

the BRIDGE

Building bridges of hope



SUMMER ISSUE 2019
OLD SAVANNAH
CITY MISSION

Finally Running to God

by Ben

I was just a freshman in high school when Mama got cancer. Every day, I watched her deteriorate a little bit more right before my eyes. Not long after that, Daddy got sick. At the same time, all my older siblings were leaving, starting new lives. I was the only one left to take care of my parents and the house. The whole thing rocked me, really.

I was 18 when Mama died, and I didn't know how to handle it. I felt hurt and abandoned by everyone. Then, when I tried to get a job on the riverfront, following in my daddy's footsteps,

that fell through, too. From that point on, I was completely lost. But instead of running to God for help, I ran to crack.

“Reaching my goal was the worst thing that ever happened to me.”

Crack was my life for the next 20 years. But when I was 41, I met a wonderful woman. I cleaned up and we got married. But eventually I started dipping into crack again. We were married for 11 years, but I put her through so much pain and heartache. She says I chose crack over her, and she's right. That's how sick I was.

After we divorced, I was completely hopeless and defeated. It got so bad, I ended up homeless, sleeping on my cousin's porch. One day, I cried out to God, and He led me to the Old Savannah City Mission. I finally ran to God instead of crack.

Through daily discipline, learning the Word of God, and experiencing God's love through the people here, I slowly felt like maybe I was worth something again. God forgave me for the terrible choices I made, and I was even able to forgive myself. Now God is restoring me to my entire family. For the first time since I was a child, I have peace of mind.

As a donor, you showed me so much compassion. You showed me that someone really does care. God used you to make me the man God called me to be. Thank you.

**Photos have been changed to protect the privacy of our clients.*



Backpacks to the Rescue!

Every year, like clockwork, Old Savannah City Mission can count on the First Baptist Church of Hilton Head Island, S.C., to bring approximately 75 backpacks to the Mission and pass them out to our “friends and neighbors” (the homeless individuals we serve). These backpacks were not just any ordinary bags; they were nice backpacks with several compartments filled with items that are very useful for living on the street, especially the weatherproof poncho. Other items included in the backpack were a blanket, socks, undershirts, gloves, gum, notebook, pens, a daily inspirational, and a Sunday school book. Also included was every toiletry imaginable — There was soap, deodorant, dental care products, hand sanitizer, emery boards, lotion, chest rub, combs, cough drops, tissues, Q-tips, and Band-Aids.

Our “friends and neighbors” were truly excited to receive these gifts, and we were equally excited as they opened their gifts like kids on Christmas morning. And to top it all off, the church donated enough funds to provide 138 meals for our “friends and neighbors.” The members who came provided the service and the sermon for the evening. Then they served our “friends and neighbors” a delicious meal.

A warm fellowship was enjoyed by all! A Gracious Thank You to Our Friends of the First Baptist Church. God Bless You All!

An Encouraging Word from Brother Bill

Dear Friend of Old Savannah City Mission,

For most of us, summers are a wonderful time of God’s blessings — warm sun, barbecues, and fun vacations. But what about our homeless neighbors?

There is no summer vacation for the homeless. The terrible hardships they face know no season. Emotional wounds and mental problems, like anxiety and depression, follow them all year long. Hunger and addictions don’t go away when the seasons change. Most are lonely and have lost connections to friends and family. And those without faith in God are lost in hopelessness.

But summer just makes it all worse. Here in Savannah, the hot, muggy weather can be unbearable. It saps energy, makes it hard to sleep, and causes dehydration and other health issues. And the summer insects are miserable.

But praise the Lord, thanks to your faithful generosity, homeless men at the Old Savannah City Mission find encouragement and new hope in their hearts. Your gifts mean they have someplace to eat and sleep 365 days a year. Many find healing from addictions. Others will find jobs. This summer, you will provide the air conditioning and showers to wash and cool their bodies. But best of all, your compassionate gifts give every man the chance to hear the lifesaving gospel of Jesus Christ.

All of our guests are so grateful for you — and so am I. On behalf of all of us at the Old Savannah City Mission, *thank you!*



William Stiles, Sr.
Executive Director



“Your compassionate gifts give every man the chance to hear the lifesaving gospel of Jesus Christ.”



Men struggling with hunger and

The Apostle John wrote, “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth,” (1 John 3:17-18).

It’s clear that your heart is filled with God’s love. Your support for the Old Savannah City Mission has provided food for hungry men, clothes for those who have so little, and shelter for those struggling with homelessness. Without your support, there would be no Old Savannah City Mission. So, on behalf of every precious soul seeking our help today, thank you for loving them “with actions and in truth.”



A Dad's Last Chance

by Jermaine

I had one more chance to get being a dad right.

I've always been kind of a loner.

I never let myself get close to anyone. When I was 23, I had my first son with a young lady. I provided for him, but I wasn't really there. A few years later, I had two daughters with another young lady. Again, I always provided for them, but I wasn't in their lives.

The truth is, I was selfish. I wanted to hang out with my friends and party. I didn't want to get close to my kids like I should have. So it was always easier to just run away. And as a long-haul trucker, I had the perfect job for that.

Whenever things got uncomfortable, I hit the road.

Then, five years ago, I had another son. I wanted to do things different with him, but I didn't know how. However, when his mother tragically died in a car accident last October, I had no choice. My son needed a father, and I knew I had to step up. This was my last chance to get it right. But I needed help. I needed to change — I needed God.

So I gave temporary custody of my son to his grandparents — with the promise that I would come back for him as soon as I could. Then I came straight to the Old Savannah City Mission.



"I'm going to be the father my son needs, and I'm not going to let anything get in my way."

It's the best decision I ever made. The Bible studies, preaching, and mentors here are helping me become a true man of God. The structure is teaching me to humble myself, to step up and take responsibility, and to be obedient. I'm also helping to feed the homeless here, and that's teaching me to care for others, with love, just like I need to care for and love my son. I'm going to be the father my son needs, and I'm not going to let anything get in my way.

Your support for the Old Savannah City Mission changed my life. More importantly, my son is going to have the father he deserves. Thank you.

Bottles of Blessings

It only takes one person with a good idea to start something great. And that is just what an 11-year-old named Caroline did when she was trying to find a project for her lower school to do. A call was made to the Mission asking what our needs were. Having to do laundry for over 55 people a week, the answer was — laundry detergent and bleach.

Caroline placed clothes baskets and boxes in each classroom for the students to place their donations in. Bottles of bleach, laundry detergent, washcloths, towels, and even the laundry baskets were donated to the Mission.

May God richly bless each and every student who gave! To view related pictures, go to oscm.org

homelessness need you this summer!

Please help again this summer

I hope you enjoyed reading about Ben and Jermaine in this newsletter. They are just two of the men you have helped through your gifts and prayers over this past year. Now, with summer upon us, we have the opportunity to work together again to show our guests there's a better way to live.

Please send your next generous gift today with the enclosed remittance, or donate at www.oscm.org or by calling 912-232-1979. Thank you, and God bless you for your faithful prayers and support.

Without your support, there would be no Old Savannah City Mission



Delivering Canned Goods in High Horsepower Cars

Theologian Emanuel Swedenborg once quoted, “True charity is the desire to be useful to others with no thought of recompense.” With charity in mind, the Mustang Syndicate and ABG Outlaws Car Club embodied the meaning of this quote through a charitable food donation event with the Savannah Old City Mission. The intent of the event was to donate comfort items to those needing shelter and food on a daily basis. The Street Predators Car Club of Savannah joined the Mustang Club in donating over 500 pounds of canned goods and bottled water.

“You must have heard our cry for support. All the items donated were items needed to support homeless and hungry people in our community on a daily basis,”

said Reginald C. Lee, Director of Programs for Old Savannah City Mission. “Without people like those in the Mustang Syndicate, ABG Outlaws, and Street Predators car clubs, God’s work could not be accomplished at Old Savannah City Mission.”

The Mustang Syndicate Club and ABG Outlaws Club are new to the Savannah and Hinesville area, both of which are less than a year old. The Club’s main branch is located in East Texas. Currently, the club has 26 chapters in 14 states, and also a chapter in Germany. They plan to regularly host charity events in our community throughout the year.



My Summer 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 summer. **Here’s my gift of:**

- \$21.70** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
- \$32.55** to provide **15** meals and other assistance
- \$65.10** 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
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► Please mail this completed form with your donation, or donate online at www.oscm.org. Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.