

Impacting Families, Changing Lives

LIGHT OF LIFE RESCUE MISSION
ANNUAL REPORT 2019





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Dear Friends,

As I reflect on 2019, I can't help but feel grateful for all the ways that God moved at Light of Life. I have had a first-hand look at seeing Him expand our programs, strengthen our community, and give the staff a fresh sense of hope and renewal as we neared 2020.

We couldn't have done it without you, and we thank you!

Though we face challenges, God provided and continues to provide the staff here at Light of Life with the opportunity to help Him transform the lives of the homeless and hurting men, women, and children who walked through our doors in 2019 and we believe He isn't done yet! Now that we are almost halfway through 2020 and amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen by great measure that God still has work for us to do through and for Him in our community. Through Christ, we know that there is hope on the other side of every challenge we face.

I hope that you'll feel encouraged by the work that has been done here when reading this report.

As we look to the future, we are thankful for the partners in our community who support us and pray continued blessings over you this year.

In His Grip,

Jerrel T. Gilliam
Executive Director

Who We Serve

GREGORY W.

"When I come through the doors at Light of Life, I feel respected. I can't believe how nice you guys are to me when I come here. People need to know how nice the staff is here and that Light of Life not only serves food, but they give out clothes and if you need help with finding a program or housing, the staff will help you."

AMANDA D.

"When I first walked into LOL, I felt honored to be chosen for the program. I was nervous about the unknown. I wasn't fully aware of what Light of Life was. Now that I have been in the program and know the ins and outs, it's a lot more than I expected...this program is so full of God and He is vital to recovery of any kind, even just emotional, personal growth. This program changes you if you have the willingness, open-mindedness, and honesty."



MYRON J.

"When I first walked into Light of Life, I felt lost, depressed, and hopeless. But, Light of Life gives you the opportunity to find hope and yourself again. It provides you with the tools to overcome addiction and depression and to have a relationship with Jesus Christ."

IAN S.

"When I first came to Light of Life, I felt lost, hopeless, that nothing mattered, and I had no trust in God whatsoever. I had hatred, anger, and was a very disoriented person. After being in the community here, I now know that Light of Life is an awesome program. The groups are very interesting and I'm finding out that through God's power, I'm not as evil as I thought I was. I'm so blessed to be a part of LOL...they have shown me what growing up is all about. I'm so grateful for LOL. Now, I can start being the man, father, and person I know I am."





BARB'S STORY

In 2007, Barb was a mom of three small kids. She was a hard drug user, a habit that was reinforced by prescriptions after a terrible car accident and a hospital stay for MRSA. Eventually, Barb put herself in rehab and discovered the Women and Children's Program at Light of Life. When she came to Light of Life for the first time that year, she remembers a staff member asking her if she accepted Jesus Christ as her savior and she was floored. She couldn't believe that was an intake question and she thought "Oh my gosh, what am I getting into?"

Barb graduated in 2010 with every expectation of staying clean. A short four months later though, she relapsed and spent the next two years getting high on the streets. She says, "I was spiritually dead by December 2012. I was living in darkness, yet I could feel God with me and knew everything would be okay."

Barb reached back out to Light of Life and asked to come back. Her kids were suffering, and she wanted to do what it took to make things right. At the time, she would take her youngest daughter to the rehab clinics with her and it broke her heart to drag her along. Her relationship with her mom suffered greatly and her aunt took her in only because she wanted to help the children. "My kids went through my addiction with me," Barb says of those years.

In 2013, she came back to Light of Life for the second time. She says, "the first time I came to Light of Life, it was more of me being on a mission to get my life together. It was more about getting a house and needing financial help. The second time, it was knowing that I was safe and that it was going to be okay. The focus was to change my life and my kids' lives."

Over the next several years, Barb and her kids' lives have transformed. She graduated the second time in 2016 and continues to be a presence in the Women and Children's Program. Last summer, she volunteered at the Women's Outreach Center and her daughters (now 16, 14, and 11) volunteered in the Women and Children's Program helping other kids see that they can be comfortable here. Barb says, "the best way that I show support for the new clients is through recovery. I show up to the Narcotics Anonymous meetings and sponsor a couple of clients. I try to share honestly and openly about where I'm at and that there is always going to be struggle, but we don't have to get high and run away from God in that struggle."

When she used to see new doors open, Barb would fear the new responsibilities associated with them. But today, they energize her. "At this point, I've accomplished so much and know that even though there is work behind a new door, it'll lead me somewhere better than I can imagine. I've experienced that."

Light of Life has allowed Barb to attend Penn State University and obtain an Information Science Technology degree and is doing an internship at a software company. Barb's kids now know Jesus.

They believe in themselves. And they have a mom who has been transformed and no longer struggles with addiction. She has restored her relationship, not only with her mom, but with her oldest son who greatly suffered from her addiction in the past.

Barb says, "My family became a family because of Light of Life. Before that, we were just existing. It allowed my family to grow in Christ and we all have an intimate relationship with God. My whole family can now depend on me. And that is a big deal."



GREG'S STORY

Greg first came to Light of Life in April 2016 after his sister kicked him out and he realized he had nowhere to turn. He struggled with a drug and alcohol addiction for many years and his ex-wife suggested that he come to Light of Life. After losing the trust of his entire family and all his friends, Greg agreed. However, he was ashamed to be coming to Light of Life because he saw it as a last resort for people. As he walked through the doors that first day, he felt desperation.

"When I walked through the doors, I had \$1 to my name as a 46-year-old man. I was spiritually and morally broken," he says. After one night at the Mission, Greg called his ex-wife and asked her to come get him. She told him to stick it out because he didn't have anywhere else to go. So, he did. And it changed his life.

Shortly after he decided to fully commit to the program, he met a few men that really helped him feel welcome. Abdul, a Care Team Leader, was instrumental in welcoming Greg and reassuring him when he had doubts. Abdul would remind Greg that his recovery wasn't going to be easy, but it would get better. In addition to Abdul, Greg says that the other clients really took the initiative to show him fellowship and help him through tough days. "After a while, I felt a sense of safety and peace and calm at Light of Life. All the fundamentals are taken care of so you can focus on getting well. I didn't have to worry about food, shelter, or clothes. I just had to focus on changing my ways."



Greg is involved now at the Mission as an alumnus. He comes back each week for Alcoholics Anonymous meetings to support and encourage the current men in the program. He says, "I try to help clients by letting them know that there are thousands of people in the same boat. We didn't get sick overnight and we aren't going to get well overnight. God is the key to recovery and Light of Life allows for that to take place."

Back when Greg first came to Light of Life, he wasn't looking for a major change – he was content with living a destructive lifestyle because he had no sense of self-worth and felt like he had no support. Now that he's graduated from the program and is in recovery, he knows that there is always someone willing to help and that excites him for new opportunities in his life. He says, "life is ever-changing and ever-evolving. You just have to be prepared for the newness of what the new door brings – don't close it on yourself – change is a good thing."



It is Greg's hope that when our new shelter opens this Winter that as many people as possible who seek help can get the help. He says, "The broadening of the facilities allows more and more people to go there and obtain that sense of hope, knowing that they won't be turned away." He also wants people to know that there is no shame in coming to Light of Life. He says, "the shame would be to not come and get the help that is available."

The relationships that Greg once struggled to keep are being restored. His sister and family trust him again and want to spend time with him. His nephew, who once despised him, now calls him regularly to get together. He says, "my life gets better and better each day. I am proud to have walked through those doors and when I walked out, I was a transformed person. I am grateful for the opportunity that Light of Life provided me."

2019 Changing Lives

Since 1952, Light of Life has been a safe refuge for the homeless and hurting people in our community. Thanks to the prayers, compassion and generosity of our supporters, we are making a real difference for those who have been devastated by homelessness, addiction or abuse.



1,149



CHAPEL SERVICES



23,049 hours
OF EDUCATION

17



FAMILIES REUNITED



295,176

MEALS PROVIDED

1,030 hours
OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING



11,216



**EMERGENCY
SHELTER NIGHTS**

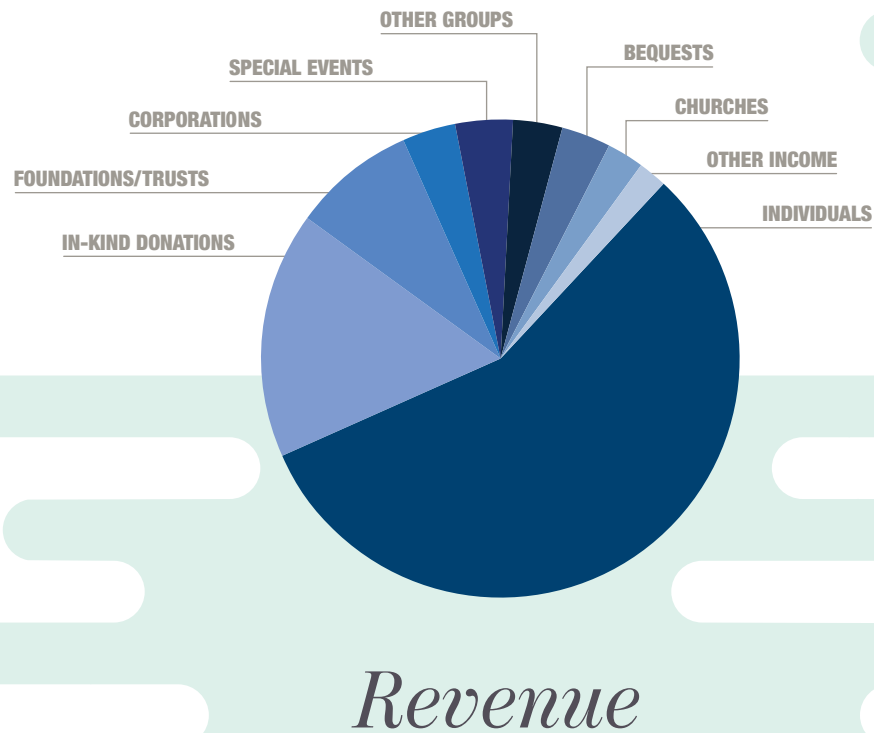


24
GRADUATES

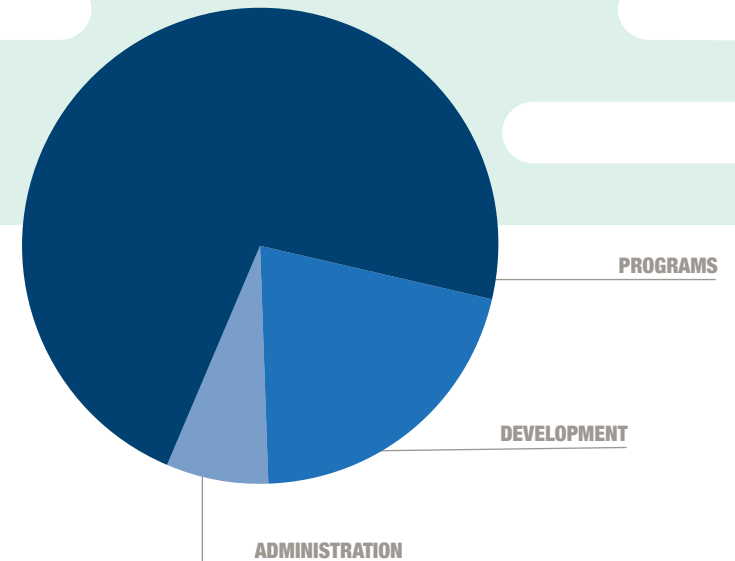


3,268
CLASSES TAKEN

Financials



Expenses



Corporations: \$270,910.39

Foundations/Trusts: \$595,373.28

Individuals: \$4,028,851.07

Churches: \$188,999.91

Other Groups: \$241,830.49

Bequests: \$234,270.56

Special Events: \$264,425.46

In-Kind Donations: \$1,174,710.91

Other Income: \$122,155.81

Administration: \$562,429.64

Development: \$1,835,449.03

Programs: \$5,266,723.25



Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Glenn Graner, Chairman
 William Wolfe, Vice-Chairman
 Richard L. Roadarmel, Treasurer
 Rebecca Fatica, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Jerrel T. Gilliam, Executive Director
 Doug Smith, Director of Development
 Sherry Rorison, Director of Programs
 Liz Gryger, Director of Administration and Operations

BOARD MEMBERS

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 Donald Tucker
 David Wilke
 Donald L. Foster, Honorary Member
 Tunch Ilkin, Honorary Member



Glenn Graner



William Wolfe



Richard L. Roadarmel



Rebecca Fatica



Jerrel T. Gilliam



Doug Smith



Sherry Rorison



Liz Gryger



Gash Abebe



Stephanie L. Herring



Rita Huckle



Jody Johnson



Edwin J. Kairis



Ralph Miller



Rhonda Moore Johnson



Leonard Petrancosta



Donald Tucker



David Wilke



Donald L. Foster



Tunch Ilkin

Our Supporters



950+
 NEW VOLUNTEER
 APPLICANTS



30,808 DONORS



\$289.86
 AVERAGE DONATION



What's Next?

Nine years ago, Craig Schweiger became the Executive Director of Light of Life. From the beginning, he demonstrated his care for the growth of the organization, he increased our financial stability and most importantly he wanted to honor Christ through his leadership in our community. Craig stepped down from CEO of Light of Life on June 30, 2020. However, he will continue to assist us through counsel and support of key projects as opportunities present themselves.

Craig says, "I first thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I also thank our staff, our board of directors and you, our many supporters, who have shown endless compassion for the homeless, addicted and lost in our city. I will also remember the nine years I served at Light of Life as the fullest years in terms of my faith and walk with God. I served for a special purpose and that is now complete." You can read a full letter from Craig at lightoflife.org/farewell-craig. Please join us in celebrating Craig's faithful years of service and pray for God's continued blessings on his future endeavors.



We are also thrilled to share that we have been able to continue construction throughout COVID-19 and expect to be in the building this winter. Our internal planning team has been working with design partners to select wall colors, flooring, and other design elements for our new building! Our fundraising goal for this campaign is \$20 million. So far, we have raised \$11.3 million through foundation grants, individuals' gifts, and pledges. Based on our current projections of additional funding towards the project, we will need to raise \$4 million from the community at large to reach our total goal and complete the project. If you're interested in being more involved in the campaign, email Philip Spina at pspina@lightoflife.org or call him at 412-803-4152.



WE KNOW THAT WITH YOUR HELP, WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE HOPE AND HEALING TO MORE HURTING AND HOMELESS NEIGHBORS THAN EVER BEFORE.

LIGHT *of* LIFE

rescue mission

Food. Shelter. Hope.

lightoflife.org