



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Love in Service *see page 2*

"HUM is not just concerned about my addiction; they are concerned about the whole man."

Jason is Finding Time to Heal



WHAT'S INSIDE:

Bob Gehman's Monthly Update **2**

Photo Story **2**

Focus on Recovery **3**

Heart to Serve **4**

Jason, age 49, was born in Lodi, California. "I was born into a cult," states Jason. "One night, to escape, my parents grabbed me and my brother, loaded up the car, and headed out of town. From there we joined a church. I was in first or second grade at the time when my babysitter began to sexually abuse me. My dad was an alcoholic with a traumatic past. My parents had a traumatic marriage which was fraught with violence and anger. So I did not have a safe place where I could share about the abuse that was occurring."

"The abuse lasted 5 years and only ended because of my older brother getting involved with drugs. And the only solution that my parents could produce was to pack us all up and move all the way across the country to New Hampshire. I would like to say that my trauma and abuse were dealt with, but that is not the case. It was simply a geography change."

"In middle school, there were a couple of kids that spoke openly about their traumatic backgrounds, and they were ostracized for their

courageous confessions. I wanted nothing to do with that and the seed of deception was sowed within me. I started to tell lies about my past. The lies worked so well that I lied increasingly until every part of my life was either hidden, manipulation, or deception. Growing up, being someone else was all that I wanted"

"I got married right out of college. With the pressure of being an adult, my first job, and being married my alcoholism really began. But my alcoholism really took off when I joined corporate America. I would entertain clients who loved to drink. So we drank a lot and often. When I was entering my forties, my father passed, and my childhood abuse came raging back. I slipped into depression and used alcohol to self-medicate. From the time that I was 40 until age 49, I drank around the clock. I was a 12-year-old boy functioning in a 49-year old's body. My decision making, my relationships with loved ones and God, and dealing with my addiction were being managed by a 12-year-old boy. It was time to grow up!"

> continued on page 3



NOW IT'S UP TO US

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NOW IT'S UP TO US Bob's Monthly Update

Dear friends,

Many of you have been faithfully supporting the men and women of HUM for years, and our longtime friends certainly know how I applaud anyone working to achieve a goal. The staff here at HUM have heard me so say often, "if you don't grow, you gotta go!" It is an informal motto here at the mission, but also one I try to abide in my own life. I feel certain this is a big part of what keeps my job exciting after 28 years: working on my own personal growth while leading this amazing community where each person is working so hard to achieve their goals of life transformation.

This is not the first letter I have written about goal-setting, but whenever I hear a story like Jason's, I feel newly inspired! In Jason's feature story, he shares his experience in tackling both the goal of recovery and the goal of achieving good physical health. Jason tells us, "HUM is not just concerned about my addiction; they are concerned about the whole man." He goes on to say that in addition to graduating from our year-long Spiritual Recovery Program, that he has lost 154 pounds and just achieved the goal of running 10 miles! In my years at HUM I have certainly heard many stories of this level of achievement, but it never ceases to amaze me how God is at work shaping our lives.

The Bible tells us again and again to set our goals in alignment with God's will, and He will make our plans succeed. A passage from Hebrews 12 comes to mind, to encourage all of us working to achieve a goal, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

A donor recently shared with me that he is a busy man, but by making a donation to HUM, he knows that people in need are being helped. We believe that we are called by God to help our most vulnerable neighbors, and for this donor, a gift of support is the best way he can help to make God's work come to life for people like Jason.

I thank you for standing alongside Jason this past year as he has achieved his goals, and for standing with 540 other men and women just like him, who are also setting life-saving goals, which they can only achieve because they have friends like you helping them to see God's path.

Sincerely,

Bob

Love in Service

Recently, TrinityLife Church members stopped by during their #loveweek. Some gave a building a fresh coat of paint (below) and others cleaned. It was such a pleasure having them serve in love, bringing smiles, warm hearts, and tremendous painting skills.



"I eventually checked into a 28-day program in Northern Maryland. We would have nightly meetings where folks would share that they have been coming to this place 28, 18, and 12 times. It was disturbing to me that this culture of relapse had invaded this sector of society. I met with my counselor and said, listen, I really love you, but I do not ever want to see you again. What do I do? And they said, 'if you are serious about getting sober and addressing your story behind your story, you need to go to Helping Up Mission (HUM).' I was sober for 5 weeks, severely overweight, battling the onset of diabetes, and terrified."

"I showed up here with all those physical factors and wondered what I was getting myself into. My marriage was in a state of limbo. You are just looking at the scorched earth landscape of your life. There was nothing left to hold me back from today's incredible level of freedom that my wife and I have. But my wife dove into our relationship. She dove deep into

the Be A Loving Mirror (BALM) method of family recovery. Through BALM, she was moved to deep compassion, forgiveness, and mercy. Today, we are rediscovering one another and re-experiencing our marriage. We have experienced Christ in some extraordinary ways this year. Also, my daughters were able to come into themselves during this process. If they are angry or happy with me, we can have an honest conversation. Our relationships have an authentic, open dynamic that has allowed for healing. A highlight being when they both came to my graduation and cheered me on."

"HUM is not just concerned about my addiction; they are concerned about the whole man. They connected me with a nutritionist and a primary care physician who quickly put me on a strict diet. They plugged me into a group of guys who were exercising daily. I was introduced to a partnering organization Back on My Feet (BoMF) that uses running to help people get back on their feet. When I came to

HUM, I could not run one hundred yards. But two weeks ago, I ran a 10-miler! I have lost 154 pounds. My blood pressure is good, and my diabetes is gone. I have had a return to optimum health!"

"Salvation is a gift. We did nothing to earn it. We are completely in need of it, but the price tag is immense. In our walks with Christ, we must accept Him for who He really is. Just as I must accept myself for whom I really am. If I am brave enough, accept enough, and humble enough, what is next is going to be the pursuit of that in my relationships with my children, my wife, and God."

"There are very few missions that are helping severely marginalized and broken people. HUM is a place where the Holy Spirit and Christ penetrate, change, and save lives. Thank you for supporting HUM. We see miracles here. The problems are immense, and the need is great. Thank you for being part of the solution!"

To read more of Jason's story, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/jason

Focus on Recovery – Vick King, HUM Chaplain



Jason's transformation has been dramatic! The physical changes have been the most visible, but what cannot be as easily seen is just as important. Jason's faith and thought-life have been renewed. Here is a man who spent years in full-time ministry, telling other people about God's grace and mercy... while hiding his own struggles. Now, finally, Jason is living in the freedom of radical honesty. We live in a moment that prizes authenticity and vulnerability, but only to a point.

Every community has its "acceptable sins" and "unforgivable offenses." All too often, we feel pressure to perform a kind of "faux-nerability." We share our surface-level problems, while hiding our deeper failures for fear of exile. "If they really knew me, they would run," our fear tells us. And so, we stay in hiding and avoid asking for help. Jason hid for as long as he could, but at last, he was able to get radically honest with God, himself, and others. It was a humbling process. But Jesus meets us when we are at our lowest and raises us up with him.

The word "radical" is from the Latin radicalis, meaning "to or from the root." And as Jason has gotten down to the roots of his story, he has uncovered God's radical love that runs even deeper. And he has been able to repair and reconnect with his family. A year ago, he would never have thought that was possible.

Summer Freedom

This month at Helping Up Mission (HUM), we're not just celebrating freedom as a nation. We're also celebrating the freedom from the chains of homelessness and addiction that hurting souls are finding here at HUM! You can celebrate their freedom too! That's why we hope you'll continue your strong support today with a gift to provide a Freedom Pack for a neighbor in need. Each Freedom Pack includes:

- 1 night of shelter
- 3 hot, nutritious meals
- The opportunity to enter HUM's Spiritual Recovery Program

All for just \$16.15!

Your support is especially appreciated this summer! As inflation continues to rise, so does the cost of basic living expenses like groceries, gas, and housing. It impacts the operating costs we have at HUM, putting a strain on our budget. Soaring temperatures and the spike in violence also put our most vulnerable neighbors at even greater risk.

These are people like Paul, an Air Force veteran who has battled a years-long addiction to alcohol. He entered our Spiritual Recovery Program this spring and already feels God doing a powerful work in his life.

"I was broken for real," Paul says. "But since coming to HUM, I'm being transformed. Before I was self-centered, jealous, envious, greedy — all the ugly things. But now, I'm filled with gentleness, kindness, and respect. Now I read the Word and try to live what God's telling me to do."

For the sake of Paul and all the people struggling in Baltimore, please give today. You'll be supporting a hurting neighbor as they break free from addiction and homelessness... and find true freedom through Christ's love. Thank you!



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NOW IT'S UP TO US

Heart to Serve



Adam Fishman (1991–2017) came to Helping Up Mission (HUM) in June of 2012. "It was his own choice to come to HUM after entering rehab after rehab, and finally being homeless," recalls his mother, Alison Hartman. A year later, with Adam thriving, he graduated from HUM's year-long Spiritual Recovery Program. "After a year of recovery behind him he was doing great, clear, hopeful, and a part of our family again."

"Unfortunately, Adam did not continue working actively on his recovery and within a year, he got back on the runaway train of addiction for the next several years." In 2017, ready to reenter HUM's programs, Adam said to Alison, "Mom, I am ready to work on my recovery again. I know you love me, I feel hopeful, and I know what I want to do with my life—I want to help people like you do!" Tragically, on his way over to HUM the next day, Adam died of a fentanyl drug overdose before he could return to the safety of Helping Up.

Today, Alison and her son, Adam's older brother, Jake, are helping Adam fulfill his goal of helping people by creating a legacy in his name. For Jake, he honors Adam's life by running. Every year since 2020, Jake runs Adams "age" in miles on his birthday and so far, has raised over \$24,000 for HUM! Several times a year, Alison stops by the Mission to speak to the men about Adam's story and the effect of trauma, which is often at the root of addiction, with Director of Spiritual Life, Mike Rallo. The men recognize her and are deeply affected by her messages of hope. Alison, who is a licensed acupuncturist, has also started an acupuncture therapy program for our clients called, "The Adam Project."

"Adam's death was tragic, but so much meaningful work is coming from it. In a way, perhaps his death has become a blessing and is nothing to be ashamed of," says Alison. Adam wanted to help people and five years after his passing, he is doing just that, and his mission is being achieved!"

For more information on Adam, Alison, and Jake and their true "Heart to Serve" please visit www.helpingupmission.org/adams-legacy

Helping Up Mission thanks all three of you for your dedication and involvement in true life-transformation!



Our Mission

Helping Up Mission provides hope to people experiencing homelessness, poverty or addiction by meeting their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.

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