



From complete brokenness,  
Nick's soul was renewed and  
transformed at PGM.

## YOUR SUPPORT WAS MY LIFELINE

**When Nick found himself suicidal and on his knees after over a decade of backsliding, he knew where he needed to go to reconnect with God and start fresh: Pacific Garden Mission. Nick shares his painful journey that brought him back to PGM after being away for 14 years and the new hope and connection with Jesus Christ he has found since his return. His story highlights God's grace and patience and wouldn't be possible without your support. We thank you for helping to make his story possible.**

### NICK BUSTILLO

"My name is Nick Bustillo, and I was born and raised in Texas. I arrived at PGM in June of 2024 after getting on a Greyhound bus to come here. I knew about the Mission because I had been here before from 2006 until 2010. I was in a Texas prison in 2005 when Christ Jesus put in my hands a PGM Newsletter, and then a few months later, a guy named David, a Chicago native, landed in the prison I was in. He knew about PGM through his church in Chicago, so he told me about it and how I could be disciplined there. Upon my release, I came straight to Chicago, where I completed the one-year Bible

**“I had been living a lie for years and God didn’t want that for me. He pulled me out, rescued me, and brought me to the Mission.”**



program at PGM.

“I then got hired by the *UNSHACKLED!* Ministry for three years and did evangelism. I got married, and my wife wanted to leave Chicago, so I took my leave at PGM and moved back to Texas in 2010. I know now that God wanted me to stay.

“I compromised during the 14 years since I left PGM. I took a lot of identities, from my job to things that were said to me, and I believed all those lies. I was a pipe fabricator in the oil and gas production field and made good money, but everything was horrible. I wasn’t a fruitful Christian, and I was very ashamed of myself. I was married but I wasn’t living the way a Christian should be. My wife and I went to counseling but it was in a chaotic relationship, a chaotic life. I cried out to the Lord for help.

“I started drinking and then I started using drugs occasionally, and then I decided I had to do something because I just didn’t

want to live anymore. I tried to kill myself several times using cocaine but it didn’t matter how much I used, I just wouldn’t die. I’d sober up, go back home and then try it again and this went on for a few years. It was horrible.

“After trying to kill myself one last time, I knew I had to go to Pacific Garden Mission and humble myself. I needed Jesus and needed to find my identity. I couldn’t live any longer that way. So, I got on a bus and when I got to Pacific Garden Mission, I met with Pastor Phil. I joined the New Day addictions program and completed it in January. I am now in the Bible program and I’m



Nick receives his New Day graduation certificate during the recent graduation ceremony.

**“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” —1 Corinthians 1:18 KJV**

very blessed to serve in Hospitality. I love doing the tours and sharing the PGM history and what Christ is doing here at PGM.

“God met me where I was, face to face, and it has brought so much peace. It is wonderful. I finally have peace and I am enjoying life now again. For those who don’t think that Jesus loves you, He does. I forgot who I was in Christ. I have a Father who loves me and is there for me. Throughout the Bible, you can find help in the person of Jesus Christ. He has delivered me and there are no words to describe it.

“I had been living a lie for years and God didn’t want that for me. He pulled me out, rescued me, and brought me back to the Mission. I used to love this place, and I still do. Here you have people who love you and it’s wonderful. I am very thankful. I should be dead, but God has given me another opportunity. He met me where I was at and He cared. Sometimes I just cry and thank the Lord.

“Before I came back here I had gotten to a place where I didn’t believe anymore, but since I have been here, God has shown up so powerfully in my life and brought so much healing. And He isn’t finished with me yet. I have a lot to look forward to. He is there no matter what is going on in your life. Just say, ‘Jesus help me,’ and He will. I am being transformed and it’s amazing to receive the peace of mind I needed so much. I am free and I bow my heart to my



LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, I matter to HIM.”

**At Pacific Garden Mission we always welcome people back with no judgment and open arms of love and support, knowing that no matter the struggle or sin, Jesus can fix it. With your support, PGM continues to be a spiritual hospital where people can come when they need help. People come from across the country to PGM to get help. Stories like Nick’s of healing and renewal wouldn’t have been possible without your support and we are happy and thankful to share it. Nick graduated the New Day addictions recovery program and is now serving and studying in the Bible program.**

Photo above: Nick’s work ministry is helping in the hospitality department welcoming visitors.



# Happy Mother's Day!



As we celebrate Mother's Day this month, we want to especially reach out and honor the mothers staying at PGM. Facing the challenges of homelessness are complex enough on your own, but when you have young children, it makes it more stressful and complicated. Thankfully, we have a close network of resources and staff that can get them the help they need to move on and rebuild a stable life for themselves and their children.



The strength and perseverance of mothers is commendable, and we are genuinely proud and honored to be able to help them in their time of need. We are also grateful for donors like you who have helped make all this possible for these women. The impact on our guests, both young and old, can change the course of their lives and set them down a path of hope and long-term stability. We wish all our mothers a very special *Happy Mother's Day!*



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

# A DAUGHTER'S STORY OF GRACE

When I think of Mother's Day, my mind drifts to one of our residents, Lisa Miller. Lisa and her mother sit together for every Saturday evening service. Her mother once remarked, "Thank you for giving my daughter back." I was curious about her story, so I asked her to write it down,

"I, Lisa, am writing concerning past failures in my life. For three years, I was missing in the valley of the shadow of death due to drugs. My mother and family wondered what happened to me. They did not know if I was alive or dead. My mother expressed to me the pain and hurt she went through of the unknown... of not knowing where I was. At times, she wondered if I was dead. She said she would cry and tell God, 'Please take care of my baby.' I was really in a dark place in my life on the streets of Chicago. Then one day, I lost my boyfriend. He was shot to death with a silencer gun as

he slept beside me. I walked around in shock and pain for many days.

"In 2021, God touched my mind and heart with His grace and mercy. He led me to come to PGM. I didn't have any money and was desperate to change my life. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was tired of being on the streets with nowhere to lay my head. It is a cold world out there. I cried to God and asked Him to help me. He answered my prayer. After being here at PGM, I called my mother after not seeing her for three years. She was so happy. Then she came to visit me and we were reunited. Every week, she would come to see me. We became a family again by God's grace.

"I wake up every morning thanking God for directing me to PGM. I am so happy. I have peace. I am surrounded by godly, wonderful people who show me love. I know this place is a godly place because my body, mind, and soul came back to life. I love being here at PGM. I will continue to learn how to be obedient to follow Jesus. I would like to encourage everyone out in the streets who is homeless and have given up on life to know there is a God who is just waiting for them to let Him into their hearts. There is hope here at PGM. It is full of love."



**Lisa and her mother were reunited at PGM.**

**PGMNews** MAY 2025 • Vol. 90, No. 5  
Published monthly by Pacific Garden Mission  
Philip Kwiatkowski, President  
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)

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

## GODLY STEWARDSHIP

### Honoring Your Trust: The Annual Financial Audit

Peter Leavitt,  
Assistant Treasurer, PGM Board of Trustees

Each summer, we open the door to evaluation and accountability by launching our external financial audit—a vital process that underscores our commitment to responsible stewardship of the Lord's resources at PGM.

#### Why the Audit Matters

The annual audit meticulously examines our financial records to verify their accuracy and reliability. It also ensures that we follow current accounting regulations and standards, reinforcing our commitment to operating with the highest ethical and professional conduct.

#### The Audit Process

The audit is conducted on-site at PGM's facility by an independent

auditing firm with expertise in the field of nonprofit financial management. The detailed and comprehensive process takes several weeks to complete. It not only includes scrutiny of financial activity statements, position, and cash flow but also involves an assessment of internal financial controls and policies.

The audit results are reviewed by PGM's leadership and Board of Trustees, and all insights gained are used to refine and enhance our financial management processes. We consistently remain in good standing thanks to the dedication and faithfulness of our partners who manage the integrity of the funds you provide.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who faithfully pray, volunteer, and donate to the Lord's work at PGM. Your trust enables us to fulfill our mission of reaching the lost with the Gospel of Christ. The annual financial audit is one of the many ways we seek to honor and maintain that trust.

## 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 March your support made a true difference:

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

**38,022** plates of food were served (est.)

**2,140** clothing items were distributed (est.)

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

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

**5** mothers with their **7** children were sheltered at PGM

**159** 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.