

the BRIDGE

Building bridges of hope



FALL ISSUE 2018

OLD SAVANNAH
CITY MISSION

Losing One "Rock," Finding Another

by Anthony

The first Thanksgiving after my mom passed was awful. Our family had always celebrated at her house. When we gathered together that year, her seat was empty — a painful reminder she was gone.

She'd been my rock through thick and thin. Without her, I lost my way. In a moment of weakness, I used crack-cocaine to help me forget about her. Before then I always held down a job. But using drugs once led to using again . . . and again . . . and again and again.

Addiction cost me my job, then my home. Life on the streets was miserable. I remember this patio I used to hide at, where a family of possums lived. They would walk right up next to me, come and go, but I didn't mind sleeping next to them as long as I had crack. That's how bad it was!

Worse, I dragged my daughter through this mess. When she had a baby, she told me, "Daddy, I'm not going to let you ruin my son's life the way you tried to ruin mine." That hurt bad, but she was right.

So, I tried to get help. I came to Old City Savannah Mission. Unfortunately, I didn't apply myself. I didn't listen. And it wasn't long before I was back on the streets, using.

More than a year later, I came back — just for a meal at first. But they invited me to join the program again. They said they were praying for me. They said they saw a better future for me.

I came to the Mission with a lot of anger because life hadn't worked out on my terms. But I grew up.

My second time here, I accepted the rules, applied the teaching, drew near to God, and worked hard in the warehouse. I learned how to deal with difficult people and developed patience. These are priceless lessons!

“I came to the Mission with a lot of anger because life hadn't worked out on my terms.”

Today, I'm clean, I'm working, and my daughter has forgiven me. Now God is my rock, and I'm grateful for all the ways He's changed my life at the Mission.

***Thanks to you, I'm not homeless anymore!
I have a new job and a changed heart.***





La-Z-Boy Furniture Gallery Does It Again!

By the time you read this article, we will have become the recipients of our second **La-Z-BOY Furniture Gallery Trade-In Sale**. La-Z-Boy runs this sale every year during the fall and spring. Twice a year, you can donate your old “gently used” chair or sofa and receive a discount on a new chair or sofa. When their delivery team arrives with your new furniture, they will inspect your old chair or sofa before it is accepted as a donation. Once La-Z-Boy has a tractor-trailer container load of furniture, it is then delivered and donated to Old Savannah City Mission where it is either sold in one of our Bargain Centers or donated to families in crisis.

We want to thank La-Z-Boy Southeast and Mr. John Pohl, in particular, for partnering with Old Savannah City Mission to have been the recipients of this huge furniture donation again. We are looking forward to a mutually rewarding relationship with La-Z-Boy Furniture for years to come.

A grand THANK YOU to La-Z-Boy, the La-Z-Boy customers, the La-Z-Boy staff, and Mr. John Pohl for making all of this possible!



An Encouraging Word from Brother Bill

Dear Friend of Old Savannah City Mission,

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name.” Psalm 100:4



“You’ve blessed countless homeless men with a 5-Star healing experience.”

They say this beautiful Psalm is actually teaching how we ought to approach God in prayer — first with gratitude, then with praise. That seems especially appropriate at this time of year, as we move toward fall and Thanksgiving.

And indeed, my heart is filled with gratitude — for each day, my growing family (my wife Connell and I just celebrated the birth of our fourth grandchild), and the chance to serve our God with ministry partners like you. What a privilege to reach “the least of these” together!

Thankfulness Flows Both Ways

Just recently, I was speaking with one of our guests who arrived here in a state of severe brokenness, but recently celebrated five years sober. Having completed our program, he now has a good job, his own place... and he never fails to credit the Mission for saving his life.

His words testify to the power of your prayers and support. You’ve filled his heart with gratitude, and that impacts every person he’s connected with. And you’ve blessed countless other homeless men with a 5-Star healing experience, too.

Thank you, and God bless you for your faithful support.



William G. Stiles Sr.

William Stiles
Executive Director

Without the Mission, I would still be homeless, and be dead.

What a “5-Star Mission” Really Means

Homelessness is usually the final stop on a tragic journey filled with broken relationships, self-destructive choices, and suffering. After a season on the streets, many men feel worthless and unlovable.

The reason Old Savannah City Mission strives to provide them with a “5-Star” experience is because we want them to know they are not just worthy of love, but *eternally* valuable — in God’s sight, and in ours. They are made in His image, and they are worth *every* effort.

Your support ensures we can bless lost men with an amazing, healing experience. The Mission isn’t luxurious, but it is clean,

Digging Down Deep to the Root

by Paul

I was on the streets for a week before I came to my senses and entered Old Savannah City Mission. That time out there was the lowest of my life. It felt like everyone had abandoned me. But I had no one to blame but myself.

I spent two decades addicted to pain killers. I lied to my family, broke trust, and burned every bridge. When I got fired from my last job, I got evicted and no one would take me in. That's how I became homeless.

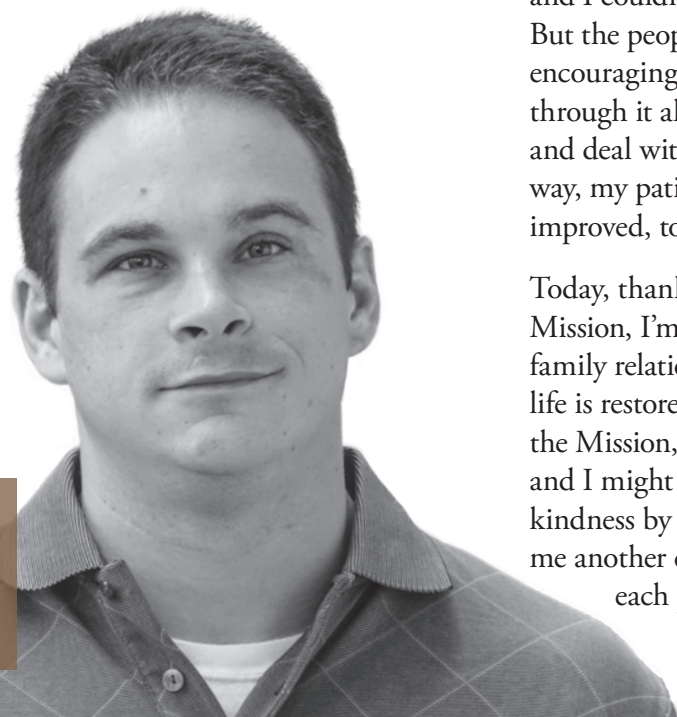
My addiction was fueled by two broken backs that made legal pain killers easy to come by. Both injuries were the result of

severe car accidents that I was lucky to survive. The first, in particular, left me in constant pain. For a few days, the doctors didn't think I would even walk again.

Now, the truth is my injuries were a convenient excuse for addiction. But I think the real reason I used is because when I was 10, my parents got divorced and I never knew how to handle it. It was just a couple years later, before I was even a teenager, that I first tried drugs.

By the time I came to the Mission, my addiction was completely out of hand. I was determined to change, but it was rough — I had the shakes really bad, and I couldn't sleep for two weeks. But the people here were so loving and encouraging. They walked with me through it all and helped me dig deep and deal with my root issues. Along the way, my patience and people skills improved, too.

Today, thanks to Old Savannah City Mission, I'm sober and clearheaded. My family relationships have healed, and my life is restored. I'm so grateful. Without the Mission, I would still be homeless, and I might be dead. God showed me kindness by bringing me here and giving me another chance, and I'm thankful to each person who made it possible.



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HAPPY, SAD, BUT TRUE

Some people come into our lives for a season and make a profound difference — such is the case with our volunteer, teacher, mentor, and friend, Jeff Brewster. During his time at the Mission, we had a gas grill and a brand new flat screen TV donated just in time for the Super Bowl, and as a Christmas gift, Jeff took 15 of our Urban Training Institute students to see Star Wars.

Jeff and his family will be moving back to New York City for a year, and we are sad to see him go. We give THANKS for individuals like Jeff Brewster. Jeff, we will miss you and your family sorely, and we are eagerly looking forward to your return.

Means

safe, and uplifting. At first, our guests are surprised to learn that they are loved. That good neighbors like you sincerely care about them. But in time, that surprise turns to deep gratitude... and by God's grace, lasting transformation.

As we move deeper into fall and the holidays, please help us continue providing a 5-Star recovery that rescues many more men from the streets.

Send your next generous gift today, or give online at www.oscm.org.

Thank you, and God bless you for your faithful prayers and support.



Your gift to the Mission goes right to work meeting the most urgent needs of homeless men in our community — so they can get off the streets for good.

Old Savannah City Mission Creates Employment Partnerships



Over the past 11 years, Old Savannah City Mission has partnered with the Men's Wearhouse Company and its National Suit Drive program. Each year, this program partners with over 170 charities from across the country to distribute items collected at more than 900 Men's Wearhouse locations. Items collected include men and women's suits, shirts, jackets, ties, belts, and shoes. In 2018, Men's Wearhouse hopes to collect more than 346,000 articles of clothing to benefit charities like Old Savannah City Mission. Because of the generosity of donors in 2017, Men's Wearhouse stores collected over 322,000 items of professional clothing. Local donations last year generated over 320 items for Old Savannah City Mission. As a result of this local support, the Mission was able to assist dozens of men and women who sought help with business clothing to "get suited-up" for their next job interview and get back on their feet.

To further coordinate the efforts of the National Suit Drive to services at Old Savannah City Mission, steps have been taken to partner with the Georgia Department of Labor and At Work Personnel Services to provide a seamless transition from Mission programs and services to opportunities for employment. The Georgia Department of Labor and At Work Personnel Services have as their goal to work with those that we serve with a wide range of services that include résumé development, employment leads, and interviews with the ultimate goal of increasing self-sufficiency through employment, training, and other support services. With this holistic approach, Old Savannah City Mission continues its efforts to fulfill the mandates set forth in Matthew 25:35-40.



My Fall Gift

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YES, Brother Bill... I will help provide food, shelter, and other critical resources to my hungry and homeless neighbors this fall. **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 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 fall donation, or donate online at www.oscm.org. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.