



# Changing Lives



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## Free for the First Time

**M**y name is Karl. There was no stopping it. I just drank, drank, and drank . . . and then I drank some more. The police around here know me well, because I was picked up three times for public drinking and disorderly conduct. But I just kept drinking.

**“Alcohol was destroying me drink by drink. I lost everything many times.”**

Alcohol was destroying me drink by drink. I lost everything many times — apartments, cars, and everything else that should have been important to me. A lot of people tried to help me over the years, but I never listened. I just didn't want to stop drinking.

**My life is finally turning in the right direction**

It took a long time for me to see the light. When I finally realized alcohol was killing me, I came to Holland Rescue Mission. For the first time, my life is turning around.

Today, I know God loves me and that He forgives me. I'm no longer a slave to alcohol and a lifestyle that violated everything God wants for me. I'm free. I still have my problems, but now I have the One who is always there for me when I need help.

**Thank you for helping me put my life back together**

Someday, I hope I get the chance to talk to high school kids, so I can share with them the lessons I've learned: Booze is a lie and drinking is no path to a good life. If just one kid listened to me, it would be worth it.

I don't know what I would do without Holland Rescue Mission and generous people like you who keep these doors open. Thank you for being obedient to Jesus when He says to reach out to people in need. I hope you and your family make it a great holiday season.

Karl



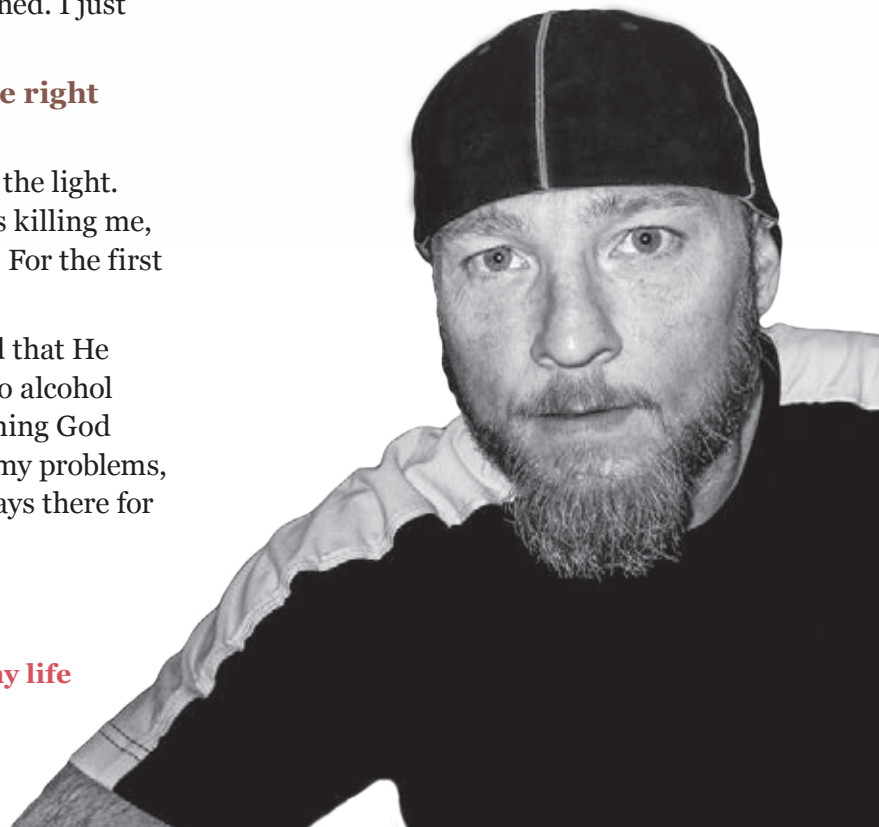
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**HOLIDAY  
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## Shop with a Mission

The revenue generated through the sale of donated items in our thrift store is used to support the ongoing work of our ministry. When you donate items or shop at our Gateway Center Store or online at Amazon, Craigslist, and eBay, you are helping us make a difference in the lives of our residents and in our community.

## Business Spotlight

Every month when you donate items to our thrift store or Gateway Center, you will receive our Business Spotlight

Coupon with a discount to a local business that supports our organization. Thank you to all local businesses that have partnered with us so far! For more information on becoming one of our business spotlights, contact Nicole Meengs at [nicolem@hollandrescue.org](mailto:nicolem@hollandrescue.org) or (616) 928-3445.

## A Word of Gratitude from Darryl Dear Friend of Holland Rescue Mission,

I was recently asked, "What is the greatest gift we can give those who come to the Mission for help?" I remember saying: **There are so many great gifts under God's tree of life.** First of all, there is the great gift of His Son, whose birthday we celebrate in the next few weeks. Where would any of us be without that great gift? Then there is the gift of hope, something Christ freely offers to all who come through our doors. We remind our guests that where there's hope there's life, and where there's life there's hope.

Then there is also the great gift of light itself. When our guests and students see the light, they cannot help but be attracted to it. That's when they begin moving out of the despair and darkness where they lived so long. The good news is that even the smallest ray of light promises that something better lies ahead. That light then becomes the foundation for all good things yet to come.

### Out of the darkness and into the light

Isaiah 9:2 reminds us "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." And this is the encouraging word I share with you today: The same light that shines in the hearts of a homeless, despairing, addicted man or woman who comes through our doors is the same light that shines in your life as you remain obedient to the Lord of your salvation.

And the great gifts of life keep coming . . . the gifts of forgiveness, salvation, newness of life and a reconciliation with a loving God who reaches out to us, saves, and redeems us. It's my prayer during this holiday season that you will be a recipient of all these gifts and more. Thank you for reaching out to so many who have been living on the cold streets, but who now have entered the warmth of Holland Rescue Mission.

Until the next time, God bless you and keep you always.

Your servant,

Darryl Bartlett, Executive Director



**"The good news is that even the smallest ray of light promises that something better lies ahead."**



## Thank you for helping us meet the need

It's always a challenge to run a race when you start off by standing at the bottom of a tall mountain or with your feet in a hole. Yet that's what it's like for many of our friends and neighbors who come to Holland Rescue Mission. For so many, life did not start out well at all: there may have been family abuse, drug addiction, extreme poverty, lack of education, or the unfortunate choice of simply *leaving God out of the picture.*

Over the years, hundreds of our guests have been blasted with, "You are no good," or "You never will amount to anything." Cutting, damaging words indeed — words that often rob our friends of their self-esteem for their entire lives.

**Thank you for your generous support**

## Getting it right this time ... Finally honest with myself

**M**y name is Dawn. It was a 20-year marriage, but it was a troubled marriage, one filled with mental and physical abuse. And it *drove me to drink*. Vodka became my companion. I started drinking just to relax. After all, I had excuses, right? The domestic abuse was terrible, my mother was on meds, I was having anxiety attacks, and I was overwhelmed trying to be super mom. But one drink became two, and then I figured I needed another one . . . and so it went until it became a full-blown addiction.

### With God's help, I'll stay the course this time around

The results of my drinking? I lost everything — my driver's license, my house, and more jobs than I care to remember. My employers got tired of me calling in saying, *"I'm sorry but I'm sick today."* When I was finally honest with myself, I had to admit I was doing a rotten job running my life. That's when I decided to return to Holland Rescue Mission's program, from which I'd graduated more than two years ago. I hoped against hope I would learn my lesson this time and maintain a better relationship with God. I no longer wanted to fill that deep hole in my life with alcohol. All I can say is, *so far so good.*



It's good to know I'm not doing this alone. God, my Christian counselors, and you who support this place of rescue are with me every day. I love to spend time in God's Word, and I'm working hard on developing my relationship with my heavenly Father. Thank you for giving me a safe place — a good place — at this time of my life. It's also great to be able to help in the thrift store here at the Gateway Center, where I'm able to use my many years of retail skills. When I meet Jesus in heaven one day, I'm simply going to thank Him for loving me. And I hope to hear him say to me, *"Well done, my good and faithful servant."*



## Thank you for being a Hope Provider

We care deeply about our Mission guests . . . and one of the most encouraging things we say is where there's life there's hope . . . and, conversely, *where there's hope there's life*. For most who come to the Mission, "hope" has not been an active word in their vocabularies. It's certainly not a word heard on the streets. But when our friends begin to realize they are loved, and when they start to see a flicker of hope — even the faintest beam of light on their darkened lives — things begin to change. That's when a spiritual transformation begins to take place — a change only possible when the light of Jesus Christ comes into once despairing hearts.

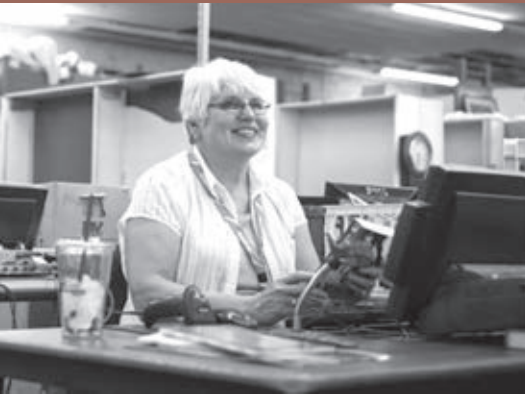
Thank you for being a hope dealer . . . and a hope provider for people like Karl, Dawn, and others who've asked Jesus to change them from the inside out. God bless you for reaching out to so many during this special holiday season.

## ds of so many during the holiday season

Then, by the grace and mercy of God, these folks come to the doors of Holland Rescue Mission. Finally, those with the most severe life challenges now have an opportunity to change course and accept the promise that Jesus will be with them today and forever. And this reminder: everything we do to help the homeless is made possible through your prayers and generous support.

To keep providing hope to the needy, please use the remit slip enclosed and include it with your generous donation today. You may also give your gift by visiting us at [www.hollandrescue.org](http://www.hollandrescue.org). Thank you for being a partner in caring for the needy during the holiday season and throughout the year.

“...everything we do to help the homeless is made possible through your prayers and generous support.”



# Not All Ignorance Is Bliss



A woman called her airline customer service to inquire about bringing dogs on board. "It's no problem at all," replied the representative, "as long as you provide your own kennel." The representative went on to explain the kennel needed to be large enough for the dog to stand up, sit down, turn around, and roll over. Shocked, the customer gasped, "But I'll never be able to teach him all of that by tomorrow!" (*Adapted from Reader's Digest*)

## Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of Holland Rescue Mission. God has given us all unique talents and abilities. As His children, we are called to serve others and share His love throughout our community. If you have a heart to serve, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Marissa Scholten, at [marissas@hollandrescue.org](mailto:marissas@hollandrescue.org). We look forward to ministering with you!



Ever been in a situation where something should have been totally obvious, but you missed it entirely? Did you know you may be missing "triggers" that it's time to update your estate plan? These could include:

- Birth or adoption of a child or grandchild
- Death of a family member or friend
- An injury or ongoing illness
- A wedding or divorce

Or other more *obscure triggers* like:

- Viewing old photographs or videos
- Writing a memoir or family history
- Receiving an unexpected call from an old friend or long-lost family member



Christian author Dallas Willard once said, "Blessing is the projection of good into the life of another." Having an up-to-date estate plan or will can be much more than a plan on paper, it can be a purposeful way to project good into the lives of loved ones and the ministries you care about, like Holland Rescue Mission. This is good stewardship and it blesses the heart of God, too.

For the full version of this article, request a **FREE** copy of "6 'Blessing Triggers' You May Be Overlooking" by contacting Rachael Neal at (616) 396-2200 ext. 425 or [rachaeln@hollandrescue.org](mailto:rachaeln@hollandrescue.org) — or bless your family today with a God-honoring will at [www.christianwill.org/hrm](http://www.christianwill.org/hrm)



## My Holiday Gift

YES, Darryl . . .

I'm happy to help provide food and care to those who come to the Mission during the holidays.

Here's my gift of:

- \$20.50 to provide 10 meals and other assistance
- \$30.75 to provide 15 meals and other assistance
- \$61.50 to provide 30 meals and other assistance
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide as many meals and as much care as possible
- Please bill my credit card:  VISA  MC  Discover
- Please send me a free copy of the article "6 'Blessing Triggers' You May Be Overlooking"

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ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### Holland Rescue Mission

Mr. Darryl Bartlett

356 Fairbanks Ave.

Holland, MI 49423-3718

► Please mail this completed form with your holiday gift, or donate online at [www.hollandrescue.org](http://www.hollandrescue.org). Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.