WHY WE GIVE

Anonymous UGMTC & CRC Donors

"Our son battled an alcohol addiction. He did month-long rehab treatments twice, but relapsed. Then his wife kicked him out of their home.

As longtime donors, we were familiar with UGMTC. So, we called to see if the programs might work for him. We received a call back from the director of the Christ Recovery Center within the hour. After an extended talk with the director, our son enrolled in the program.

Our son talked frequently about the experiences of other men in the program, the close friendships he formed, and the mutual support he received from men of all backgrounds. Drug and alcohol addiction is no respecter of age, class, or income. He learned so much about himself and his disease—alcoholism is serious and lifelong. And he realized he couldn't get sober on his own; he needed the support of his friends and family.

Being invited to join events at the Mission meant a great deal to us. We went to Wednesday sing-alongs, and sometimes his wife and siblings attended. We got a good sense of the care, commitment, and tough love in the program while there. And we were touched to see wives, girlfriends, and children sitting with their dads at the sing-alongs.

We used to give $1,000 to UGMTC annually and, on occasion, to special projects. When we saw how successful the program was for our son, we began contributing undesignated funds specifically to CRC. We were delighted when the director told us part of our donation would enable men to buy Christmas gifts for their children; that's so important to those men and children!

Our son graduated from CRC after being in the program for a year, got a good job, and has remained sober. He also moved back home with his wife and family. They are together now, and we are so thankful."

HOPE BEGINS WITH A MEAL

$2.27 Can Change a Life

There are countless stories of men and women who came to the Mission simply for a long overdue meal and a place to sleep other than on a train or under a bridge.

For many of these, that hot meal served with a smile did far more than fill an empty stomach; it touched their soul and opened their heart to hear the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Your gift of only $2.27, which provides a hot meal, warm bed, and Christ-centered care, can truly change a life and may be the catalyst to reconciliation between parents, children, and families.

Please join us in changing lives.

Thank you!

A History of Bringing Hope to Families

Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities opened its arms to men, women, and children 120 years ago to share the saving love of Jesus Christ, starting with a hot meal and a place to sleep. Throughout the Mission's history, countless men and women have reunited with family after receiving hope and healing.

UNION GOSPEL MISSION TWIN CITIES 120 YEARS

Save the Date!

120th Anniversary Open House
August 3, 2022

Please join us for our 120th Anniversary Open House at the Men's Campus on Wednesday, August 3. This event is free and open to the public! Follow us on social media and visit our website for details and updates: **ugmtc.org/120th**

"God loves. We fail. God restores."

After achieving a lifelong dream of having a family, home, and career, Eric's life began to unravel. A divorce, layoff, and subsequent eviction paved the way to drug addiction and homelessness.

Now nearing the end of his time in UGMTC's Christ Recovery Center program (CRC), Eric looks forward to a career equipping young people with the tools they need to avoid addiction and pursue fulfilling lives. Eric also takes steps each day to reconcile with his three daughters.

When telling his story, Eric begins with his mom: "She was born into a family that wanted a boy and was abused mentally, physically, sexually, and emotionally. When she was in fourth or fifth grade, she came home and the whole family was gone. They moved out while she was in school."

Found wandering the streets, Eric's mom was placed in foster care, where she experienced more abuse. When older, she thought getting pregnant would help her escape foster care and abuse.

"She became a single mom with few parenting skills. She had a number of boyfriends, some good and some abusive to both of us. Until my stepdad moved in—the man I call Dad. He was strict and shaped me into the man I am today. He taught me that you keep your hair and nails short, work hard, and don't abuse women or animals. All that stuff."

Eric's parents eventually divorced and, at age 15, he dropped out of school to work full time to support his mother and brother. Several years later, he met a young, single woman with a baby.

"Our friendship turned into a relationship, and we had two more daughters."

Eric loved being a dad, attending school activities and "dad and daughter" events, and coaching sports—until his marriage ended. Not long after, he lost his job. He fell behind on child support and was evicted from his apartment. All his belongings—including cherished family items— were placed on the boulevard, and he was taken away in handcuffs. When released, his possessions were gone, and Eric was homeless.

After learning about UGMTC and sleeping on a cot on Men's Campus for a few nights, Eric was invited to join the CRC program. "When I walked through the doors, I saw a bunch of happy, healthy, friendly people that extended their hand and a smile. It felt like a nice, big, happy family—something I'd been searching for my whole life."

At CRC, Eric earned his GED and several state certifications, including mental health first aid, and serves as a Chemical Dependency Technician trainee at the Mission. "I plan to enroll in college courses soon to become a counselor for young teenagers—before they get into addiction."

Even closer to Eric's heart is reuniting with his daughters. "Reconciling with my daughters is my main goal. It might take a while for my daughters to accept me back; I get it. For now, I am trying to be the best me I can be every day. God loves. We fail. God restores. We can lose so much in our life, but He can restore it all."

MEET DR. MEG: CLINICAL DIRECTOR

Dr. Meaghan Johansen ("Dr. Meg") serves as the Clinical Director of Mental Health Services at UGMTC.

† ***What does your position involve?***
When I started in 2018, the Mission had a clinician, but not a full clinical department. My focus has been building the clinic and integrating it into our programs. I wore a lot of hats when the clinic was new, serving as full-time therapist, psych-testing person, and clinical supervisor for our internship program. Now I primarily provide leadership, consultation, site testing, and am continuing to build our services and team.

† ***Where is the clinic located?***
We provide mental health services on our Men's Campus and at our women's residential facility. Building relationships and trust in people who have experienced trauma is hard. But when they see us around campus, they're able to get to know us as humans and trustworthy people. That encourages them to come in for services they need. And being onsite allows them to get help right where they are and when they need it. We also have a clinician and children's therapist position embedded in the Naomi Family Program located on the women's campus. It's an amazing model that is different from what has historically been provided to a population in great need of mental health care.

† ***Are the same services offered to full-time residents and emergency guests?***
We have more structured services for men and women enrolled in UGMTC's programs. We do a clinical and diagnostic assessment of residents when they enter our programs to understand their strengths and needs and how we can best support them. They receive individual and group therapy every week, as well as dialectical behavioral therapy—a skills-based therapy that helps each person manage emotions, build self-respect, and maintain relationships. And we partner with Minnesota Community Care for psychiatric nurse practitioner services for medication management. They come to our clinic to provide care.

Our team also assesses residents taking classes in our Adult Education Center to detect learning disabilities. If needed, we provide further testing to enable learning accommodations as they pursue their GED diploma and take life- and work-skills courses.

† ***Many residents are estranged from family; does therapy offered focus on reconciliation?***
Family reconciliation is central to what we do. We help residents build skills needed to reconcile relationships, gain the emotional stability needed to tolerate anger and hurt that surface, take responsibility for hurting family members, and learn skills for maintaining those relationships. We see multiple generations go through our recovery programs after men make amends with their children and become leaders in sobriety. It's beautiful to see.

SERVE A MEAL TO THOSE IN NEED: VOLUNTEERS.UGMTC.ORG

A MESSAGE FROM
PAM STEGORA AXBERG, CEO

Reconciling Families is a Beautiful Thing

One of the most beautiful outcomes we see of lives transformed through Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities is one we don't talk about often enough: the reconciliation of families. Many of the men who come to the Mission for help have been estranged from their children due to the complications of addiction, mental health issues, and homelessness. And although we often invite women along with their young children into our Naomi Family Program, it is not unusual for the women we serve to have additional children with whom they have no contact.

Our aim at the Mission is to foster lasting hope and deep healing in each person we are privileged to serve. We provide programs that address mental health issues and teach skills that are foundational to both reconciling and maintaining relationships. And we offer Bible studies, chapel services, and opportunities for worship that enrich the soul, instill character, and usher in the Spirit of Christ who enables each of us to love well, forgive, reconcile, and serve in ways we otherwise could not.

In addition to individual lives transformed, we are seeing families reconciled. Your support accomplishes amazing things indeed. Thank you!

Blessings,

Pam Stegora Axberg