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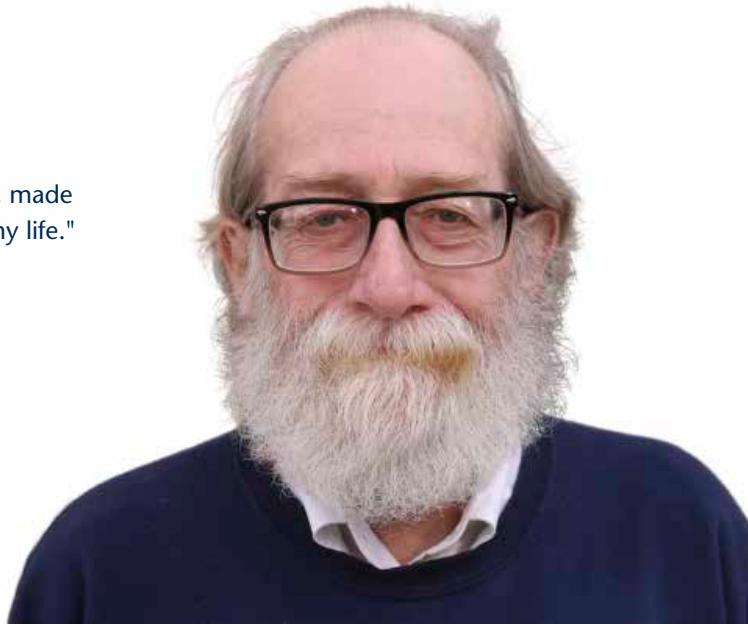
RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



Raven's 19th Annual
Coat Giveaway
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"Really talking about my trauma, made me aware of other traumas in my life."



Michael has Learned to Forgive

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 **Helping Up Mission™**

NOW IT'S UP TO US

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Michael, age 69, was born and raised in a small rural farming town of West Grove, Pennsylvania. The youngest of five children, Michael learned to be invisible. "My dad was a heavy disciplinarian," recalls Michael. "We were very well behaved, scared actually. My mother was emotionally distant. I spent all my time alone in music, electronics, and books. In second grade my teacher wrote my parents to tell them that I just stare out of the window. She thought that I was not paying attention, when really, I was somewhere else."

"I had my first drink at age 11. I would go downstairs after one of my parent's pinochle games and drink any leftover beverages. I never got a buzz. In high school, I started smoking weed, taking speed, and dropping acid. All my friends were into music, and we would sit around, get high, and play. As soon as I graduated from high school, I moved out. At the time, I thought the trauma from my parents was normal for everybody. I had no idea that the abuse was not normal!"

"When I went to technical school for my associates degree, I started working with bands as a sound engineer. I was good at it. When you are working with a rock and roll band, you

are at a club or bar every night. I drank, but never to excess. I had a job to do."

"My brother Joe did three tours of Vietnam. He came back from the war a changed man, but we became close again. 23 months later, he committed suicide. My dad called me up and told me to get my brother. I went into the woods, found his body, and it destroyed me. It took me 10 years in and out of mental institutions to be able to function properly. During one of my stays, a fellow patient was given a lobotomy. They wheeled him into my room with his eyes wide open and nothing going on in his head. The orderly told me 'if you do not straighten up, this is how you are going to end up.' "

"My sister Jane had diabetes since she was eight, and eventually would need a kidney transplant. We made a pact, that when she was ready, I would donate my kidney to her. One day she called me and said, 'Michael it is time to come home.' The first thing my mother said to me was, 'You can't give her a kidney. You do drugs!' My sister was so mad at our parents for trying to run her life, that she overdosed on insulin the night before her transplant. 12 years after my brother Joe killed himself."

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NOW IT'S UP TO US

Bob's Monthly Update

Dear friends,

Each Christmas, our team works very hard to make this a special time here at Helping Up Mission. There is no time of year when it is harder for our clients to be separated from their loved ones. But with the help of some volunteer "elves" we have put up 15 Christmas trees and countless festive decorations to bring the feeling of a warm home. Volunteers, like the wonderful Ravens players, also help us to serve special meals during this season and distribute brand new warm coats, hats, and gloves. And a group of special donors help us to provide Christmas presents for our clients to give to their young children and grandchildren. All of these activities are a new beginning for our clients to bring back the special feelings of Christmas, and to build bridges back to their families.

Those of us who have ever had a loved one suffering with addiction know that the holidays create feelings of wanting to be close, and to have the normalcy of traditions—but those things are so often disrupted because of the chaos and drama of the addiction. Families can feel frustration and even anger when their expectations for the holidays are broken by the realities of living with someone in addiction.

The holidays bring into focus the need for our work here at HUM. This year marks my 28th Christmas at Helping Up Mission, and I never tire of witnessing how small kindnesses bring hope to people who are working so hard to transform their lives. Many of our donors and volunteers here at HUM have had a loved one with addiction—or experienced it themselves. And they have found, as I have, that by giving back to help others, we are healed ourselves.

In our feature story this month, Michael had a very tough childhood which contributed to him turning to drugs and alcohol at a young age. I happen to know that today, Michael is doing his Work Therapy in our Treatment Office—where he gets to help others schedule appointments for the care and services they will need on their road to a new life. He expresses his gratitude for all that donors like you have done in his life when he says, "I would like to thank the donors sincerely. Without your support, this beautiful place could not happen. You are changing people's lives."

I also never tire of thanking you, our donors, for the generosity that leads you to change the life of someone like Michael. When you provide a hot meal, a safe warm bed, and a healing community, you are truly sharing the blessings of Christmas! On behalf of the 550 men and women you are helping every day of the year, I send our warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

Bob

Great Scott!

On Wednesday, November 16th, Bart Scott, along with Raven's legends Femi Ayanbadejo, Michael Mcrary, Ray Rice, Jimmy Smith, and Bryan Hall, hosted his Annual Thanksgiving Dinner. The men and women of our program were served turkey, ham, and all the fixings with their choice of pumpkin or sweet potato pie! We were so grateful for Bart's smile and his fellow players' heartfelt presence that made this event a success!



* Due to an overabundance of kindness, we are not accepting women's and children's clothing through December 31st.

** This holiday season you can select HUM as your charity of choice at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 5% of your purchase at no cost to you!

Michael has Learned to Forgive

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"Eventually, I met a lady named Carol in 1983, and we were married for 22 years. We started drinking excessively, but I was a functional drunk. We began using methamphetamines, which we would use for the next 20 years. Eventually we got busted. The cops came in, stuck seven guns in my face, and off we went to jail."

"By 2001, all that I wanted to do was lay around and stay high. In 2005, Carol could not take it anymore and told me that I had to leave. I tried to commit suicide two times. I do not know how I survived even one of the attempts but ended up at a hospital where they gave me a dual diagnosis of drug abuse and bipolar disorder. Shortly after my diagnosis, I ended up at Water Street Rescue Mission in Lancaster, Pa., where I began my relationship with Jesus."

"In 2017, I got pneumococcal pneumonia. It took a year for me to function again. I could not work anymore and retired at age 65. To "change places," I moved away and

abandoned my recovery network. I started using meth and drinking again. And then Covid happened. I started drinking daily. I was not drinking to get high; I was drinking for oblivion. After 3 years of this lifestyle, and three black out trips to the hospital in Elkton, Md, I finally heard about Helping Up Mission (HUM). My nurse gave me a number for Jason at Maryland State Health. Jason told me about HUM, picked me up, drove me to Baltimore, and dropped me off."

"At first, I was scared and not thinking clearly but, everybody was so nice and helpful. I was so angry and irritable that the other clients called me 'grumpy old man!' By the third week, I knew HUM was where I was supposed to be. There is a feeling here that you know you are safe. I got out of my comfort zone and joined the choir. One day I was talking to the Treatment Intern about the Bible, and he asked me why I was here. I opened up about my trauma from my dysfunctional family and

the deaths of my siblings. Soon, I was talking to my Treatment Coordinator Todd Starkey, and he helped me forgive them."

"Really talking about my trauma made me aware of other traumas in my life. HUM offered a spiritual healing trauma class which was helpful. I then read a manual on trauma that was just neurological. Soon, I was mentally able to absorb both the therapist's and survivor's viewpoints. I have been working on trauma a lot in the past six months and just for myself, I took HUM's trauma class again."

"I would like to thank the donors sincerely. Without your support, this beautiful place could not happen. You are changing people's lives."

"To the guys like me who need help – If you are not familiar with the Bible, and you do not know much about Jesus, I would look into it. The Bible has strengthened my relationship with God."

To read more of Michael's story, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/michaelg

Focus on Recovery – Mike Rallo, Director of Spiritual Life



"Trauma isn't what happens outside of you. Trauma is what happens inside of the person."

That is one of the truths we teach here.

When you look at the feature story of Michael, you will see more about why we take trauma and the healing of it so importantly in the work of helping addicts.

"I thought what happened to me growing up was normal." Michael said. "I had no idea that what was happening to me as a child was not supposed to be happening."

We don't dredge up the trauma of people to make excuses for them. We surface the trauma so the deep wounds can be healed by God's grace and the forgiveness that can take place. Jesus said, blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. The insinuation there is that if we don't learn how to grieve the sickness and sadness of a broken world and our broken selves, we will seek false comfort.

Michael did the false comfort thing for many years to numb himself from feeling.

Then Michael came to the Mission. At first, he was scared. "I was so angry when I first came here," he said. I was the "grumpy old man", but then I started to feel safe."

And incredibly, the grumpy old man joined the choir, started sharing with his treatment coordinator, and began opening up about all of the 'hurt that was done to me and all of the hurt I did to others.' Michael joined one of our trauma healing groups, which is not for the faint of heart. Mike made himself vulnerable in a community of others that had been hurt and hurt others. He was not alone anymore.

"In the community I found acceptance, and then I learned to be forgiven and to forgive. I am still an old man," he laughed. "I am not the grumpy old man."

Urgent! Meals needed BEFORE Christmas!

Your help is needed to serve more than 45,000 meals this Christmas season.

Christmas is just around the corner. Will you open your heart and bless some of our most vulnerable neighbors?

We're expecting to serve over 45,000 meals to people at Helping Up Mission who are struggling with homelessness and addiction this holiday season. But this can only happen with help from caring friends like you!

At just \$2.10 per meal, imagine how many people you can bless...

With your gift, the holidays here at HUM will culminate in a family-style Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. It's sure to be a blessing to the men and women in our Spiritual Recovery Program, many of whom have forgotten what the warmth and joy of the season can be like.

Your will mean much more than just meals.

That's because for someone who is struggling with homelessness or addiction, a hot, home-cooked meal can be the first step toward a new life filled with promise – toward the abundant life God intended.

So please take a moment to **make your special Christmas gift now**. By visiting: Helpingupmission.org/christmas, you can bless men and women who need to know they're not alone this holiday season. Thank you for your compassion and your partnership!



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410.675.HELP

Donate your car:
[helpingupmission.careeasy.org/](https://Helpingupmission.careeasy.org/)

NOW IT'S UP TO US

Raven's 19th Annual Coat Giveaway



On Monday November 28, we were overjoyed to welcome back the Baltimore Ravens and Kathryn's Closet for their 19th annual coat giveaway. In addition to our men, the chapel was filled with members of the Dunbar Poets football team – one win away from remaining state champions. Returning in his role as trivia emcee, Raven's kicker Justin Tucker thrilled the crowd with humorous questions and the chance to win signed Raven's footballs. One lucky man caught a "touchdown" pass from MVP quarterback Lamar Jackson!

To prepare for the harsh winter weather ahead, hundreds of coats, gloves, hats, and socks were generously given by players to the men. In total, 12 Ravens players handed out coats: including Mark Andrews, Roquan Smith, Tyler Lindenbaugh among others. The room was full of support, cheerful energy, and spontaneous selfies. A special thank you to the team at Regional Management Inc. for providing a hot grilled lunch for our residents and to Strideline for providing the socks!

To check out a local news coverage of the event visit:
<https://helpingupmission.org/news>

We are grateful for the Baltimore Raven's ongoing support, as they continue to bless our community! And for a man battling homelessness and addiction, what a better present than shaking the hands of these amazing players!



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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