

Crossroads

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

A PLACE OF GROWTH. A PLACE OF SAFETY.

Christmas 2021

“I DON’T WANT TO LET THEM DOWN”

How your grace and patience helped Robert realize he wants to change.

Robert has lost count of how many times he’s been to Crossroads Mission Avenue over the last 10 years or so.

Each time he’s been, it’s been for the same reason. “Drinking,” he says. And each time he’s left, same reason: “Drinking.”

Robert, 55, has been drinking for 40 years — and never in moderation.

“Not even close,” he says. “When I drink, I take it to the max. I’ve lost friends, I’ve lost jobs, I’ve been kicked out of bars, all from drinking too much and acting stupid.”

Robert has recently come to believe he’s been repressing anger and trauma from his childhood. He vividly remembers his father abusing his mother when he was just three. And he recalls his mom saying cruel things to him during his teenage years.

“But when I drink, all that goes away,” he says. “No cares, nothing.”

Robert likes coming to the Mission because, he says, “They always give you a chance to redeem yourself.”



Robert is grateful for your support for the Mission . . . and for him.

Each time he returns, he builds on his experience and gets a little closer to victory over his past.

This time, he’s been here for nine months and has worked his way up to a position of leadership. He makes out the list of daily chores and serves as an on-call worker at night. He also has the gift of empathy, especially for those with mental health issues. And he has a calming manner.

This Christmas season, Robert particularly embraces the gift of grace he’s found at the Mission, and he’s more committed than ever to remaining sober. He was almost 200 days clean when we went to print!

“I don’t want to let the Mission down,” he says, “because they’ve been so good to me.”

Thank you for showing grace to folks who are walking the hard road to recovery . . . and for inspiring positive change in their lives.

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

HASTINGS CAMPUS
702 W 14TH STREET
HASTINGS, NE 68901
TEL: 402-462-6460

KEARNEY CAMPUS
1404 E 39TH STREET
KEARNEY, NE 68847
TEL: 308-236-5688

GRAND ISLAND CAMPUS
1910 W 9TH STREET
GRAND ISLAND, NE 68803
TEL: 308-675-1973

**SERVING THOSE IN
NEED SINCE 1983**
CROSSROADSMISSION.COM

**From
Executive Director
Daniel Buller**



*For God so loved the world
that he gave his one and only
Son, that whoever believes in
him shall not perish but have
eternal life.*

— John 3:16

When I was a kid, we saw and heard that verse everywhere. Seems like everybody knew John 3:16, even those who never stepped once inside a church.

Remember that guy in the rainbow wig who showed up on televised sporting events, holding the giant John 3:16 sign? It really was everywhere.

We don't see it so much anymore. That's a shame, because that's the whole gospel right there. It's also what Christmas is all about — the greatest gift of all:

God gave us his one and only Son.

There is no bigger present anyone could get for Christmas. Here at Crossroads, we offer that gift to our guests 24/7/365.

The gift of Jesus is available, for free, anytime, to anyone who asks.

I'm so grateful for that gift . . . and for friends like you who make it possible for us to share that gift with everyone who walks through our doors.

Sincerely,

Daniel Buller



**Mohamed says
he might be dead
without the
Mission's help.**

“On the Right Path Now”

**Thanks to your compassion, Mohamed
has found a home.**

Mohamed knows what it's like to be homeless with no place to go. After all, he was born that way.

He was born in a refugee camp in Kenya, where his family had landed after fleeing war-torn Somalia, where several family members had been killed. When Mohamed was about a year old, his family came to the United States, seeking safety and opportunity.

Mohamed's father deserted the family almost right away, leaving the little boy to grow up without a dad. “I never really knew him,” Mohamed says. “I had no guidance, no role model.”

As Mohamed grew into his teens, he started getting into mischief and minor trouble. By the time he was 17, he was into drugs and frequent brushes with the law. At 20, he was convicted for theft and failure to appear in court, and sentenced to two years in prison.

When he was released early this year, once more he was like a refugee with no place to go . . . till someone pointed him to Crossroads.

“I came here with nothing but the clothes on my back,” Mohamed says. “But once I got here, they were a big help.”

In addition to providing food, shelter and clothes, the Mission helped Mohamed land a job as a butcher at the JBS Meat Plant in Grand Island.

Mohamed says without Crossroads, “I probably would've died, or went back to prison. I'm definitely on the right path now.”

Thank YOU for helping him find the right path!

“I’ve Started a New Life”

Yevgeniy got a fresh start . . . and restored relationships with family

The 1990s were a terrible, tragic time in Russia. Communism had been abolished and, theoretically, democracy was the new way.

But not in reality. The country spun into economic and cultural chaos. Crime and lawlessness prevailed. The economy was in shambles. Things got so bad, average life expectancy went down.

Yevgeniy had wanted to get his family out for some time. When his wife suffered a debilitating accident at work and was unable to get the medical care she needed, Yevgeniy felt even more urgency to leave.

So he packed up the family and set off for a new life — first in Canada, and then in the U.S. The family of five — including two sons and a daughter — would find a place to start fresh . . . and hopefully get their matriarch the medical attention she needed.

Unfortunately, the dream never materialized. Yevgeniy’s wife never got better, and the bulk of the home duties — cooking, cleaning and caring for her parents and brothers — fell to their young daughter, Alena.

Yevgeniy’s own health started to decline, and he drank heavily. Alena, overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a caregiver, started using drugs to cope. Then, when her mother died in 2012, Alena fell hard into a heroin habit.

Yevgeniy, devastated by his wife’s death, drank to cope. “Her death knocked me off my feet,” he says. “I never understood loneliness until she passed. I felt really lost. Drinking helped me relax and helped me cope with my feelings.”

The family was in bad shape. Alena ended up in prison on a drug charge, serving two years. When she was released in 2020, she ended up at Crossroads, where her life was dramatically changed. (We told Alena’s story in depth in our 2020 Christmas newsletter.)

Now that Alena had found new life, she wanted the same for her father.

A new state of mind

Since Crossroads had helped Alena kick her drug habit and get back on her feet, she knew the Mission could do the same for her father.



Alena and Yevgeniy both found fresh starts at Crossroads.

So Yevgeniy came to Crossroads, where he has also turned his life around. He has quit drinking, he’s much happier, and his relationship with his children — all adults now — has dramatically improved. Particularly with Alena.

“Today, my state of mind is feeling freedom,” Yevgeniy says. “I feel like I’ve started a new life, but I know my time is running out.”

Yevgeniy, worn down by a hard life in the construction business, has numerous health issues — heart problems, clogged arteries, chronic pain. Medical intervention, including several operations, have helped.

He is now living with Alena and her boyfriend, who care for Yevgeniy. And the father-daughter relationship is stronger than ever.

“My whole life, my dad was absent — not physically, but emotionally and mentally,” says Alena. “We never had any conversation.

“But now, we sit down and have great conversation. You can see in his face that he’s happy. It’s such a good feeling to have a relationship with your parent that you’ve known all your life, but you feel like you just met.”

Because of you, people find new life and relationships are restored at Crossroads. Thank you!



Christmas at Crossroads

Opportunities for you to serve 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 18, we'll have Christmas trees in the lobbies of our Kearney, Hastings and Grand Island locations. 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 9 p.m. to pick up one or more ornaments, and then shop for that particular adult or child.

We ask that you return your gifts to the Mission by December 13. 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? Call 402.462.6460 or email info@crossroadsmission.com.



Christmas Dinner

We traditionally have a community holiday meal for our guests and the community.

We need volunteers to help prep, serve and clean up after the meal. And we need, as always, 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.



MISI-CMA-21065

N22A1A

Please remember Crossroads this Christmas!

Donate on GivingTuesday, November 30, 2021 • Give anytime online at crossroadsmission.com