

Steve was cold and desperate, but found a warm welcome and much more at PGM.

YOUR CARING SUPPORT KEPT HIM ALIVE

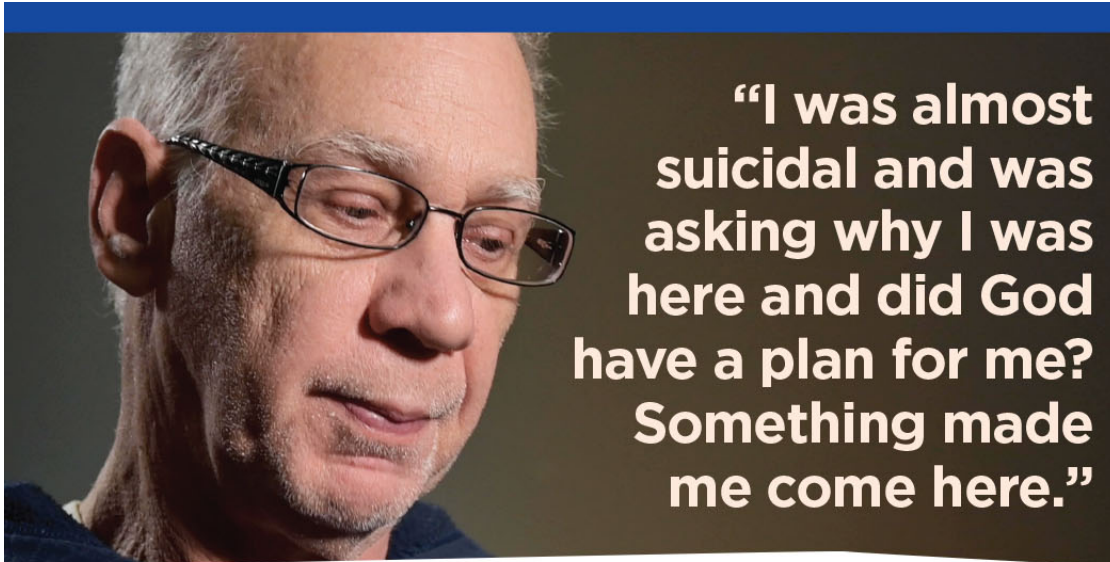
When cold weather arrives in Chicago, it leaves those sleeping outside with little choice but to seek shelter from the elements. With the frigid temperatures come many people who usually wouldn't come to us for help, and because of this they are able to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While not everyone who hears the Word of God preached may join the Bible program or become saved, we rest assured knowing the seed of faith has been planted and God can work in their lives in time.

In this month's issue, we hear from Steve, who came to PGM to escape the cold. Steve found much more here than warmth and food;

he encountered God's love. There are many stories like Steve's here, and their stories wouldn't have been possible without your help.

STEVE

"Hi, my name is Steve and I am from Chicago. I am 66 years old. I grew up on the north side. My father had four bars and two car dealerships. I have been working all my life, but I became an alcoholic. I did drugs like cocaine and marijuana, and I had a major gambling problem. What brought me to Pacific Garden Mission is that I was at the end of my wits. I had lost my kid brother, Tommy, who died of fentanyl two years ago. I lost most of my



“I was almost suicidal and was asking why I was here and did God have a plan for me? Something made me come here.”

friends. I am the only one left. I have COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and other health issues.

“The bottom line is: I was homeless. I moved out because the place I was living was rat-infested and had bedbugs, mold, and water coming through the walls. It just got too bad and I couldn’t stay there anymore, so I lived in my car. Then my car broke down and that is how I ended up being homeless. I had never been homeless in my life. I worked hard all my life but would spend it as soon as I got it.

“It was cold out and it was November. I was sick and a friend of mine told me about PGM. He said ‘You know the ‘Jesus Saves’ sign? Go there.’ Something kept driving me to come to PGM. It was in my brain because I was at my wit’s end. I was almost suicidal and was asking why I was here and did God have a plan for me? Something made me come here. I walked for miles three days in a row to get in here. I had even gone to the police station, but they told me I

couldn’t stay there and threw me out. I was at the end of my rope; I came here, and they took me in, and I appreciate it.

“I feel God inside me. PGM has made me aware of how God and Jesus work. It is a feeling I have never had before. My mother was religious. She was a Catholic who went to church all the time. She always wanted me to follow in her



Steve volunteers in the kitchen helping with the daily needs.

And he said unto them, **‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.’** —Mark 16:15 KJV

footsteps, but I never did. I even went to Catholic school, but it was like you never learn anything. I was at the end of my rope, so maybe that is why I am doing what I am doing now.

“I thank God for this place because it saved my life. I was desperate. I had no clothes and everything I needed or wished for in my head came. I could see the change in people here and I was starting to feel something. I am brand new to it, but I know something is going on. I have to keep with it because it is making me stronger and I am glad to share my story because it is true and I am blessed. I am currently working on getting a place in Galena, IL.

“I feel the Holy Spirit. I used to need six to ten beers each day, and now I don’t even desire it. It is almost like it is automatically happening to me. I still need to learn a lot. I love going to church and hearing people’s stories. I am shy



but now I am learning to open up.

“When I got here, I was scared, and it took me a while to adjust but after about a week, I started to adapt to it. The place is clean. You have beds and showers, and the food is good. The church and learning about God five times a day doesn’t bother me, and in fact, it helps me. I am glad they do it and thank God this place is here. Pacific Garden Mission has saved my life. I was at the end of my rope until I came here, and I appreciate everything you guys do for me.”

As Steve shared in his story, he was at his wit’s end after losing everything. Facing health and housing issues, Steve felt led to come to PGM for help and has found not only physical help but also spiritual help. There are many at PGM, like Steve, who may not join the Bible program or confess Christ as their

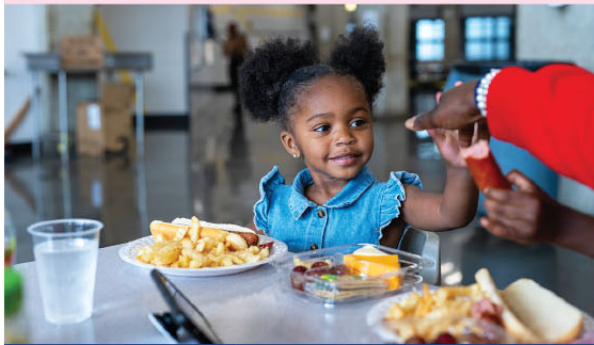
Savior. Still, they are able to witness the positive effects of a relationship with God in others and themselves, which can often grow into something much more. Thank you for helping us help people like Steve and hundreds of others each day, sharing the love of God and His Gospel with them.

Photo above: Steve looks over a Scripture verse with a PGM counselor.

WHEN THE COLD ARRIVES

When the weather turns frigidly cold and living outside becomes too dangerous, PGM's doors are open to those who need help. During these next few months, we see even the most cold-acclimated veterans of outdoor living forced to surrender to the elements and come to us for warm clothing, meals, and a safe bed to sleep in. During this time, we can witness to them the life-transforming message of Jesus Christ.

At PGM, we strive not only to help people with their outward problems but also with their inward issues, which can often be the root of their plight. Once their physical needs are met, their spiritual needs can be better addressed. We want to see people made whole. It might be bitterness, guilt, or a painful past that seems irreconcilable. Still, whatever it is, we have seen again and again how Biblical wisdom and a relationship with God can help get to the root of these inward afflictions. Just as Jesus said, we want to see people cleansed and made whole.



"And Jesus answering said, 'Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.' And he said unto him, 'Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.'" —Luke 17:17-19

GIVE NOW pgm.org/donate

To donate using your phone, just scan this QR code with your phone's camera, and it will direct you to the PGM Donate page.



Visit our website at pgm.org to learn more about PGM's multiple ministries to the needy.



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

GIVING THE GIFT OF WARMTH

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me . . . And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

—Matthew 25:35-36, 40 KJV

For many people, winter is an uncomfortable distraction, but for those on the streets, it is life and death. Here is a sample of some of our current residents and their experiences.

Billy—“My wife and I slept outside last year during the winter a couple of nights and it was hard. We had to use several blankets and sleep close to each other for warmth. The worst part is how hard and cold the ground is. That cold just creeps into your bones. We thank God for PGM because this year, we are safe and warm.”

Ezra—“Being in the cold in Washington state during the winter without shelter was very difficult. My resources were very limited, if any at all. I had no family because I am an orphan. It was so hard,

and I felt alone. This will be my first winter in Chicago, and I know how cold it can get here, so I am so grateful I have a safe, warm place for the winter. I can now focus on my schooling and don't have to worry if the cold will get to me.”

Anonymous—“After living 2 years rent-free, I was given a DUI, which prevented me from working in my profession. I am a truck driver by trade. I became homeless. Living in the streets of Chicago during the winter was rough. The days were filled with uncertainty and hunger. I didn't know what the future would hold for me.”

Steven—“Winter in Chicago is difficult because most of the locations I can go to for warmth can be dangerous. I would have to ride the trains many nights to stay warm with the fear of getting jumped on or beat up. The need to be warm would override my fear and I would have to ride the trains, putting myself at risk. You never really get a good night's rest when you are fearing for your safety.”

Thank you for making it possible for those outside to have a warm, Christ-centered facility in the heart of the city.

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Learn more about our Mission, where lost souls find hope, compassion, and purpose.

GODLY STEWARDSHIP

From Coast to Coast: Uniting Hearts Across America in Faith and Compassion

Peter Leavitt,
Assistant Treasurer, PGM Board of Trustees

At PGM, our mission extends beyond providing physical shelter and support. Our primary goal is to share the transformative message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—a message of love, compassion, and redemption that knows no boundaries. **We are thrilled to share a remarkable testament to the Lord's faithfulness to this ministry: over the past year, donors from all 50 states and the territories of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have supported Pacific Garden Mission.**

Whether from a bustling metropolis like Chicago or a rural community, each donation carries a message of faith and compassion. It's a reminder that our mission to share the Gospel transcends geographical barriers and unites us in a common purpose—to bring light into the darkness and offer hope to the needy.

We attribute our broad donor base, in part, to the impactful *UNSHACKLED!* radio broadcast. *UNSHACKLED!* is the longest-running radio drama in history. It is aired on well over 3,000 radio stations globally and is broadcast in fourteen languages. Countless lives have been transformed across the world through these broadcasts.

To all those who support PGM through donations and prayer, we extend our deepest gratitude for your unwavering support in our mission of meeting physical needs and sharing the Gospel. Your generosity fuels our efforts and inspires us to continue our work with renewed dedication and passion, knowing that through Christ, all things are possible.



A live *UNSHACKLED!* recording at PGM

THE IMPACT WE MAKE TOGETHER

Pacific Garden Mission's budget is completely donor-funded. We receive no government funding. We are eternally grateful for the individuals, businesses, churches, and foundations that make it possible for PGM to serve thousands of homeless men, women, and children each year. When you support us financially, you're not only giving *to* the Mission, but *through* the Mission to people who need your help the most. In November your support made a true difference:

572 average number of homeless people who received aid and Gospel services each day

31,748 plates of food were served (est.)

17,250 clothing items were distributed (est.)

3,137 media outlets around the world broadcasted *UNSHACKLED!*

34 men and women were enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board

25 mothers with their children who were sheltered at PGM

84 people professed saving faith in Christ and became new believers at PGM

With your encouragement and support, we minister hope to the homeless, addicted, and brokenhearted.