

LIVING *by the* LIGHT

Published for Partners of Light of Life Rescue Mission

SUMMER 2015



Clockwise from top left: Michael and Caleb take a moment to share a smile; The Day of Hope Picnic in full swing; an art project made by women in our program; children having fun at a picnic hosted by the Pittsburgh Foundation.

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LIGHT *of* LIFE
rescue mission

Food. Shelter. Hope.

Donald's Story

The men and women who come through our doors each day have their own stories about what led them to homelessness.

A year ago Donald was working and living in his own place. Last November he was let go from his job, couldn't find another job quickly, and within 3 months he was evicted from his apartment because he couldn't pay the bills. He left with only a few pieces of clothing, "I basically lost everything," said Donald.

Donald stayed with a family member, but he was asked to leave in February with nowhere to go. Someone told him about an organization that eventually referred him to Light of Life. Donald initially stayed in our emergency shelter and was given a safe place to sleep, shower and eat every day. Since February was particularly cold last year, we kept our warming shelter open during the day and Donald got to know the staff.

Eventually Donald decided to apply for the Men's Residential Program (MRP). "I really had nowhere else to go and I needed to get my life back on track," said Donald. "It's been a really good experience. I've met a lot of different people and I'm working on many of problems that I have."



Donald

“It's been a really good experience. I've met a lot different people and I'm working on many of problems that I have.”

– Donald, Men's Program Resident

The programming at Light of Life is set up to give men knowledge and experiences to strengthen relationships. "This program has given me structure on how to do things and how to get them done," said Donald. "A lot of the classes are very helpful. The [creative

learning outing] activities help me because I am around others in a different setting.”

One of the most exciting things that has happened for Donald since he started MRP at Light of Life is that he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. Through Bible studies, classes at the Mission, church and church activities, and relationships with staff and other clients, Donald continues to grow deeper in his Christian faith. He even got baptized in June!

Donald also enjoys getting to know the men who come to Light of Life for meals and emergency shelter and sharing his story with them. He lets them know that he was

once where they are but is now making a positive change. "A long-term program helps get all your problems dealt with," said Donald. "They're willing to help you with that. Then you can go back into the world and start again."

Your support makes a difference in the lives of many people at Light of Life so they can find healing and have the courage and tools to, as Donald put it, get back into the world and start again. Thank you for giving your time, prayers and donations!

Food and Shelter in 2015

By the end of June at the Mission and through outreach in our community we provided:



79,759
meals



4,681
nights of shelter

As we look back at this half-way point to see how God has provided for us so far through 2015, we can't help but thank Him for your support.

By volunteering, donating, financially supporting and praying, you are helping to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and provide the hope of Christ at Light of Life!

Winter Donation Items Needed

With the cold weather quickly approaching, we are currently accepting the following donations:

- Socks
- Underwear large and up
- T-shirts large and up
- Gloves
- Hats
- New or used coats

Please contact Bri at bfeindt@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4160 to arrange a drop-off time.



Annual Day of Hope Picnic

Our annual Day of Hope Picnic was held on July 23rd in West Park across from the Mission.

This event was a long-standing tradition, but we took a break for about 10 years and brought it back in 2012. The purpose of the event is to share the hope of Christ with the neighborhood by meeting tangible and spiritual needs.

This year over 40 area service providers and organizations set up tables to make it easy for people to know what is available to them in the community. Additionally, volunteers gave away clothing to those who had a need,

entertained and inspired through various musical acts, helped with a cookout that was going all afternoon, prayed with people, and shared the gospel message with all who came.

More than 1,350 meals were served and over 40 community agencies were available to connect with community members who had need for their services!

We couldn't do this without you! Over 70 volunteers came out to help

throughout the day. Your help at the Day of Hope Picnic allowed us to share the message of hope with so many people – thank you for caring!

A special thank you to our Day of Hope Sponsors:



Men's Picnic and Baptism

Every summer the men's program has a picnic at Moraine State Park that is a day full of fun and great food. This year it was held on June 13th and time was spent going for boat rides, playing outdoor games and enjoying a chance to get away from the city for a day.

In addition to the activities, we continued a very special tradition of baptism in the lake, which is open to all of the men in the program. **This year we had three men and one volunteer get baptized in Lake Arthur!** Joe C., Jim H. and Donald R. were the three men who were baptized, so if you see them around the Mission please feel free to ask them about their relationship with Christ.

Pastor Harvey Hall is the discipleship chaplain at Light of Life and he oversaw the baptisms. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful way to celebrate how God is transforming hearts at Light of Life.

Each of the men who were baptized attend church regularly and have been encouraged, built up, and loved by many of you, through your time volunteering and talking with them, saying hello to them at church, donating to the Mission to keep operations going, and praying for them regularly.

Thank you for helping to make opportunities like summer baptisms possible at Light of Life!



Pastor Harvey Hall baptizes one of the men in our program.

What are you celebrating now?



"My daughter. Not only is she becoming an adult, but she is planning her life ahead of her. She's going to college. She's grown so much. She is just a blessing to be around and willing to help with anything. We didn't have that relationship before and now she can sit down and talk to Daddy. To lose that relationship and by the grace of God to get it back- there's nothing better than that."

–Jim, Men's Residential Program

"I woke up this morning thinking about God's relentless love that never gives up on us, and how He is always drawing us in closer to Christ. Ephesians 5:2 tells us that Christ gave himself up for us! This truth sank deeper in me this week and I want to celebrate this picture of love, that true love is found in giving up our lives for one another. This leads me to think about the people in my life, old friends and new. Light of Life is certainly a new chapter in my life that I couldn't have foreseen, but I know that God has me here for very specific purposes! This picture of love and where life has me now are reasons to celebrate!"

–David, Care Support Specialist



"I would like to celebrate life. In my past, because of the things I have done, I would not be here today. Today I'm working on getting physically fit, getting my license to drive and getting back into the workforce."

–Joe, Men's Residential Program



"The process of recovery and the act of transformation are integral to maintaining a balanced foundation. Being assertive rather than aggressive, taking a stand for truth and righteousness over popular demand and opinion, being able to express myself without regret, and above all, honoring God with obedience by choosing to first question myself rather than attacking others. These are ways in which I can celebrate the healing power of Christ in my life."

–Jason, Men's Residential Program



"The birth of my great niece. She is 7 months old now. She's been an angel to us and brought our family back together. It is just amazing what her smile can do."

–Larry, Men's Residential Program



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You are invited to our annual More Than a Meal Gala & Fundraiser!

Join us for this wonderful evening hosted by former Steelers and current sports broadcasters Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley.

When you come to the gala, you will hear how Light of Life provides more than a meal to Pittsburgh's poor and homeless. The evening will include a delicious dinner, silent and live auctions, and stories of how lives have been changed at Light of Life.

When: **Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 6 p.m.**

Where: **Hyundai Club West Lounge at Heinz Field Press Gate Entrance, across from the Carnegie Science Center**

Parking is available in the Carnegie Science Center parking lot. Cost \$7 per car.

Emcees: **Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley**

Tickets: **\$125 per person, a table of 8 is \$1,000, a table of 10 is \$1,250**

For all questions or to sign up online, visit www.lightoflife.org/gala or contact Kate Wadsworth at 412-803-4162 or kwadsworth@lightoflife.org.

Sponsorship Opportunities:

For information about business sponsorships, please contact Doug Smith at dougsmith@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4161.

Silent Auction Donations:

For information on getting a group of friends or your church small group together to put together a silent auction basket, please contact Bri Feindt at bfeindt@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4160.

All proceeds of the gala benefit Light of Life Rescue Mission.

Graduation

On June 4th, we celebrated 14 men and women who graduated from our long-term programs. Each person spent 12-18 months in our programs and the graduates shared about their journey through recovery from homelessness and addiction, what their future plans are, and how their families have changed and grown with them during their experience at Light of Life.

Thank you so much for all you do to help make our programs possible. During times like graduation, we see the long-term effect of your love and support. If you would like to learn more about our long-term programs, or all of the services we offer, check out www.lightoflife.org.

Another Successful Yinzer 5k

The 3rd annual Yinzer 5k was held on Saturday, August 8th at North Park. More than 200 runners came out to show their Pittsburgh pride and over \$10,000 was raised for the Mission!



We would like to say a special thank you Dollar Bank for being the title sponsor, Trib Total Media for being the media sponsor, to DJ Chuck for providing the Pittsburgh tunes, and to Jaden's Catering, Bob Evans in Irwin, Islay's and Eat 'n Park for the food donations.

Start thinking about your Pittsburgh costumes, grab your terrible towels and join us next August for the Yinzer 5k!

A special thank you to our Yinzer 5K Sponsors:



Summer Interns



Summer interns from left to right: Evan Burns, Elena Plackis, Emily Conti (Missing from photo is Brandt Gribbin)

We recently said good-bye to our summer interns. They contributed to our community in many tangible and intangible ways and we wish them well on the next steps of their journeys. Read what our intern wrote about one thing he learned this summer:

“At Light of Life people are treated as people, valuable because they are made in God’s image and loved by Him, not because of anything that they have done. And that’s true of staff and clients. Everyone is loved despite their position or their performance and loved despite their most unlovable flaws. That is true Christ-like love because Christ has saved and loved us not because we’ve decided to follow a checklist. Not because we’ve resolved to be better people. Christ loves us because he loves us. And that’s what true Christian community looks like.”
– Evan Burns, Men’s Residential Program Intern

If you know any college students interested in doing a summer internship with Light of Life next year, please contact Britanni Watterson at bwatterson@lightoflife.org or 412-258-6131.

Kelly’s Mission Trip

When a life is changed at Light of Life, the impact of that life can reach far beyond our walls. This summer Kelly, one of the graduates from our Women & Children’s Program, took an 8-day mission trip to Haiti with her church. When this opportunity first came up, Kelly wasn’t sure she wanted to go. She was scared and not sure if she could do it. Her church, family and friends from Light of Life helped her raise money and encouraged her.

The trip was a medical mission and Kelly was one of the first people the patients encountered. Not only was she a friendly face, but she prayed for each person who came through her line. She saw 800 patients in 3 days! The women currently in Light of Life’s program also made bracelets for Kelly to give out as she prayed with people.

Kelly came back to Pittsburgh with a new perspective on her life- and a lot of gratitude. “I learned a lot about God,” said Kelly. “I was chosen for this mission to confirm that I am to be a help to other people without expecting anything back.”

Upcoming Events

- ▶ **September 10th – Volunteer Appreciation Event at Bistro to Go beginning at 6 p.m.** Please contact Emily Rabatin at erabatin@lightoflife.org or 412-258-6154 for more information.
- ▶ **October 6th – More Than a Meal Gala at the Hyundai Club West Lounge at Heinz Field.** Join us at 6 p.m. for a delicious dinner, silent and live auctions, and inspirational stories of lives changed. Tickets are \$125 per person. Visit www.lightoflife.org/gala to register or for more information.
- ▶ **November 26th – The Great Thanksgiving Banquet at Light of Life Rescue Mission.** Men, women and children who do not have a place to go for Thanksgiving dinner are invited to Light of Life for turkey, stuffing and all the fixings between 1-6 p.m.
- ▶ **Volunteer Orientations**
Time: 6 p.m.
When:
 - August 25th
 - September 8th
 - September 24th
 - October 5th
 - October 22nd
 - November 3rd
 - November 19th**Where: 913-915 Western Ave**
 Please register for orientation by completing the volunteer application online. It can be found at www.lightoflife.org under the “Get Involved” tab.

LIGHT of LIFE rescue mission

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.

P.O. Box 6823 | Pittsburgh, PA 15212
412-258-6100
www.lightoflife.org | serve@lightoflife.org



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