

# THE BRIDGE

Savannah's Gospel Rescue Mission

BUILDING BRIDGES OF HOPE

## My Breakthrough Happened at Old Savannah City Mission . . . and I thank God for His Grace and Mercy

**M**y name is David. The year 2064 had a terrible ring to it. That was supposed to be the year I'd be released from prison.

I had three twenty-year sentences and another 15 years to serve. All my violence was drug related. It also didn't help that I escaped from County jail. The authorities don't look kindly on that sort of behavior.

But God intervened and I only had to serve seven and a half years of a 75-year sentence. My parole officer brought me to Old Savannah City Mission, and this is where I'm going through my recovery thanks to a gracious God and a staff that knows how to help a man. It's a blessing to be here.

### From rebellion to a life of service

The other day it hit me. Even though I tried to run away from my Heavenly Father, *He was there with me all the time.* I just didn't have a mind to listen. Today I'm a willing vessel. I'm not only getting my own life in order, but I'm also eager to be of service to others. It's an interesting experience to wave to the sheriff now when I'm on the Mission's truck picking up donated goods. I used to run the other way when I'd see the man. Today I'm no longer

afraid. In fact, I even flag the sheriff down to say "Hi".

These days, I have many opportunities to speak with donors who give so much of their money, goods and time to the Mission. One thing is for sure . . . if there were no donors, there would be no Old Savannah City Mission. Thank you for your gifts — large or small — which allow us to touch so many lives.

Now it's almost Easter and I want to give you an Easter greeting of appreciation as we celebrate the life of our risen Lord. I also hope you'll come and visit us soon. I think you'll be amazed to see how your donations are being used to bring hope to so many. God bless you.



**"All my violence was drug related. It also didn't help that I escaped from County jail. The authorities don't look kindly on that sort of behavior."**



An Encouraging  
Word from  
Reverend Jim

... Pg. 2



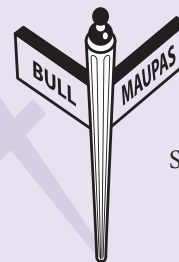
Digging my hole  
deeper . . . *until  
the day God  
rescued my soul*

... Pg. 3



A Community  
Feast . . .

... Pg. 4



**Old Savannah  
City Mission**

Reverend Jim Lewis  
2414 Bull Street  
Savannah, GA 31401-9113

912-232-1979  
[www.oscm.org](http://www.oscm.org)



**The Fresh Start Dorm is located above Dorcas & Esther's Thrift Shop**

## New Fresh Start Dorm is Open

**F**resh Start is a residential transition program for men and women who, while incarcerated, come to faith in Christ and desire a fresh start in life. It equates the same zero tolerance policies of Clean Start. The Mission is thrilled to have an additional 21 rooms open to serve men who genuinely desire to get their lives back on track. We also have a Fresh Start women's facility, "A Place Called Home," located on 34th Street.

It was five years ago when the seed of the dream was sown. Now this dream is fulfilled. This is another testimony to the faithfulness of God and the generosity of benevolent people. In addition to donations from individuals, the Mission received a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank which was facilitated through Carver State Bank. This grant is not connected in any way to taxpayer funds. **Over 100,000 meals and nearly 28,000 beds were provided during 2008**, as were many other critical services. The Mission is funded entirely by private sources.

## An Encouraging Word from Reverend Jim

**I**t's a pleasure to send you this Easter message. As you receive it, it's my prayer that our risen Lord lives deep in your heart and that He manifests Himself in your daily living. Thank you for sharing so much of your resources in this Kingdom work. You faithfully support the Mission in good economic times and bad. My staff and I do not take you for granted.

If a person who comes to us is to change, it must come from the inside out. When this happens, old things pass away and all things become new. One of our students was recently interviewed by a TV crew. I love what Robert, recently released from prison, said to the reporter, "God's economy is not going into a recession. The children of God just keep moving ahead. While everything seems to be sinking, God remains our solid rock. God then uses donors to flow their God-given resources into the Mission." I don't think anyone could have said it better.

### Becoming a new creation starts with surrender to Jesus . . . then the real work begins

We want people to change their misguided behavior — and so do you. That's why you support Old Savannah City Mission. But that *start* begins with surrender to Jesus. Then and only then can we work with that person and help him become the person God designed him to be. It's been said the best place for a resurrection is in a graveyard . . . and this is precisely where we're seeing miracles happen every day: graveyards of addiction, abuse and anti-God behavior.

And whatever the size of your gift, please remember that *even little is much when God is in it*. Yes, our needs are great during these challenging economic times. But we're not holding back. We've added two new Fresh Start facilities. The men will now have an additional 21 rooms and the women are living in "A Place Called Home" (See Summer 2008 issue for more details.). Like Robert says, *God's economy is not going into a recession*.

I do hope you'll come by soon to pay us a visit. Stop by and see your prayers and gifts in action. I promise that you'll never be quite the same. God bless you at this Easter season.

Blessings,

Reverend Jim Lewis, Executive Director



**"It's been said the best place for a resurrection is in a graveyard . . . and this is precisely where we're seeing miracles happen every day: graveyards of addiction, abuse and anti-God behavior."**

## 2009 Promises to be the Year of Dreams Fulfilled at Old Sa

**T**he entire Mission staff thanks you for your overwhelming support of this ministry of rescue during the past several months. It would be an understatement to remind ourselves that these are challenging economic times. "*Unprecedented*" would be a more appropriate word.

But as tough as it is for many during these days of uncertainty, it's even more difficult for the men and women who are streaming through our doors at this Easter season. These are the homeless, the ex-offenders, the addicted and the lost. The good news is that those who choose to make positive changes in their lives are finding new hope, new opportunities and new life when they decide to walk with their Savior and Lord.



# I kept digging my hole deeper and deeper . . . until the day God rescued my soul

**M**y name is Anthony. I'm at Old Savannah City Mission because I needed to move away from my old destructive life. I finally cried out to the Lord for help. For years I had been using drugs, drinking alcohol, hurting people, lying to my family and refusing to be a man of my word. If anyone needed a touch from the risen Savior, it was me.

If there was an image to my life, it would be of a man digging a hole and pulling the dirt in after him. But I just kept digging . . . and the hole just got bigger and bigger. I thank God He rescued me from a life that was going nowhere. But it was close at times. One day a guy put a gun to my head and pulled the trigger. The gun didn't fire and the man ran off. That was a defining moment for me. I thank God my old life is history and that all things are becoming new in Christ.

## **It feels good to be trusted with responsibility**

Sometimes I wonder how God can bring about inward change in a person's heart so quickly. I just know that reading the Bible, praying and fellowshiping with other Christians are making all the

difference in the world. For so long, I could not be trusted. Now I work and have responsibilities at the Mission's thrift store. It makes me feel good that

I'm recovering enough for people to trust me. I think God must be smiling when He sees one more lost sheep return to his fold.

Now at this Easter season, I want to thank you for helping me find my way home to a living, loving God. Without your ongoing support there would be no Mission. Thank you for your support.

**"For years I had been using drugs, drinking alcohol, hurting people, lying to my family and refusing to be a man of my word. If anyone needed a touch from the risen Savior it was me."**



## **HIS Radio Donation**

**R**ev. Jim thanks HIS Radio manager Jodie Robinson for the wonderful donation of food and blankets by their most generous listeners.



**Christ is a God of joy . . .**  
A Christian should be and must be a person of joy.

The devil is the spirit of sadness,  
but God is the Spirit of joy, and He is our salvation

We have more occasion for joy than sadness.

Martin Luther

**Savannah City Mission . . . your generous support will make many dreams come true.**

**"... as tough as it is for many during these days of uncertainty, it's even more difficult for the men and women who are streaming through our doors at this Easter season."**

## **God bless you for giving from a loving heart**

Even though you may be feeling the pain of the uncertainty of your investments, you continue to reach out to others who are hungry, homeless and without a friend. And we simply cannot thank you enough for your ongoing generosity.

To respond to people's physical and spiritual needs today, please use the enclosed remit slip and mail it to us today. You may also donate by visiting us online at [www.oscm.org](http://www.oscm.org). Thank you for reaching out to so many lives through your generous giving during the Easter season — and throughout the year.



# A Community Feast

## 11th Annual "Day of Great Thanksgiving"

The "Day of Great Thanksgiving" has become the Mission's signature event. There are three other Missions in Savannah, and sometimes Old Savannah City Mission is confused with them. Usually, the clarifying question is: "Are you the Mission that does the Thanksgiving dinner under the big tent in Forsyth Park?" This question reminds me of the words of Jesus, "... by their fruits you will know them." (Matthew 7:20)

This event brings hundreds of volunteers who work alongside scores

of businesses, churches and community organizations. It is okay for the Mission to be known for the great tent and the big dinner . . . 5,278 meals were provided this year; however, the Mission does much more than this event. Please visit our website [www.oscm.org](http://www.oscm.org) or better yet, come visit the Mission. The welcome mat is always out.

**5,278 Delicious  
Smoked Turkey  
Dinners Served!**

*Wiley McCrary of Championship BBQ  
explains the smoking process*



*Excellent Food, Excellent Fellowship, Excellent Service*

## My Easter Gift



**YES, Reverend Jim,  
you can count on my  
compassion and support  
to help people in need  
during the Easter season.**

**Here is my best donation 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  AMEX  DINERS



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

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

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Old Savannah City Mission**  
P.O. Box 16839  
Savannah, GA 31416-3539

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