WHY WE GIVE

UGMTC Donors

We give to Union Gospel Mission on a monthly basis because it is a faith-based program that does so much good for those in need! And because it has several different programs under its umbrella of care. We have toured the facility, and we are so impressed with the staff and the assistance they provide to our neighbors in need.

We also donate clothing for both the men’s and women’s programs. It does the heart good knowing it will be put to good use.

—Bridget and Dewey Berglund

A FULL WEEK OF FOOD, SHELTER, & CARE FOR $50

At UGMTC, Fifty Dollars Can Transform a Life

In today’s economy, a drive-thru meal for a family or “a few items” on a Target run can easily add up to more than fifty dollars. At Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities, fifty dollars covers the cost of a full week of meals, seven nights of safe shelter, and free access to showers, toiletries, clothing, and biblically based counsel.

At the Mission, it is often said that hope begins with a meal. Imagine the difference a full week of hot food, kindness, mental-health counseling, and chapel messages proclaiming the healing Gospel of Jesus Christ can have in a life!

Please give today.

Thank you!

1926: Bethel Hotel Begins

In 1926, the Mission purchased land adjacent to its building on 8th Street and Wacouta to build a four-story addition, including a new Bethel Hotel to shelter and care for up to 336 men each night. “A place where the doors never close,” the Bethel Hotel offered a dormitory, 96 rentable rooms, and a restaurant serving inexpensive meals.

Now located at 435 University Avenue East in St. Paul, the doors of the Bethel Hotel remain open to men seeking shelter and a second chance. More than 325 beds, bunks, and cots are available each evening for men in need. Three hot meals are served daily, and chapel services are held each night. The Mission’s Housing Plus program, housed within the Bethel Hotel, also continues to offer programming and affordable rooms to men in need of help and a temporary home.
Frank served as an altar boy as a child and skipped meals regularly so the food could be given to the poor. As an adult, he restored cars to give to nieces and nephews and led addiction recovery groups at treatment centers across the Twin Cities. Then, he became the one in need of generosity and grace—something he found in Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities’ (UGMTC) Housing Plus program. A serious medical condition ended Frank’s career as a cook in downtown Minneapolis. No longer able to pay rent and other expenses, Frank moved in with his brother’s family until he could find an affordable place of his own.

“I felt bad about living with family, and missed my independence,” Frank said. “My doctor gave me information on social services, so I called a lot of places. This was the last facility I got a hold of; I talked to a man at the Mission who told me about the programs and said to come when I was ready.” Frank was struck by the kindness of each person he encountered at UGMTC. “I came to campus in February. I parked in the handicapped place, and a young women came out and asked what I needed.” She helped him right away. Then the guys that helped me get into the dorms

“Housing Plus is for guys like me who are in a jam. I was in trouble, and there it was.”

Frank

Resources offered to men staying at UGMTC have also blessed Frank. “I was surprised to learn the Mission provides three meals a day, has a place for men to clean up, and supplies you with whatever you need. There’s even a place to get clothes, boots, gloves, and anything else needed. I don’t know places like this existed!”

Housing Plus participants are required to attend church regularly or enroll in a support group outside the Mission. Frank found a church in downtown St. Paul that he attends every Sunday. He also goes to weekly Bible study and life-skills classes as part of his Housing Plus requirement. “Being able to go to the Bible studies—like it. And it’s what these guys need. You need to learn to care about each other. You need to care about yourself!”

Frank is saving money for future independent living. “We’re allowed to stay two years, but I hope to get an apartment before that.” In the meantime, he continues to live a life of service and generosity. In his brief time at UGMTC, he has become someone other residents and shelter guests talk to. “I feel good about that—just helping somebody else and giving them encouragement.” Frank also donated his electric guitar and amp to the Mission. “I played my guitar until I developed neuropathy. I decided to give it to the Chapel because I feel so appreciative. I thank God for bringing me here. It’s such a beautiful place.”

What is Housing Plus?

It’s a transitional housing program at UGMTC for men and women who have a job or other form of income and don’t require a lot of programming—for addiction recovery, for instance—but need help to get on their feet. There is a Housing Plus program for men on the Men’s Campus and for women at the Naomi Family Program residence. We currently have 16 guys in the program on Men’s Campus, with a goal to serve 30 men.

What does being enrolled in the Housing Plus provide?

Housing Plus participants can stay with us for up to 24 months (or longer, depending on the circumstances of the resident). They get three meals a day and can select free clothing from our warehouse once a month. Participants can also get free, on-site mental health therapy. Each man in the program has his own room. There are two sizes of Housing Plus rooms available on Men’s Campus—small and large—for different levels of very affordable rent. We just finished remodeling the rooms on the Men’s Campus, including painting the walls, tiling the floor, and replacing old furniture. We also replaced the air conditioning units; they needed it!

Are Housing Plus participants required to attend classes at the Mission?

Yes. Bible studies and life-skills classes are central to the success of the program. Participants learn about boundaries, budgeting, anger management, and emotional intelligence—a course we’re piloting for Housing Plus. Another course, the Genesis Process, combines Scripture and psychology to help men overcome barriers they may face in their lives. The residents are also expected to go to church or a community support group while here to encourage them to build relationships in the community—a strong support network they can lean on when times get tough. They also meet with me monthly for a financial review. Our goal is for men to successfully transition back into society, so they are required to save a minimum of $35 a month.

What do you find most meaningful about your work?

I enjoy my work because I recognize what God has done in my life; it’s an opportunity for me to love on others and give back. My family has a history of mental illness and addiction (including myself), so it’s only right that I do the same for God that I didn’t end up in a similar situation as the men and women we serve at UGMTC. Because of my personal and family history, I believe this is where God has called me to be.

I began serving as the Housing Plus program manager in January 2022. Before that, I was a program director at a Christian-based outpatient treatment program that offers housing to men struggling with mental illness and chemical dependency issues.

When did you join the staff at UGMTC?

I joined the staff at UGMTC in 2016, serving as the program director for Men’s Campus. In that role, I focused on the programs and said to come when I was ready.”

After a brief stay in UGMTC’s dorms, Frank moved into an individual Housing Plus program room—available for a minimal monthly fee. “Housing Plus is for guys like me who are in a jam. When I was in trouble, there it was—praise God!”

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