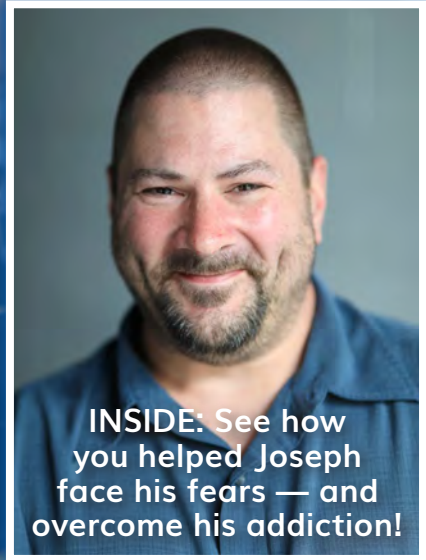


# HIS HANDS

REACHING HEARTS | CHANGING LIVES

## YOU MADE JUNE 29 A DAY TO REMEMBER

You Stood In For Homeless Students.  
Are You Ready To Step Out?



INSIDE: See how you helped Joseph face his fears — and overcome his addiction!



# Always Learning



**Rev. Richard Trickel**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**I will instruct you  
and teach you in  
the way you should  
go; I will counsel  
you with My loving  
eye on you.**

PSALM 32:8, NIV

Dear Friend,

We begin learning from the very first moment we open our eyes to the world ... and if we want to, we can keep learning until God closes our eyes for the last time. He has so much to teach us about generosity, forgiveness, and the transforming power of His love ... and here at The City Mission, we see these lessons play out so beautifully in the lives of our guests. Every day has its lessons to make us into the people He created us to be.

Right now at The City Mission, we're focused on getting the boys and girls at Laura's Home settled into the new school year. Our Pathways and childcare staff work with these children year-round, giving them confidence and helping them overcome the obstacles homelessness can place in the way of their education.

We recently brought these issues to the forefront with our Stand In for Homeless Children. We wanted to raise awareness and much-needed support for these most vulnerable members of our community.

It's not just the youngsters learning, though. The women at Laura's Home discover new ways to reach their goals and build stable lives for themselves and their children. And men like Joseph, in this issue of *His Hands*, graduate from the long-term program in our Crossroads Men's Crisis Center, free from addiction and ready for a new beginning.

Every single one of us at The City Mission—staff and volunteers—learns something every day as God does His work through your gifts.

And I hope you learn—through our newsletters, website, and social media—how profoundly your support changes individuals and our community. Thank you and God bless!

Sincerely,

*Rev Richard Trickel*

# Did You Stand In For Homeless Children? Will You Step Out?



On June 29, we did more than just Stand In. Over 3,000 Clevelanders committed to unite in power and in faith for a crisis that cannot continue. Men, women, and children of all ages, backgrounds, churches, and neighborhoods used their voices to cry out for Cleveland's children who desperately need change. Thank you to those who generously gave their time and attention for our vulnerable neighbors. Because of this day, we will see lasting transformation for children experiencing homelessness in our city.

As much effort as it took to put on this event, the real work begins now: formulating a practical, united response that collaboratively engages the Body of Christ. Over the coming months, we'll be focusing our efforts on such a plan. This summer's event demonstrated Cleveland's commitment to Stand In for children in crisis. Soon, we'll be calling on you to Step Out and work with each other to end the cycle of poverty. Stay tuned—we're counting on your partnership and believing that the good work begun on that Saturday in June will continue.

Visit [www.thecitymission.org/stand-in](http://www.thecitymission.org/stand-in) for three ways to be a part of the solution today.

# A LIFETIME OF

## *"God won't let*

**G**rowing up with ten older siblings, Joseph had plenty of people to learn from. Unfortunately, one of his earliest lessons was how to drink. By high school, he had been drinking and smoking marijuana for several years.

Even so, Joseph says he had a "pretty normal" life, hanging out with the "cool kids" and playing sports in school. At home, he spent time with his dad learning how to repair things around the house or on the car. One thing Joseph couldn't repair was his addiction.

Joseph dropped out of high school and watched many of his classmates go on to college. Without a diploma, Joseph's options were limited. He found a job in a warehouse, but the party never stopped.

### **A downward spiral**

"It got to the point where I was waking up the next day, not knowing how I got home," Joseph admits. He knew he had to stop drinking. However, after suffering several herniated discs in his back from warehouse work, Joseph simply replaced alcohol with prescription pain killers.

For years, Joseph was a "functioning addict." Struggling with his addiction, he moved back home to care for his ailing parents. "I literally watched my dad die over the next five years," he tells us. "He was my best friend. When he passed away, I went into a downward spiral."

Taught from childhood to keep his feelings to himself, Joseph turned to heroin and crack to



# OF LESSONS FOR JOSEPH

*... me down." Neither did you.*

relieve his grief. He was soon unemployed and homeless. He was staying with a friend when he was arrested for drug possession and served eight weeks in jail. Upon his release, he was allowed to serve out his probation at The City Mission.

## **"God won't let me down."**

Here in our Crossroads Men's Crisis Center, Joseph's real learning began. "The program is phenomenal," he says. "Christianity 101 introduced me to the Bible. Anger Management and Dialectical Behavior Theory let you be aware of your thinking and that you can change it."

Most of all, Joseph learned how to share his feelings. "I felt embarrassed at first," he admits, "but when you build fellowship with people, you allow yourself to be vulnerable around them."

That includes Joseph's 19-year-old daughter. "I found out about her when she was eight years old and I was in my active addiction. I didn't know how to be a dad." Joseph reached out to her through Facebook and they are now working on their relationship by phone.

Joseph just completed the program and his GED. He hopes to find work that won't aggravate his back injuries. "God won't let me down," he says. Neither did you. Thank you for helping Joseph and so many others learn to be the men God intended.

Joseph found an outlet for his emotions through poetry. Here is an excerpt from his poem "Side Effects," written in January.

Forty years have passed me by,  
My heart wouldn't let me cry.  
Lessons learned, I thought,  
Battles battled, I fought.  
Trying to fill the void inside,  
All this time not dealing with my pride ...

... For the first time, in my life, I'm free.  
Imprisoned no more, I can see.  
Given all the tools I need,  
My heart will no longer bleed.  
All those drugs over the years,  
From not facing my fears ...

... Lessons taught, strive to be better.  
Battles fought, alive not bitter!



# How you help children face back-to-school challenges

A new school year is an exciting time for most boys and girls. But for children experiencing homelessness, it can be more stressful than living on the street. Some have changed schools as many as six times by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. They can't form lasting friendships and are more likely to have poor grades, fail, or drop out of school altogether.

But your support for children in the Pathways program gives them the help they need to succeed—all year round.

These children, ages 5 to 17, will go back to class fortified by a summer's worth of daily reading and tutoring, new clothes or uniforms, shoes, school supplies, and everything else that makes a new school year special. The younger children attend Clara E. Westropp Elementary School, which is a short walk from Laura's Home. Most of them are accompanied by their mothers. Transportation is provided for the other children.

You help boys and girls in many ways throughout the year. Please see the back of the enclosed letter and follow us on Facebook for more opportunities to Step Out and break the cycle of poverty for children in our community!



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*Providing help and hope to all people through the transforming power of God's love*

