

# LIVING *by the* LIGHT

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Clockwise from top left: James from the Men's Residential Program helps the Mission get ready for Open House; a group of men from the Mission enjoy a morning on the Gateway Clipper during the Christian Leadership Concepts Cruise; Chef John fries fish for the Easter meal; Community Guest Liaison does intake for a new client; a group enjoys a hearty meal during our Easter Outreach Celebration.

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**LIGHT of LIFE**  
**rescue mission**

*Life sustaining. Life changing.*

Dear friend,

Our Light of Life facility relocation project has seen many twists and turns, but thankfully the Lord in His wonderful omnipotence is leading us in the journey. For me it started when I joined the relocation committee in 2007. Four years later I took the responsibility to lead the effort as Executive Director. I've been told that securing and moving into a new facility has been a project that has really spanned almost 20 years.



In my three years on staff at Light of Life we have seen excellent progress as well as times when I need to practice tremendous patience. In my first year, the Lord led us to discover the Ridge Avenue School and successfully bid on and gained ownership of the property. The meetings with neighborhoods and other interested parties have consistently spanned the entire three years and yielded some unexpected pleasant community support, thank the Lord. The result of this neighborhood support will allow Light of Life to invest funds into the new facilities rather than wasting funds on legal fees spent fighting against opposed neighbors. As we all know, transitions in leadership in the city can cause delays in projects like this and because of that we have experienced nearly a one year delay. But as I have been saying, the Lord's timing is perfect! Everything seems to be lining up.

Currently we have all the necessary support, we are in our third consecutive year of a balanced budget, and our ratio of program expenses has continued to grow positively. As of today our programs are reaching more men, women and children than they have in the past three years. We have also made changes toward a more results-based ministry, focusing on our outcomes and making adjustments to programming to improve those outcomes. The relevance of this to our building needs is significant – the building must be designed to fit the programs and the programs must be optimized to achieve the desired outcomes. Over the three years we have grown toward a vision of all staff members being integral in sharing the love of Christ with our clients and shelter guests. We have directed attention to the integration of our programs and our focus has been to redevelop our Education and Employment Program. Frankly, we want to see more clients leave here not only clean and sober and on good spiritual ground, but on a solid track of education or a path to better employment.

Our new building and relocation will serve the city and our clients well right now. God's timing is perfect! Please join me in helping make this long-time dream a reality. It is a work that is difficult yet incredibly important and extremely fulfilling. Feel free to call me directly at 412-258-6150 to find out how you can help.

In Christ,

*Craig*

## Missy's Story

When Missy was 16, she learned a painful truth that had been kept from her. She was angry, ran away from home, and ended up dropping out of high school by age 17. Although she was working, she was not financially stable and was in an unhealthy relationship. "I lived in the moment—people pleasing and never thinking what could happen tomorrow because today I'm making everyone happy," said Missy. "I was overstressed, buried pain and drank."

Missy had four children and tried to be a good mother, but in 2001, she made some bad decisions and went to jail. This started a series of bad decisions that kept her in and out of jail for 13 years. While she was in jail for a 3-year period, Missy missed her children terribly and wanted them to know

how much she cared about them. She went to parenting classes and regularly wrote letters to her children.

Before Missy was released from jail in April 2013, a teacher in her parenting class told Missy about Light of Life. When she left jail, Missy contacted Light of Life's Women & Children's Program. "I knew I needed to do something to help my family," said Missy. "I knew I couldn't go back to jail."

After spending nights in hotels or with friends that summer, Missy committed to the Women & Children's Program in September. She now has custody of her four children and has secured housing for her family through Light of Life's program. "At first I was skeptical because

I didn't think I had time for this and I am so tired," said Missy. "But it's worth it because it keeps my family together."

Missy is grateful for all she is learning, especially learning accountability and responsibility. "Since I've been here, I haven't screwed up!" Missy said. "They keep me accountable for what I do and I need that."

We thank God for rebuilding family relationships and for the healing he does in hearts of women like Missy. "Until I came to Light of Life, I didn't get having a relationship with the Lord," said Missy. "Since being here, I get that it's not just going to church that matters. You have to have a relationship with your creator."



# Easter Celebrations

The Easter season is always a special time at Light of Life. On Thursday, April 17, clients and staff came together for an Easter meal. It was a wonderful time of eating delicious food prepared by our very own chefs, having meaningful conversation, and enjoying a song performed by women and children from our program.

Clients and staff took turns sharing what the resurrection of Christ means to them.



“What the resurrection means to me is that my old self is pinned to that cross with Jesus,” said one man in our program. “And I have to believe that I am a new man today. Me without him—I’d be back out on the streets. But God is so graceful and forgiving. You don’t have to hold onto anything. He wants it all.”

The next day was our Easter Outreach Celebration. We extended our dinner serving hours to 3-6 p.m. and delivered hot Easter meals to 15 local high-rise buildings. In total, 971 Easter dinners were served by volunteers! Mayor William Peduto served the first meals alongside Light of Life supporters and former Steelers Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley. The Gold Tones Choir from Shaler sang in the chapel while dinner guests waited to be seated.

This year we opened up a tent for those in need to receive light jackets, sweaters, shoes and toiletry items donated by you. We gave away 485 items!

You help make meals like this and the services we provide every day possible. Thank you for your generosity and commitment to Light of Life. We hope you and your family had a wonderful Easter celebration!



Top: A couple enjoyed an Easter meal on April 18th. Bottom: Former Steelers Tunch Ilkin, left and Craig Wolfley, right, and Mayor William Peduto served the first meals at our Easter Outreach Celebration.

# Laughter

A woman in the Women & Children’s Program wrote about something she was grateful for every day during Lent. Below is what she wrote on one day.

I’m grateful to be able to laugh today! I can remember for years in my addiction not being able to laugh and when I did it was fake because really deep down inside I was hurting so bad that all I wanted to do was

cry. I was so numb that every day that I woke up I dreaded being up and couldn’t wait to just go back to sleep. I hated my life and life in general and when I saw other people laughing I wondered what was so good in their life that they could be so happy and then thought that they had to be fake because no one could possibly be that happy...the truth is that I was just that miserable!

Today when I wake I can’t wait to see what God has in store for me and sometimes throughout the day I laugh (sometimes to myself, sometimes out loud) at what God had in store for me because once again what I thought I was going to do wasn’t what God had planned for me to do.

The point being is that when I laugh today... and I do it a lot...it is real...and for that I’m grateful!

# How has Light of Life helped you as a mother?

"Being involved in the Light of Life program has made phenomenal changes in all areas of my life...mostly with being a better mother. They've helped me conquer a lot of my fears, regain custody of my children, beat homelessness and give my family a loving, happy, secure home and [they] are always strengthening me when I'm weak. I feel stronger constantly. This is the longest in 13 years I've been out of jail, clean, sober and had my family stable, thanks to Light of Life. I feel like this is the foundation for my family's future that has been missing."

– Missy, Client - Women and Children's Program



"I'm so grateful for Light of Life! They have brought me closer to my children and helped me every step of the way...Today I have all five of my children thanks to God and Light of Life...My kids and I have really reconnected and been able to communicate with each other. I'm so very grateful for this program."

– Jennifer, Client - Women and Children's Program

"Light of Life has helped me be a better mother in many ways. I am directly connected to God because of this program. My faith is solid and because of these things I have more patience, I am more understanding and my angry outbursts are a thing of the past...I have learned to love in a healthy and productive way and this has profoundly affected my parenting. I am truly grateful for what the Light of Life has done for my family and I. These are true blessings from God."

– Pam, Client - Women and Children's Program



"I think the most important way that Light of Life has helped me is by providing such positive support. Being a parent is difficult. I am a single mother with no immediate family in the area. It is such a comfort to have the women of this program to ask for advice, get out frustrations, cry, laugh, and to celebrate my growth and my son's triumphs. Never in my life have I had a support system as I do in this program. It is imperative to my recovery and my growth as a mother and a woman of God."

– Shannon, Client - Women and Children's Program

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# You Can Make A Difference by Walking With Us on May 24th **Sign up today!**

## TUNCH & WOLF'S **WALK FOR THE HOMELESS**

**MAY 24, 2014**

Registration begins at 8 a.m. • Walk begins at 10 a.m.  
The FedEx Great Hall at Heinz Field, Pittsburgh, PA



### **Every year, Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless is one of Light of Life's biggest fundraisers.**

Proceeds from the event benefit Light of Life and the critical services provided to the poor and homeless men, women and children we serve. Will you get involved by asking people to support you as you walk with us or by making a financial donation if you cannot be there?

If you are available on Saturday, May 24th, gather your friends and family and come to the Great Hall at Heinz Field! Former Steelers and current sports broadcasters Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley join up with Pittsburghers of all ages to walk along the beautiful North Shore Trails.

As always, there is free food from local vendors and family-friendly fun throughout the day.

We have made fundraising for the walk easy! To fundraise online, sign up on our Crowdrise page at [www.crowdrise.com/tunchandwolf2014](http://www.crowdrise.com/tunchandwolf2014). If you would rather fundraise without using the internet, download the Walker Pledge Form at [www.lightoflife.org/2014walk](http://www.lightoflife.org/2014walk) or contact Kate at 412-803-4138.

If you cannot walk with us this year but would like to make a financial donation to support this event, please visit

[www.crowdrise.com/tunchandwolf2014](http://www.crowdrise.com/tunchandwolf2014) and click on the orange button that says "Donate to this fundraiser" on it. Every dollar makes a difference!

For more information about Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless, please visit [www.lightoflife.org/2014walk](http://www.lightoflife.org/2014walk).

**We hope to see you at Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless on May 24th!**

## **Learning and Growing Through Men's Conferences**

This spring and summer, there are many opportunities for men to gather, eat good food, and talk about their relationship with Christ and others. Men involved with Light of Life have been able to take part in these conferences, thanks to you. It has been a wonderful time of fellowship and growth for all men involved.

Men in our program, recent graduates, and men involved in nonprofits we partner with were able to attend the For Men Only event on March 29th at Stage AE. They were able to attend because you responded to our request for sponsors to provide the cost of tickets. Thank you!

“It was an awesome experience. It was moving. There were people there from all walks of life. I would go again and I would tell others to go.” – Nate, Men's Residential Program Graduate

Because of you, we were able to purchase 65 tickets for men who might not otherwise be able to attend. The majority of tickets went to men currently in our program and recent graduates. As part of our outreach program, we were also able to partner with a couple of North Side ministries that work with men and they were able to attend the event as well.

The next conference men in our program will be attending is ManUp Pittsburgh on June 7th at Orchard Hill. In addition to the cost of the tickets for men in our program and recent graduates, we need to cover the cost of transportation to the conference and back. If you are interested in learning more about how you can help with costs, please contact Doug Smith at 412-803-4161 or [dougsmith@lightoflife.org](mailto:dougsmith@lightoflife.org).



# Process for Donating Items is Updated

We appreciate all of the ways you get involved to make a difference at Light of Life – from volunteering your time, to giving financially, to dropping off donated items, to the many other ways you help us support the men, women and children in our programs and in the community. Recently we have made a change to the process of dropping off donated items. **Instead of bringing items to the Mission on North Avenue or to the building on Western Avenue, please**

Due to the overwhelming generosity of friends like you, we are currently only accepting the following items:

- New socks, all sizes
- New underwear, all sizes
- New twin sheet sets
- New pillows
- New umbrellas
- New flip flops
- Alarm clocks
- New day planners
- Flash drives for computers

## OPEN HOUSE

On Saturday, April 5, we held an open house. The Mission on North Avenue, our Western Avenue location, and the Ridge Avenue building were all part of the tour. Clients and graduates of our programs gave tours to around 100 people! Thank you to everyone who was able to come out and join us.

### Light of Life Mission Statement

As a ministry of Jesus Christ, Light of Life will provide a home for the homeless and food for the hungry, and will build disciples for the Kingdom of God among the poor, addicted, abused and needy.

contact our Volunteer Coordinator Bri Feindt at 412-803-4160 or [bfeindt@lightoflife.org](mailto:bfeindt@lightoflife.org) for donation drop-off times at our Ridge Avenue location.

If you have other items you would like to donate, please first contact Bri at [bfeindt@lightoflife.org](mailto:bfeindt@lightoflife.org) or 412-803-4160 to see if there is a need. We also update our Facebook and Twitter pages with our most current needs. If you would like to make a financial donation, please donate online at [www.lightoflife.org/give](http://www.lightoflife.org/give) or mail your donation to Light of Life Rescue Mission, P.O. Box 6823, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.

All food items are still being accepted at the Mission on North Avenue. It is helpful to call ahead at 412-803-4120 prior to delivery of food donations.

**Thank you again for all the ways you are involved with making a difference at Light of Life!**



If you were not able to come to the Open House but would like a tour of the Mission, please contact Kate at 412-803-4138 or [kwadsworth@lightoflife.org](mailto:kwadsworth@lightoflife.org)

## Upcoming

- ▶ **May 16 – Locker Room Leadership Award** presented in Market Square at 9:45 a.m. Join former Steelers and sports broadcasters Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley as they honor nominees in the Pittsburgh community who have gone above and beyond to serve the poor and homeless. Refreshments will be served.
- ▶ **May 24 – Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless at the Great Hall at Heinz Field.** Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the walk starts at 10 a.m. Visit [www.lightoflife.org/2014walk](http://www.lightoflife.org/2014walk) for more information.
- ▶ **May 27 – Volunteer orientation at 6 p.m.** Please register for an orientation by completing the volunteer application online. It can be found at [www.lightoflife.org](http://www.lightoflife.org) under the "Get Involved" tab.
- ▶ **June 7 – ManUp Pittsburgh at Orchard Hill Church.** We are looking for sponsors to provide the cost of tickets so men in our program can attend. Please contact [dougsmith@lightoflife.org](mailto:dougsmith@lightoflife.org) or 412-803-4161 if you can help. Visit [www.manuppittsburgh.org](http://www.manuppittsburgh.org) for more information.
- ▶ **June 12 – Volunteer orientation at 6 p.m.** Please register for an orientation by completing the volunteer application online. It can be found at [www.lightoflife.org](http://www.lightoflife.org) under the "Get Involved" tab.
- ▶ **June 30 – Volunteer orientation at 6 p.m.** Please register for an orientation by completing the volunteer application online. It can be found at [www.lightoflife.org](http://www.lightoflife.org) under the "Get Involved" tab.
- ▶ **July 24 – Day of Hope Picnic and CAP event.**
- ▶ **August 16 – Yinzer 5k at North Park.** See [www.lightoflife.org](http://www.lightoflife.org) and our social media for more information.