spared me from the gangs. I went through gangs for about 18 years. After the police broke us up, I found myself doing more bad stuff on the streets by myself than I was with the gangs prior.

"Before I came to Pacific Garden Mission, I was smoking and doing all kinds of drugs. I was going into garbage

“I realize that God is the only one I can lean on. I can accomplish nothing without Christ because He died for my sins.”



cans and getting stuff and eating it. Not only was I eating it, but anything I could find, I was selling it to other people, and I was hoping they wouldn't ask where I got it from.

“I came to PGM the first time because I had nothing else to do and nowhere else to go. I had messed up everything that I had. I was hungry and had no money. Somebody told me about

Pacific Garden Mission and said I could always get something to eat there and sleep. I stayed from 2005 until 2007.

“The first time I left PGM, I had a job working for a restaurant. I thought I had my life together, but I went right back into the streets, into the drug society, doing the same things I was doing at first. Until I took a drug that almost killed me. The devil is serious about dragging us back into that mess. I found something, took it, and wound up getting very sick. I stayed at my niece's house, sick in bed for days. I told my niece I had to go back to Pacific Garden Mission because I had almost died.

“So I came back here in 2008. When I came back, I thought people would laugh and talk about me for coming back so soon, but I had to get over that. It wasn't about them. It was really about the Lord. When I did come back, they took me in with open arms.

“This time, I came and Jesus worked on me. I feel there are many things I have to do instead of going back out into that messed-up world. I



Nathaniel studies his Bible lesson in the PGM outdoor courtyard.

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season...”

—Psalm 1:3 KJV

was introduced to God in the old building but went a whole other route. God never left my mind, so when I came back, I realized this was the best place I could have come to get back in touch with God so that God could work on me instead of trying to do it myself. Thank God the Mission took me in with open arms.

“We are working with Pastor Phil now, and he is taking care of the Mission. Many of the people working with him are friendly. They feel like family. When I came here, I realized that some cared for me more than my family did. The only place I enjoy going is the Mission because I know it is a whole different family the Lord has put me into. I realize God is the only one I can lean on. I can accomplish nothing without Christ because He died for my sins. Whatever route we go, we will still end up in front of Him. I want to hear God say, ‘Well done, my faithful servant.’

“My favorite Bible verse is: **‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.’** It tells me to stop trying to take things into my own hands and to always depend on the Lord. God is always telling us to do one thing while my mind and flesh are telling me to do something else. We must stop at times and realize there is a small, well, a big, quiet voice trying to talk to us. I thank God I came this route instead of running back into that world. During my life on the streets, I realize over 20 different

times I should have been dead, but it seems God has a whole other plan for me.”

Nathaniel continues to serve at PGM faithfully and lives as a fully functioning follower of Jesus Christ. With his apartment and independence, he reflects the power of God to transform a life. Earlier in life, Nathaniel was involved in crime and ungodly behavior but now lives as an example for others, showing there is another way to live that is far more wholesome, rewarding, and sustainable. He may not have gotten it right the first time, but God didn’t give up on him. Thank you for supporting our ministry.



Nathaniel works in the PGM maintenance department helping to make things run smoothly.



“MISSION SMILES”

At PGM, we try to create as warm and welcoming an environment as possible, one that is nurturing, safe, and family-oriented. Walking through the halls, dorms, classrooms, and cafeteria at PGM, hearing light-hearted laughter and seeing smiles among our guests and staff is uplifting. It reminds us that even in the most difficult of situations, the love of God is all around us, and He is pointing to His Son Jesus Christ. We just wanted to share some of the smiles at PGM that your support helps make possible. *Thank You!*



To donate using your phone, just scan this QR code with your phone's camera, and it will direct you to the PGM Donate page.

GIVE NOW pgm.org/donate

Visit our website at pgm.org to learn more about PGM's multiple ministries to the needy.



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski
President, Pacific Garden Mission

UNWAVERING DEDICATION

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” —3 John 1:4

One of my greatest joys is to see men and women who have walked through our doors, desperate for help, years later serving our Lord and doing well. I just received a call from a man who came here for help some 25 years ago; he was homeless and struggling with an addiction. After receiving Christ and graduating our program, he went to school and joined the Army as a Chaplain. Now, as a Lieutenant Colonel, he is retiring. Through the years, he has kept in touch, and now he wants to come back; not as a resident but as a volunteer.

People often ask what happens after our residents graduate. We have a Career Development department managed by Felicia Hudson that focuses on what's next. Here are some comments:

Chris says, “I was in the Career Development Class of May 2020, right in

the middle of COVID. Ms. Felicia was an open ear for me and gave me great advice in my reentry to the community, job, and family relationships. She also supported me after I got my job at PGM by checking on me regularly and ensuring I had no problems.”

Candance says, “Career development at PGM helped me find the real Christian person I never thought I was. Taking the computer class with the Crawfords was fun. I learned how to do spreadsheets using tables and data. Create pictures using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint and how to fix my resume so that it looks professional for job interviews. Overall, being in the career development program at PGM helped and taught me how to be a Christian woman and person of the Lord.”

Thank you for your love and support as we continue to make fully functioning followers of Christ.

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 August your support made a true difference:

562 average number of homeless people who received aid and Gospel services each day

25,808 plates of food were served (est.)

15,630 clothing items were distributed (est.)

3,137 media outlets around the world broadcasted *UNSHACKLED!*

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

23 mothers with their children who were sheltered at PGM

41 people professed saving faith in Christ and became new believers at PGM

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

GODLY STEWARDSHIP

Celebrating Our Compassionate Volunteers

Peter Leavitt,
Assistant Treasurer, PGM Board of Trustees

At Pacific Garden Mission, a substantial impact is made through the dedication and compassion of our incredible volunteers. Around 70 selfless individuals come together each month, contributing a remarkable 350 hours to ensure our guests feel safe, supported, and hopeful for the future. An additional 60 volunteers help with each special holiday meal.

Our volunteers wear many hats to keep things running smoothly. Here are some of the vital roles they play:

Training/Tutoring: Education can be a powerful tool for breaking the cycle

of homelessness. Volunteers offer training sessions, helping guests develop skills to build a brighter future.

Food Service: Volunteers help serve nutritious meals, ensuring no one goes hungry. Their efforts provide both physical sustenance and a sense of dignity and care.

Housekeeping: Maintaining a clean and welcoming environment is crucial. Our volunteers diligently clean and organize, creating a space where guests can feel comfortable and at home.

Crafts for Children: Creativity and play are essential for children's development. Volunteers lead craft activities, bringing joy and a sense of normalcy to the youngest guests of PGM.

Spiritual Support: Our volunteers also pray with guests and share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, offering spiritual transformation and hope. Volunteers work at PGM without pay, and the monetary value of their effort is nearly \$100,000 annually.

To all our volunteers, thank you for your unwavering dedication and generosity. You are the heartbeat of our shelter, and your work helps transform lives every day.



Our volunteers form an integral part of PGM's ministry. See our website for more details.

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Learn more about our Mission, where lost souls find hope, compassion, and purpose.