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→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

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UPDATE



Praise be to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! If we trust and rely on Him, He is always there to guide and protect us. While we don't always know why some things happen, we know we can trust Him to

work all things for our good. While the devil's purpose is always to destroy, God's purpose is to build up and add to. He is always seeking to make things better, and He is an awesome God.

Christianity is a one on one personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We grow by understanding one thing about Him at a time. The devil has religious spirits whose job and purpose are to convince individuals they have reached the top and don't need to grow. They think they know it all. The person who allows this to happen condemns others and puts them down, but he believes he is just spreading the truth. We have more than one thousand organized Christian religions in the United State alone, not counting small groups. Which one is right? Maybe it is just the Spirit of Christ, which we know by the fruits in 1 Corinthians 13 – mainly called love.

Hand Up has over 300 individuals who believe something about God, but

mostly a little different from each other. Some have been so hurt by their church in the past that they don't want anything to do with Christians. Some don't blame God as much as they blame the people claiming to be Christians. It is my responsibility to show them the love of Christ and take religion out of the equation. If they want the religious part, they have the freedom to find the religion of their choice. No religion supports us in helping people, but in those religions there are people who support us. True love is active, not just religious talk. All of men's sins are forgivable, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Those with a religious spirit cannot forgive and accept most of our residents as brothers and sisters. A representative of one of the largest evangelical religions came on our property and said, "You better not let one of your clients set foot on our property." That is a religious spirit, not Christ's Spirit.

Due to several reasons for the increase in expenses, our building projects have been slowed down due to not enough cash flow. Loans are not easy to get, and we must show more profit to get there. Being a non-profit even makes it harder. With Hand Up, 5% of our income goes to people other than our clients and our program for management and oversight. That means 95% of all income goes to the clients and their program needs. One person in the know told me they helped get a man into a place that did everything we do, and it cost \$4200 a month. That did not include the spiritual and mental assistance provided by our program. We do it for \$2400 a month, and more than 90% of that is paid for by the clients themselves.

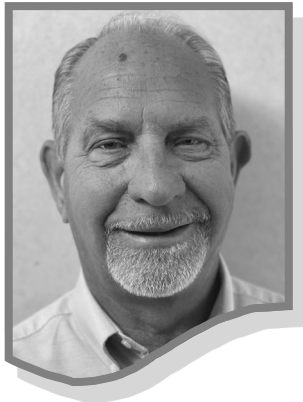
Here is the thing. Getting a loan for more beds is difficult. We are helping almost

50 men who are living in tents so they can hold a job, and they are holding a job. If you want to donate things, we mostly need land and buildings in the right place, some mobile homes (moved and set up), air conditioners (mostly condensers), and trained labor (A/C, plumbing, carpenters). Living faith is what it takes. All of it will be used many years, and your reward will be from the Lord.

Plus, I can always use help if the intentions are good. Please call me personally.

-David Nichols

I want to introduce you to one of our new staff members. I have mentioned him before, and now you can hear from him about his life experience. We hired Bill Goble almost as soon as he arrived at Hand Up because we had already met him



during at one of the Resource Fairs I attended last year. He had the qualifications and experience we wanted to find. I will let you hear from him now.

-Ray Riddle

I have never been one to stand out in the crowd, so please bear with me as I talk about myself. I grew up in the traditional country Baptist Church. My dad was a preacher for some of the smallest churches in America, but they always believed in revival and praying on their knees. I would like to say I grew up proper, but there were two things that interfered with that. First, I lived in the country, where there were many things to get me into trouble. Second, I have two older brothers. Later, I found myself skipping through life without a real plan, but I still managed to do

okay. Secretly, I was not living a great life.

I worked for Love's Travel Stops just prior to getting arrested, and I was doing well. I traveled a bit. Unfortunately, my life took a nasty turn with my time in prison. I had that moment when I realized everything I thought was good came crashing down. When I walked out of prison, I came to Hand Up with nothing more than the clothes on my back and a lot of Keefee Coffee. God has been very good to me since that time. He has allowed me to serve the ministry through a gift of organization, and my goal is to continue helping as much as I can. I want to allow guys to expand their horizons and get used to life on the outside. The first six months is always the hardest, but there is light



at the end of the tunnel. We want our residents to succeed and realize there is life beyond prison and beyond Hand Up. We only want the best for those who are willing to work towards their goals.

-William Goble

TESTIMONIES

I was born in Oklahoma City in 1967, but I grew up in Edmond, Oklahoma. I have two brothers and a sister. I had a very violent and abusive childhood. My mother told she wished I had never been born. She saw my dad when she looked at me. I forgave her later. She was married five times. I left home when I was 16, and I joined the carnival. I traveled with the carnival for 15 years. I learned my work ethic in the carnival, but I also learned to shoot meth. We worked 40 or 50 hours with no sleep sometimes.

I came home a settle down in 2004, working construction jobs and restaurant jobs. I was arrested in 2005, and I was released from prison in February 2023. I came to Hand Up when I discharged from prison. I got a job doing concrete work, but I was laid off in May 2023. I am now doing construction for Hand Up, but I am applying for other jobs. I thank Hand Up for all of the help they have given me.

Daniel Robinson

I was born in Cushing, Oklahoma in 1974. My father left us when I was five years old. The last thing I remember of him is he left me and my brother in the middle of the floor with a gallon of milk, our Hot Wheels cars, and the A-Team van. We never saw him again. I was taken away from my mother when I was seven. This was because I started a fire in the house next door. I never lived with my mother or brother again. I went from foster home to foster home, not knowing where my next house was going to be. It was troublesome to me, even as a child. It wasn't just the different houses or different parents. It was also the hospitals and the medicines.

The saddest part was that my mother never searched for me. This has pained my whole life. It was bad enough that I didn't have a father. Now I didn't have a mother or a brother. I lived in the foster system until I was 19 years old. When 19, I entered the criminal justice system. I was sentenced to 45 years, but I served only 21 years. I was released in 2015, and I came to Hand Up Ministries. I moved to Kentucky in 2016, but I returned to Hand Up in 2023. I was welcomed back to Hand Up because I had left on good terms in 2016.

My experience has been good, because God sent me here for a second chance at life. The Lord called me back. I work for Cracker Barrel. I worked there Kentucky, and I was able to transfer to Oklahoma. I am here for the second time, and I am seeing old friends and making new friends. I am very grateful to Hand Up for allowing me to come home to Hand Up. I belong here.



-Darren Ravia

I was born in Holdenville, Oklahoma in 1957. My family lived there for eight years, and then we moved to Edmond, where we lived for four years. We moved to Colgate, and we lived in Colgate for two years. Finally, we moved to Shawnee, where I graduated from high school. My mom was a stay-at-home mom, and my dad worked for the telephone company. He was constantly going to different schools to improve his skills for work, and this helped him move up through the company.

This was the main reason we moved so much.

I joined the Air Force after I graduated from high school, and I spent four years in the military. Our family was somewhat religious, and at times we attended a Southern Baptist church. I accepted Christ when I was 12 years old, and I was baptized. I quit going to church when I was in the military, and I partied with my friends. We smoked weed and drank alcohol. I continued to party after I left the Air Force.

After I retired, I gave up drinking and dope smoking, and I got into using my computer. I was watching internet porn, and this is what got me into trouble. I spent four years in prison. Prior to leaving prison, my case manager told me I needed to find a place to live. I didn't know what I was going to do. My niece said I should put in an application at Hand Up Ministries. I was happy when I learned I had been accepted at Hand Up. Because I live at hand Up, I am not stressed, and I feel safe from the bad stuff I see going on outside on the street. Through God and Hand Up Ministries, I can get my life back on track.

-Anonymous

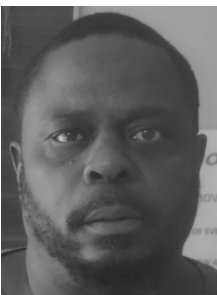
I have known God all of my life. My grandpa was a pastor. Before he passed, he taught me about the trinity. I was not always close to God. There was even a time when I thought He didn't exist. I rebelled against God in my early teens, and I continued to rebel against Him into early adulthood. I got mixed up with drugs, and this led to my first felony. I got back close with God, and I was doing well until I fell back into my old ways. This time, I took the drug habit further by doing meth. To this day, I believe God sent me to MACC, which is basically meth central, so He could show me I don't need drugs to mask my pains. He introduced me to Celebrate Recovery and Genesis One. I met many people who were going through the same things I was. Between God working on me through Celebrate Recovery and Genesis One, I have let go of my past, and I am looking toward a new and brighter future.

-Jeffery Hinshaw

In was born in September 1969. I had a normal childhood. I played soccer and football. We went to Wednesday prayer service and Sunday Mass. I went to Putnam Heights Elementary school when Jimmy Carter was president. I also went to Polk Elementary, Jackson Middle School, and Northwest Classen High School. We moved to the southeast side of Oklahoma City, and I graduated from Crooked Oak High School in 1987. I had normal, Christian childhood.

I had my first run-in with the law in 1988. I jumped into a man's car and drove away, and I was caught down the street. I spent three months in jail. My mom bonded me out, but something didn't make sense to her. She saw I was a different person. I was speaking irrationally and not making sense. My sister suggested I go to the crisis center. I was diagnosed with schizophrenia. My father had been diagnosed with schizophrenia many years earlier. I was hospitalized at Griffin Memorial Hospital, where they put me on medication. The drugs didn't work.

I self-medicated with crack cocaine. It was a great high. The Lord was always by my side. I continued to have trouble throughout the years. I was in and out of hospitals, and I went to prison four times. I am now at Hand Up Ministries, and I am ready to recover. I am staying clean, and I am taking my recovery one day at a time. I am doing some things I didn't do before. I take my medication as needed, and I go to



my mental health appointments. The one thing I enjoy at Hand Up is the brotherhood. We have coffee in the morning, and we have Saturday night meals. Praise the Lord Jesus!

-Johnnie Johnson

I was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1976. I grew up in an abusive home. The abuse was both verbal and physical. It wasn't a Christian home. Even as a child, I searched for answers. I walked to church by myself. I would pray and pray. My first introduction to crime was when I was 18. I committed a burglary, and I was put into the RID program to help first time offenders change their ways. It didn't work. I robbed again when I was 19. I was stuck in a vicious cycle of drugs and robberies. I was

incarcerated for two years. I was at it again when I was 23, because I thought I was above the law. I learned I wasn't above the law. I served six and a half years for my crime.

Later, I was put on two years of supervised probation. That was when I became homeless and addicted to meth. I went from couch to couch, and I was in a downward spiral. Most of my friends were on meth. I was stuck, surrounded by meth. I wanted to quit doing meth. It was not getting me anywhere. I was failing drug tests for probation. I failed eleven drug tests in eight months. My probation officer asked me if I wanted help. I said yes. I went back to jail, and that was when I found out about Hand Up Ministries. I was at Hand Up two months later.

I was living in a trailer at Hand Up. I failed a drug test at Hand Up, and they sent me to rehab. After rehab, I was accepted at Hand Up again, and I had to live in a tent. That humbled me. I needed to stay off of meth, and Hand Up helped me stay clean. I found the Lord when I was in that tent. I also found a community of men who take care of each other. We fed each other and helped each other. This was the Lord's plan



for our tent community. I now work for Hand Up. They took me in and gave me work. Now I am in trailer again, and I have a place to call home. Praise the Lord for bringing me to Hand Up!

Joseph Terrio

Matthew 6:14

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

We appreciate all our partners and donors. It is your support that enables us to assist individuals back into society as new brothers and sisters in Christ.

