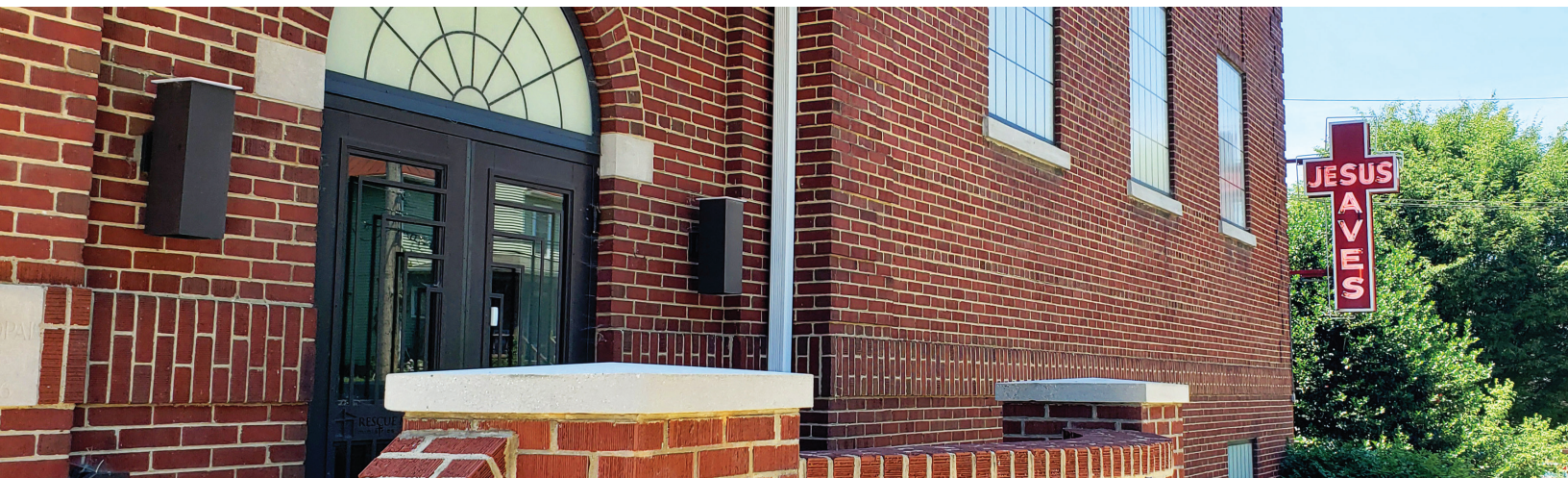




HELPING HURTING PEOPLE IN JESUS' NAME

June 2025
NEWSLETTER



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A Father's Words, A Child's Praise

By C. Lee Clark, Rescue Mission CEO

I didn't know it at the time, but my last conversation with my dad was all about heaven. It was late December, right before Christmas. During one of our weekly phone calls, he talked about worry—how we shouldn't be anxious about so much in this life. It was a sweet conversation, and as we said our goodbyes, he ended the call with, "I love you." I replied the same and hung up, not realizing he would go to sleep a few days later and not wake up.

I've since held tightly to that conversation as a treasured memory. Looking back, I believe Dad sensed that his time was near and wanted to leave me with something lasting—important words to carry forward.

I can be good at worrying. Too good. Dad knew that. I have a tendency to look at potential situations and imagine every negative outcome—mapping out likely scenarios and how to head off trouble. In some ways, that serves me well as a leader, helping me anticipate challenges and put plans in place.

But it also leads to overthinking, self-reliance instead of trusting God, and overly critical analysis—of situations, and sometimes, of people.

I think Dad was trying to remind me to keep perspective—to be grateful for God's good gifts and to trust in God's care more than my own control. And the older I get, the more I want to build those same teachable moments into my relationships with my children and grandchildren.

One recent Sunday morning, I was holding my grandson, facing the front of the church during the final worship song. As the music swelled, I saw him raise his tiny hands in praise. Tears of wonder filled my eyes. In that moment, I saw joy, safety, and gratitude—this two-year-old worshipping God from the center of a family that loves him.

Moments like that are sacred.

From a father's final words to a child's uninhibited praise, we treasure these glimpses of heaven breaking into our lives.

A Father's Words: continued on inside

A Father's Words, A Child's Praise *Continued from front page*

At your Rescue Mission, we see heaven break through, too—light piercing the clouds of brokenness. Every day, we see people wrestling with fear, anxiety, and hardship. We also see people finding health, hope, and healing. We see fathers at every stage of the journey: dads doing their best, some rebuilding relationships, others learning what it means to show up.

We strive to meet each one right where they are, sharing God's love as we "Help Hurting People in Jesus' Name."

Men mentor other men in quiet but powerful ways. Sometimes it's through deep, honest conversation—one man sharing how God used even his biggest

mistakes for good. Other times it's a smile, a welcome, or setting healthy boundaries that lead to better outcomes. Each of these moments helps shape stronger men, healthier fathers, and transformed lives.

What is your own treasured memory of wisdom or connection with an important man in your life?

As we reflect this Father's Day, can we release some of the worry we carry and place our trust in a Heavenly Father who loves us without fail?

Relationships are complicated—often a mixture of joy and pain, presence and absence. We can't change the past, and we can't

always change others. But we can choose how we show up today. We can choose to be a reflection of love, courage, and grace for the people around us.

As Father's Day approaches, consider how you can reflect the love of our Heavenly Father to someone who needs it. A kind word. A second chance. A reminder that they're not alone.

Your support helps us reach men in crisis with compassion, guidance, and hope. Will you help us continue to lift up fathers, sons, and brothers who are working to rebuild their lives?

Thank you.

THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY TO GIVE!



- **MAIL:** Donations can be mailed to: P.O. Box 11525, Roanoke, VA 24022. You are welcome to use the self addressed envelope included in this newsletter.



- **GIVE ONLINE:** Visit our website at rescuemission.net/donate



- **WISH LIST ITEMS**
 - Updated wish list items can always be found on our website or the Mission's Amazon Wish List
 - Items can be dropped off in Reception any day of the week from 8am - 6pm



- **SIGN UP FOR BREAD, BEDS, AND MEDS:** Become a monthly donor and help provide life-changing resources for our shelter guests. Visit rescuemission.net/monthly-giving for more information.



- **VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME:** Volunteers are vital to the Mission's daily operations. There are many ways to get involved. Visit rescuemission.net/volunteer



- **SPREAD THE WORD:** Tell everyone you know about the Rescue Mission of Roanoke and the services we provide. If you would like to learn more, we have tours every Monday at 12:00 Noon.

A Father's Fight: A Journey from Brokenness to Hope

Here at the Mission, every story of recovery is precious. But on Father's Day, some of the most powerful stories we hear come from the men who are not just working to rebuild their lives - but to reclaim their role as fathers.

One of those stories belongs to Eric, a man whose past was marked by pain, addiction, and incarceration - but whose present is full of purpose, compassion, and hope.

Before Eric walked through the Mission's doors for recovery, he had already stayed in the Shelter several times. Back then, he admits he was lost.

"I was very irresponsible," Eric shares. "Selling drugs, getting high, running the streets... I didn't know anything about being a man, let alone a father."

In those days, Eric remembers watching a team member named Karl from afar - drawn to the way he carried himself and treated others. "There was just something about him. I didn't understand how he could be so calm in all the chaos. But I kept watching."

After Eric was released from incarceration, he returned to the Rescue Mission in 2015 and entered The Way Forward Recovery program. Karl was still here. "I started talking to him more. And eventually, I said to myself, I want to work here someday."

Eric credits Karl as the first real father figure in his life - someone who saw the potential buried beneath his past.

"He inspired me. He encouraged me. He saw something in me I didn't see in myself. And that stuck with me."

That inspiration fueled Eric's journey through the Mission's recovery program - 18 months and 10 days, to be exact. "I went through every phase. I supervised housekeeping. I worked in the pantry. I

worked in the kitchen. Then I was at the thrift store on 460," he says. "Eventually, I was offered a job at the shelter - and I've been here ever since."

Eric is the father of two daughters and two stepsons. His youngest daughter, who is six years old, lives with Eric and his wife, Amanda.

It wasn't always this way. "After I was injured, I had to slow down. That's when I really got to know my kids," he says. "Before, I was just always moving. But that time gave me a chance to really see them - to understand their behaviors, their joys, even to experience the sleepless nights as a parent."

Being a father now gives Eric strength and focus. "It made me more responsible," he says. "I know I have an obligation to take care of my family."

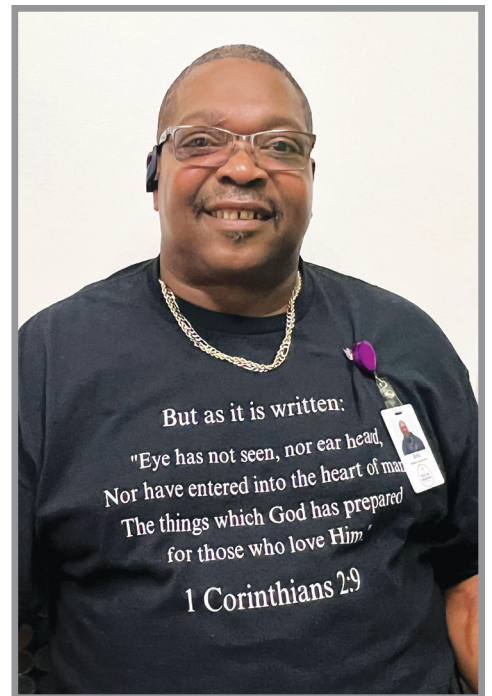
But the path hasn't been easy. Eric is honest about the pain of not being present for his first child and the long-term emotional impact of missed birthdays, prison visits that never happened, and a pride that once kept him silent and ashamed.

"There were times I felt like I was nothing," he says. "You see another man taking care of your child, and it crushes you. But that pain - it changed me. It gave me the motivation to never go back."

Now a respected team member at the Rescue Mission, Eric finds deep purpose in walking alongside men who are where he once was.

"I tell them, stay encouraged. Take it one day at a time. Don't beat yourself up. Learn from your past. Don't let resentment take root." He often quotes Scripture to the guests and reminds them that they are not alone.

"I want to see them make it. I want them



to come back and tell their story. When I see guys who have been at the Mission at the store with their kids and they say, 'Hey Eric, thank you,' I thank God. That's my joy."

Eric's story is one of transformation, but it's also one of continued service. From someone who once questioned whether his life had value, to a man who now serves as a mentor, leader, and example of God's redeeming power.

He remembers how hard it was to be in a place where no one called him "Sir," where no one asked, "How are you feeling today?"

"That is why I make sure the guys here feel seen. Even if they don't believe in themselves yet, I want them to know I believe in them."

Eric recently spoke at a community event about his journey. He admits he was nervous. "So, I asked God to help me. And He did. I got up there and spoke."

The transformation is undeniable.

When asked what the community can do to support fathers at the Rescue Mission, Eric doesn't hesitate. "Have a special day for the dads where they

A Father's Fight: continued on next page

In Memory & Honor of..

For Memory and Honor Gifts received
April 12 through May 9

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can invite their kids. Have cake and ice cream...do something fun. The dads in shelter and recovery don't get the opportunity to experience these moments. It would make them feel special - like they matter."

And they do matter.

This Father's Day, we honor men like Eric - whose courage, honesty, and determination reflect the very heart of the Rescue Mission. His life is a living

testimony that with God's grace and the support of a loving community, redemption is always possible.

This Father's Day, Be Part of a Father's Redemption Story

Eric's journey is a powerful reminder of what's possible when love, accountability, and faith collide. At the Rescue Mission, we believe that every father deserves the chance to heal, reconnect, and become the parent he was created to be.

When you give to the Rescue Mission, you help provide shelter, meals, recovery programs, job training, and spiritual guidance to fathers on the road to restoration. Visit rescuemission.net/donate and honor a dad in your life or support one who is rebuilding his.

Together, we can help more fathers like Eric walk from brokenness to hope - and into the arms of their children with courage, purpose, and dignity.

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 Roberta Sutphin..... Larry & Donna Forrester
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Your June Newsletter!

– Donation Envelope Inside –

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Volunteer.info@RescueMission.net

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 - 1505 Williamson Rd NE, Roanoke, VA 24012
- Go to our **Online Store**:
ebay.com/str/roanokerescuemission

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— The Rescue Mission of Roanoke —

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- 5K Run
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QUESTIONS? Contact us at dash@rescuemission.net