

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Crossroads

A PLACE OF GROWTH. A PLACE OF SAFETY.

Christmas 2020

“CROSSROADS HAS MY BACK”

Thanks to you, this woman has turned her life around

When Alena's family moved from Russia to the United States to pursue the American Dream, she wasn't quite two years old.

W But the dream didn't quite turn out the way they'd hoped.

Her mother had been severely disabled in a workplace accident in Russia and was mostly unable to care for her family — a husband and three children. As Alena, the only daughter, grew, more and more responsibility fell on her shoulders — cooking, cleaning and caring for her parents and two brothers.

She missed out on a carefree childhood and grew to resent the burden of being the family's lone caregiver.

“It was very hard for me, because I was forced to grow up too fast,” Alena says. “Everything fell onto me.”

By the time she was 17, she had turned to heroin to escape her troubles. “It made me feel so free,” she says. But that “freedom” came with a steep cost. Alena would remain addicted to the drug for the next 12 years.



After years of heroin addiction, Alena has found freedom at last.

“I couldn't stop,” she says. “All my money was going to my next high.”

And by then, her whole family was struggling with addictions. Alena says there were times when they all got high together.

Things didn't get any easier when her mother died of heart failure, far too young. Alena was just 22 when she lost her mom.

“I was devastated,” she says. “She was the rock. She held our family together.”

(continued on page 3)

Names and photographs in this newsletter may have been changed to protect confidentiality.

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**From
Executive Director
Daniel Buller**



“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes . . .”

— Romans 1:16

That verse is a great reminder for us to share the gospel with every person God has placed under our care. That’s one of my priorities as the Mission’s new executive director, as it was under my predecessor, Jerry Bumgardner.

Jerry, who recently retired, set a perfect example of what it means to love our clients unconditionally. So we not only meet their needs of food and shelter, but also their emotional and spiritual needs.

We do that year-round, of course, thanks to your support. But people are especially open to Jesus at the time we celebrate his birth. So please join me in praying that our guests will be receptive to the love of the gospel this Christmas season. Thank you.



Daniel Buller
Executive Director



**This Christmas,
Bev is enjoying
the fruit of a new
life, thanks to you.**

“Never Felt That Kind of Love”



Bev found unconditional embrace at Crossroads

When a relationship went sour and with no family or friends nearby, Bev suddenly found herself homeless.

She spent the next two months living on the streets. “It was tough,” she says, “because I had nothing to eat and no place to go.”

It was made more even more difficult and frightening by the fact that Bev is blind. “It’s hard being alone out there, not knowing what’s going to happen.”

She relied on the kindness of strangers until someone suggested she go to Crossroads. She walked through our doors with high hopes.

“I hoped somebody would help me get my life back together,” Bev says. “I hoped I would get back on my feet, get stable and get closer to God.”

In her two years at the Mission, all of those hopes became reality. She moved out earlier this year, and now lives independently in her own apartment.

Bev says none of it would have happened without your support.

“Thanks to you, I got three meals a day, plenty of clothes, a bed and friends,” she says. “But most of all, I felt loved. And that’s what I needed. There’s a lot of love and hope at Crossroads. I’ve never felt that kind of love before.”

Thank YOU for sending that kind of love through your support!



Finding Hope and Faith

Thanks to your support, Kevin found both at Crossroads

A Nebraska winter is no time to be living on the streets. But that's just where Kevin found himself when he lost his housing situation.

With a history of substance abuse and nowhere else to turn, he decided to give Crossroads a try. He walked in, filled out an application, and wondered just how things would turn out.

Turns out, better than he could've imagined.

Today, Kevin is clean, responsible and excited about the path he's on. It's a road to better things, compared to the road to ruin he once walked.

"I don't know where I'd be today without Crossroads," he says. "I'm pretty sure I would have ended up going down that bad road and I wouldn't get back again. Crossroads has really made a difference in my life."

Kevin has taken on more responsibilities and leadership at the Mission. He helps maintain the house, supervises nightly bed checks, and holds his fellow residents accountable.

"I just try to help the other guys out," he says. "It's a great opportunity, and good experience."

Kevin's hopes for the future include getting closer to God, staying sober, and serving those who are in need. "I'd like to become part of the staff at Crossroads," he says.



"I believe in Crossroads," says Kevin, who now wants to help others.

"They've helped me out, and I'd like to do the same for others."

If he could, Kevin would thank you personally for supporting the Mission.

"I believe in Crossroads," he says. "There's not much out there that gives people hope and faith, but Crossroads has given me all that."

Thank you for being a source of hope and faith to Kevin and so many others!

"Crossroads Has My Back" *(continued from cover)*

Alena's addiction finally caught up with her in 2017 when she was charged for distribution, possession, manufacturing and delivery of heroin. She spent the next two years in prison.

When she was paroled in September of 2019, she spent a couple months at a rehab facility, and then had no place to go.

Someone suggested Crossroads.

Since coming here last December, Alena has completely turned her life around. The Crossroads team has helped her to stay sober, get her documents in order (her green card had expired some time ago), and find her a job.

"Crossroads has had my back this whole time," Alena

says, the joy in her voice resonant and clear. "They're always there for me. They never let me fall back into depression, and they're always there when I need to talk."

Alena hates to think what have might have happened without Crossroads.

"If it weren't for Crossroads, I'd be back out on the street," she says. "Crossroads has clothed me, fed me and sheltered me. They've kept me comfortable, they've provided structure, and they've kept me safe."

And if it weren't for compassionate friends like you, many others would find themselves lost and lonely on the streets. Thank you for your support!

Christmas at Crossroads

More opportunities for you to help vulnerable neighbors this holiday season.



As usual at this time of year, there's a lot happening at the Mission, including more ways you can help bring joy and hope to struggling families.

The Giving Tree

Beginning November 16, we'll have Christmas trees in the lobbies of our Kearney and Hastings buildings, but these aren't your typical yuletide decorations.

These are our annual Giving Trees, and they'll be decked out with paper ornaments indicating the age and gender of every one of our guests, children and adults. You can stop by anytime between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. to pick up one or more ornaments, and then shop for that particular adult or child.

We ask that you please return your gifts to the Mission by December 7. Please wrap your gifts, and include the information from the ornament on the outside of the gift, so we can distribute them to the correct recipients at our upcoming Christmas parties.

**Questions? Contact Sam Kamm
at 402.462.6460 or
sam@crossroadsmission.com.**



Christmas Dinner



We typically have a community meal that is open to our guests as well as the community. But 2020 has been anything but typical.

We still hope to have the meal, but it might look a little different this year, depending on the circumstances at the time. We still may need volunteers to help prep, serve and clean up after the meal, but won't know till closer to the event.

We would also, as always, appreciate your food donations for the Christmas dinner, including desserts, stuffing, hams, turkeys, beverages and canned goods.

For the latest information regarding these events, please see our website crossroadsmission.com or call 402.462.6460.



▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ PLEASE COMPLETE AND DETACH THE REPLY FORM BELOW, AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR GIFT. ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

MY CHRISTMAS GIFT TO RESTORE LIVES

CROSSROADS

MISSION AVENUE

702 W. 14th Street
Hastings, NE 68901

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

YES, I want to help care for hungry, homeless and hurting people in South Central Nebraska this holiday season. Here's my gift of:

☐ \$_____ to help as much as possible.

☐ I'd like to give monthly.

My first gift of \$_____ is enclosed.

To give online, visit crossroadsmission.com

Thank you! Please make your check payable to Crossroads Mission Avenue.