



Yazmin's life was remarkably transformed at PGM.

## I FOUND NEW LIFE IN HIM THANKS TO YOU

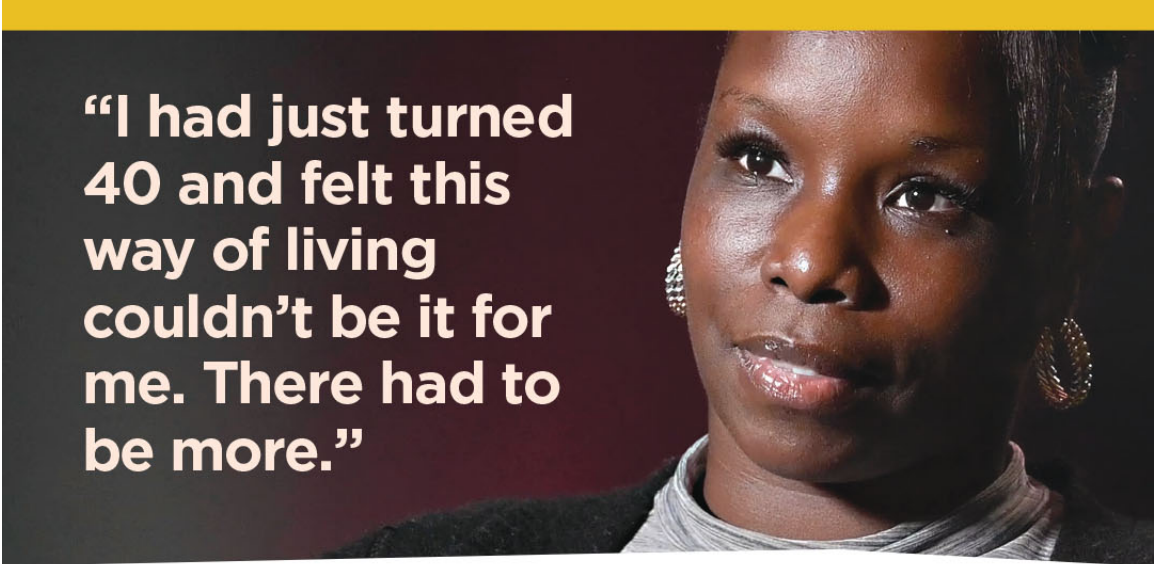
Yazmin Flowers' story is one of transformation, resilience, and the profound impact of faith in Jesus Christ and supportive fellowship. Like many, Yazmin's journey has been marked by challenges—from early struggles with addiction to navigating complex family dynamics. But it was through a moment when she felt lost and without direction that she found the hope and guidance she so desperately needed. Your support has made it possible for Yazmin—and countless others like her—to find a path to healing, recovery, and a renewed sense of purpose. She felt like she was stuck in a life that lacked meaning, but after coming to

Pacific Garden Mission, she formed a relationship with God and began seeing life in a whole new light.

### YAZMIN

"I grew up on the south side of Chicago. At the age of 14 or 15, I would experiment with marijuana with my friends. I liked smoking and drinking. I got pregnant at the age of 16. I still completed high school and went to college. I was able to work from 16 up to about two years ago. At 19, I got my own place and always found a reason to celebrate, drink, and smoke.

"I got married in 2009 until 2014; when that ended is when it seemed the drinking got excessive. I was still

A close-up portrait of a Black woman with short hair, wearing large hoop earrings and a dark top. She is looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“I had just turned 40 and felt this way of living couldn’t be it for me. There had to be more.”**

functioning, but it got way worse than it ever was before. I didn’t like to ask anyone for help. At 16, I was still going to church, but after I got married, I wasn’t doing any of that anymore.

“In 2022, I stayed in a hotel for ten months. At that time in my life, I had been staying at my mom’s to help her because she’d had a stroke. She got out of the hospital and only had about 30% functioning after the stroke. She was used to doing things on her own and thought I was coming in to take over and didn’t like my drinking. My feelings were hurt because I was trying to help her, so that was it for me, and that was when I went to stay at the hotel.

“I was still working, and stuff was going well, but I was tired. I had to spend all the money I made from work on the hotel. It was like work to pay, work to pay. I had just turned 40 and felt this way of living couldn’t be it for me. There had to be more. I was always talking at God, and it

was from a place of anger. I didn’t want to ask for help, and I thought I could do everything on my own. Maybe it was God teaching me about my pride.

“I really needed help but didn’t know which direction to go. I didn’t have time to sleep because I was always at work, and I just got tired. I was feeling depressed and didn’t want to do it anymore. I didn’t want to commit suicide because I was going to go to hell, and I didn’t want that. I wanted it to stop and get better.

“I came here and met a counselor, and she asked me how I knew I was going to heaven. She reintroduced Christ



Yazmin attends the Saturday Praise and Testimony service in the PGM auditorium .

**“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”  
—Ephesians 2:4-5 KJV**



to me in a different light. I knew God had heard me crying out to Him when, after receiving so many noes, I found PGM. He knew I was looking for help and that I wanted to stop drinking and smoking. I wanted to be free. I found out PGM had more services besides shelter, and I learned about the 90-day addiction recovery program. I knew I needed it, so I was very happy.

“After New Day, I committed to the New Life Bible program because I wanted more than just 90 days sober. I desired to be somewhere structured and still have devotions and learn about God, the Bible, and Jesus. That is why I joined the discipleship program.

“I don’t think I would be teaching my granddaughter the Bible now if I was stuck in my old life and too busy working. So, being here is what brought me to doing that. Christ is more of my provider and healer. He is a good listener. To know Him now and see that it isn’t other people who are going to bring you closer to Him, but yourself. I feel now that He brought me to spiritual people who can give good teachings of the Bible because before when I was younger, I wasn’t being taught the correct way.

“After graduation, I was accepted

into the transitional living program. In the career development phase, I applied for a WIOA Grant and was approved. Now, two days a week, I’m enrolled in school for Patient Care Technician. In November, I was offered the Volunteer Services Assistant position at PGM. I love my position. I thank God every day. I pray more for my mom and family because our relationships have become better and closer. Everyone has truly been supportive and sees what God has done for me. I feel like God had to change my surroundings and circumstances so He could change my life. I am grateful for the people He sent to minister to me.

“I can’t give up now. I don’t want to be separated from Him because I felt like I was way outside His circle before, but now, I can have those conversations with Him. He always sends me my little confirmations and signs each day, so I know He hears me when I write to Him or when I pray, and that gives me a great feeling. To have a sober feeling free of being anxious or worried; He has cleared me of that.”

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**Through your support, Yazmin has not only reclaimed her life, but she is now able to give back, serve others, and live**

**Photo above: Yazmin graduated from the Bible program last September.**

a life of purpose and gratitude. She felt something was missing from her life and that there had to be more than just working to survive. She found that meaning in Jesus Christ. She is a powerful reminder of how the

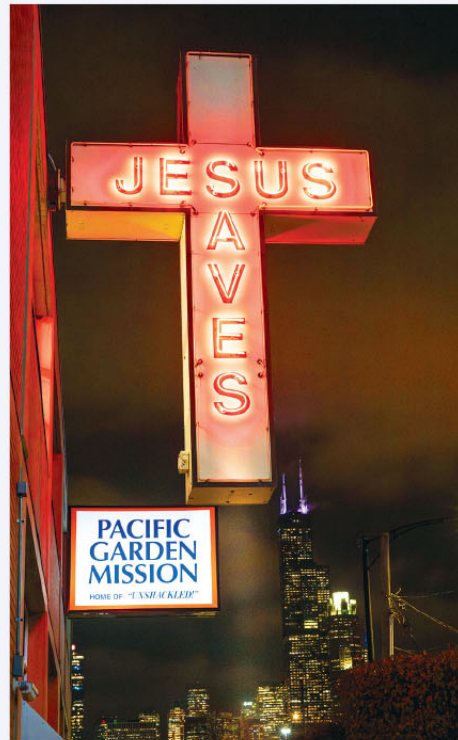
proper support at the right time can change everything. Thank you for being a part of Yazmin's transformation and investing in lives like hers, allowing individuals to find hope, healing, and a brighter future.

## IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT

Imagine, for a moment, that you wake up in the middle of a busy city street. The air is frigid, and the sounds of people rushing by drown out your thoughts. You don't have a home to return to, no safe place to rest at night, no warm bed or familiar kitchen. The things you once took for granted—a roof over your head, the security of a stable address—are distant memories. Each day is a puzzle of survival, where you navigate the cold, the uncertainty, and the vulnerability of not knowing where you'll sleep tonight, or if you'll eat tomorrow. The world seems to be in constant motion, yet you remain stuck, separated from it all.

Homelessness is more than just the lack of a home; it's the absence of connection, the erosion of dignity, and the battle against isolation. For those who are homeless, it's a daily struggle of holding onto hope, of finding even the smallest moments of humanity in a world that seems indifferent. But thanks to the generosity of donors like you, we are able to offer a lifeline. Your support means providing food, shelter, spiritual healing and renewal through Christ.

With your help, we are not just offering a place to stay—we are offering a chance to rebuild, to be loved, and to be valued once again. Thank you for being a beacon of hope in their journey.



Please donate using your phone. Just scan this QR code with your phone's camera, and it will direct you to the PGM Donate page. *Thank you!*

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

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



## A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

### HEARTS OF GRATITUDE

The most difficult time for many of our residents is the holidays, for many thoughts of holidays past, family dinners, and long conversations with loved ones are replaced by the cold, hard reality of navigating life on the streets and waking up in a shelter. Resurrection Sunday will be next month and we try to make it as joyous as possible. Here are some comments from our residents regarding last Christmas:

**Donald said,** “The staff had a welcoming attitude as if I were going to the restaurant. Not just because of the food but because of the Holy Spirit of God. I got to taste the sweet potatoes, ham, and turkey on Christmas. I didn’t hear ‘it’s time to go,’ ‘get up,’ ‘or sit down.’ I was being served and I felt that. I didn’t feel homeless and it was a joy. I smiled and laughed a lot and it felt good. It was something different and special.”

**AJ said,** “PGM has been a blessing beyond a blessing. I love this place with all my heart, beyond understanding, even for me. PGM has given me the basics—food, shelter, hygiene, showers, etc. We speak about God every hour of the day. We pray three or more times a

day in groups. This place helps me remember about God often.”

**Angel says,** “Everything was and is amazing. The Christmas dinner was awesome, with the singing together, the gifts, and the staff. I love the staff, and I would recommend this place to anyone who is homeless.”

**Sharon says,** “The food, the clothing, the presents were wonderful. Most of all, it was a blessing because I was able to celebrate Jesus’ birthday. I enjoyed sharing Jesus’ birthday. I enjoyed sharing Christmas with the PGM family. It made me feel loved and cared for.”

**Ann says,** “I had a wonderful time this Christmas; I felt love, joy, and peace. I loved the dinner. I really enjoyed the shopping and the warm smiles . . . I feel very safe at PGM. There is a lot to love here, and I want to thank everyone for the love and support they have given me.”

Just as we celebrated the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ a few months ago, and as we celebrate His resurrection next month, let’s continue to remember those less fortunate here at PGM. ***Thank you for your love, prayer, and support.***

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

## A VOLUNTEER'S PERSPECTIVE

Our volunteer coordinator, Calvin Shorter, received a letter from a recent volunteer that eloquently captures the heart of PGM. This is the ministry you make possible.

*Good afternoon, Mr. Shorter,*

*I must share this. THANK YOU for providing us with the opportunity to serve! My friends and I were so impressed by the order, professionalism, and timeliness of your management of that day. Unlike many volunteerism experiences, we had a chance to learn the history of PGM*

*and experience the inner workings of such an incredible ministry.*

*It had been quite a while since I visited the "catacombs" of PGM. Seeing the museum, barber/beauty shops, and clothing "shopping" areas filled me with joy. One of my friends said something that resonated with me: "This is such a dignified approach to service provision. It is absolutely BEAUTIFUL!"*

*All too often, homeless shelters offer clothing to people in need of garments—but the presentation is not always respectful. PGM's approach is successful because people are treated with dignity and respect. It is an environment in which they are reminded of how precious they are,*

*empowered to regain control of their lives, and provided with the tools to become self-sufficient.*

*My birthday is coming up and I would like to volunteer on that day. Keep up the righteous work!*

All praise goes to the Lord for enabling PGM to care for its guests and proclaim the life-changing Gospel message. We are profoundly grateful.



## 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 January your support made a true difference:

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

**42,389** plates of food were served (est.)

**26,586** 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

**6** mothers with their **12** children were sheltered at PGM

**260** 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.