

# SEARCHLIGHT



"If any man be in Christ he is a new creation..." 2 Cor. 5:17

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WINTER 2011

Reaching out to  
the Last, Least,  
Lost and Lonely  
since 1949

## Lost His Job, Then Lost Hope UGM's Discipleship Program

**R**ight before Christmas, 2008, **John Wilson** lost his job here in Dallas. Within a few months his house and car were gone. John and his wife went to Ohio to be close to her family. When John's wife's mother died, along with the fact John couldn't find work, problems existing in their 20-year-old marriage became too big to overcome.

John's a Dallas native, went to Thomas Jefferson High School. His mom and dad still live in the area, as does a sister. He returned home to Texas



at age 57, after not being able to get into any mission in the Dayton area.

John needed help. Only a few days after coming to UGM for shelter, his talks with David Higbee, a Discipleship graduate and current employee of the Mission, led John to enter the Discipleship Program. That was a little over a

year ago. John's focus these days is on "serving God and being more obedient to Him. In the past, all of my obedience had been to the world." John says things are working

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## Cut to the Quick UGM's Discipleship Program

**"P**raise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!" The words kept coming from across the hospital room **Terrice Wilson** was in, recovering from a deep knife wound that had pierced his sternum. Terrice, in an incredible amount of pain, was sharing a hospital room with a minister. Terrice was mad. He was starving, allowed only to eat ice cubes, and in such pain that even a mix of Demerol and morphine only slightly reduced his pain level. Stabbed by a friend during an argument in his family's home, Terrice was separated from his wife, going through a divorce. He had accepted Christ but was not growing or maturing in his faith. A nun came by his room, at the Catholic hospital he was in, with a message: "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need." (Matthew 6:33)

A native of Chicago, Illinois, who spent many years in Champaign, Terrice Wilson had experienced life's ups and downs. A father at the age of 16, had two stints in prison, married three times, twice to the same lady. Finally, in early 2010 Terrice came to the solid conclusion that "maybe life

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## Down, But Not Out COH's Discipleship Program

**B**orn and raised in North Carolina, **Joan K.** had a casual knowledge of God but also had a fierce desire to live for herself. Getting pregnant at age 22 wasn't part of her plan. After losing her mom two years later, Joan, who had two children by now, sought out her youngest son's father. He was abusive but Joan stayed with him. They moved to Texas, and Joan temporarily lost her kids when she was charged with negligence



that was caused by the youngest child's father. She did get both of her boys back, but more bad decisions eventually led to homelessness. Though Joan couldn't see it God

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## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Executive Director,  
William Thompson



**H**omeless people get really excited about Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is for the same reasons that others do, but a part of their excitement is really anxiety about what is not likely to happen in their lives, because being homeless is far from normal and is not, "business as usual."

UGM service providers get excited because we are in the unique position of offering hope for the hurting. That is "business as usual" for us. We bring together two monumental events and focus them on the clients. The first event was the coming of the Pilgrims to the new world for a new beginning and to be able to worship God freely. We give thanks as they did at Thanksgiving time and beyond. The second event was the coming of "The Son of God," the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amazingly, the most meaningful times of the year revolve around these two great events in history. So, business as usual for us is pointing men, women and children to God's Son amidst the excitement of great meals, and great gifts, all symbolizing God's care for us his glorious creation, the greatest gift of all.

Christmas 2010 was special for us at UGM as more people had their needs met by caring individuals who reached out extraordinarily to serve and to provide practical

gifts and toys for homeless people. It was great!! But, there was a special blessing for me this year. It wasn't wrapped in a box, nor did it have ribbons and bows. It was a homeless woman that I encountered about 11p.m. on my way home one night. She was sitting near some bushes not far from a filling station on the east side of Dallas. I went to her to see if she wanted to go to our shelter for women. Her reply was not something I expected to hear. She said, "Sir, I need an apartment." She had been passing through Dallas on her way back to California three months earlier when her car caught fire. She had been evicted from her home because she could not pay the bills. Her husband died last year, followed by her father's death a month later. Because she had no money, she landed on the streets of Dallas. Her life had been reduced to six plastic bags and the promise of a Social Security check, which she hoped to get soon.

God's gift to me was to be able to make a phone call to a person who could say yes to her about a place to live and being part of the process to get her housed. Her eviction stopped the process of applying to nearly 50 apartments. My phone call was made 10 minutes after meeting her. An appointment was made, and the next day she was moving into an apartment! You see, God blessed Union Gospel Mission six years ago to acquire transitional housing for people who are homeless or whose backgrounds prevent them from qualifying for housing elsewhere.

Thank God this widow got to spend Christmas in her own apartment, which UGM furnished with furniture from caring donors, who had no idea when they gave it how God would use it. We continue to receive God's gifts with "Thanks" each day. ■

## Dallas Cowboy Plays Santa

Kids get shoes and toys thanks to teen's action

**A**ustin Hill attends Vanston Middle School in Mesquite, Texas. He's also a member of "Education in Action: Lone Star Leadership Academy," a camp he goes to several times a year. Austin was given an assignment late last fall to come up with a project that would benefit others in the community. Austin, 14, put together a toy drive.

Austin, being a big Cowboys fan, contacted many members of the team about helping. He heard back from Andre Gurode, a nine year veteran from the University of Colorado, who is the Cowboy's starting center. Gurode suggested his foundation provide shoes to the children staying at the Center of Hope.

Andre and Austin showed up at the COH on December 21<sup>st</sup>. Andre, playing the role of Santa, passed out 50 pairs of shoes to the kids.

Austin, who attends The Potter's House with his father, was impressed and somewhat saddened. "I had no idea how many kids are homeless in Dallas. I think it's a really good thing what the Center of Hope is doing, I just wish it didn't need to be done." Austin visited the Center of Hope again on Christmas Eve, handing out toys he and Andre had collected.

Andre Gurode has his own foundation, "The Center of Attention." The Center's mission is "to educate and increase awareness of key issues affecting youths including initiatives to aid children that have been homeless."

Thanks to Austin for having the vision. Thanks to Andre for helping make it happen. ■



Austin with Andre Gurode.



Austin hands out gifts.

## Help Change A Person's Life

Donate Your Car, Truck or RV,  
Running or Not,  
to the Union Gospel Mission &  
Receive the Maximum Tax Deduction  
for Your Donation!



Call Steven Rosso: 214-637-6117,  
Ext. 115 or 805-709-4232  
srosso@ugmdallas.org

Reaching the last, least, lost and lonely since 1949

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**John Wilson: *Lost His Job, Then Lost Hope***

out better. His goal is to leave UGM with a job and the tools to live independently.

As he reflects on the last year of being in a homeless shelter, John says, "What a blessing this Mission has been. I've been given a roof over my head, good food and great teaching both by Dr. Cobby Asante-Mensah and Isaac Smith" (the Mission's senior chaplains). ■



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**Joan K.: *Down, But Not Out***

was working to redeem her and give her a future brighter than she could ever imagine. While forced to stay at the Salvation Army Shelter on Harry Hines Blvd., she heard about the Center of Hope. Joining the Discipleship Program allowed Joan to see God had special plans for her.

"Being in the Discipleship Program has helped me to learn and understand who God is and who I am. In phase 2, I'm learning how to observe and interpret and apply the Word in my life. And this is what I plan to continue to do when I graduate. I want to continue my education at a local Bible college and from there enroll into Dallas Theology Seminary, to earn a Master's in Youth Ministry. After finishing DTS, my biggest dream is to go to Jerusalem, where my Big Brother, Jesus Christ, walked. My two sons are in different places, the oldest is 23 living on his own in North Carolina with a job. My youngest is living with my sister in Michigan, getting ready to graduate high school. He's 18. I realize now, that if it wasn't for Jesus, I wouldn't be here at the Center of Hope. He led me here to fix my life the way it should have been."



Joan recently moved into the Mission's new apartment complex. She is a member of the original group of Discipleship and client women to move there. ■

**Calvert Place/COH 2010 Update**

|                                               |        |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------|
| <b>OCTOBER</b>                                |        |
| Professions of faith in Christ.....           | 39     |
| Recommitments .....                           | 96     |
| Meals served.....                             | 25,998 |
| Nights lodging provided .....                 | 9,476  |
| Individual Men, Women & Children Served ..... | 641    |
| <b>NOVEMBER</b>                               |        |
| Professions of faith in Christ.....           | 21     |
| Recommitments .....                           | 78     |
| Meals served.....                             | 25,790 |
| Nights lodging provided .....                 | 9,740  |
| Individual Men, Women & Children Served ..... | 678    |
| <b>DECEMBER</b>                               |        |
| Professions of faith in Christ.....           | 18     |
| Recommitments .....                           | 135    |
| Meals served.....                             | 26,070 |
| Nights lodging provided .....                 | 10,368 |
| Individual Men, Women & Children Served ..... | 680    |

**Honors and Memoriums**

**Donor**

- Anne Billings
- Walter W. Durham
- Ms. Earlene B. Waters
- Waldene Childress
- Jean L. Stanbery
- Patricia Rankin
- Ronald and Margaret Kahn
- Lorrene A. Hangen

**In Memory of**

- Gene Ford
- Herman Balka
- Leland Waters
- Charla Leann Read Mercier
- RA and Nora Lechner
- Debbie Nussbaum
- Lois M. Brown
- Garrett Hangen

**Donor**

- Jane Hellmann
- Mr Robert P. Bray
- Noelia Garza
- Tom and Suzan Fulton
- Peggy S. Collier
- The Lyda Hill Foundation
- Bonnie and Ralph Blackman

**In Honor of**

- Dave Stephenson
- Mark and Charlene Shoen
- Mrs. Sandra D. Malagon
- Cliff and Jan Hand
- Daughter Becky
- Hill Washburne
- Allen Gullledge

**ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE!**

If you have new or gently used clothing or household goods that you'd like to donate and receive a tax deduction on, please bring them to the UGM Super Thrift Store, located at the corner of Story Road and Highway 183 in Irving, open 9-9 Monday through Saturday. All income derived from the thrift store sales allows the Mission to reach out to more of the last, least, lost and lonely of Dallas. For more information, please call Gwen at (972) 252-6040.

**Find Out What's Going on at the Mission!**



UGM now hosts a page on Facebook for all those who want to be more involved in the UGM community on a regular basis. We're easy to find. Just go to your Facebook page and then search for UGM Dallas until you see us. Become a fan and receive regular, real-time updates about what is going on at UGM. Join with our other "fans" and become part of our growing on-line community.



Tired of looking at those dead leaves in your yard? Call UGM and we'll send our yard crew out to gather your leaves, bag them and put them out for bulk trash pickup. **Call Ray Smith at 214-287-3223** to schedule your yard cleanup.

**IN MEMORY** of \_\_\_\_\_

**IN HONOR** of \_\_\_\_\_

Notification (below): Name of bereaved family to be notified of your memorial gift. The amount will be kept confidential.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Union Gospel Mission • 3211 Irving Blvd. • Dallas, TX 75247



## SEARCHLIGHT

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### PLEASE SEND US YOUR ADDRESS CORRECTIONS!

If you have a change of address, or are receiving duplicates, please clip the label below and mail it with correction information. Thank you for helping us save money!

### HELP WANTED!

We're looking to partner with companies in employing the homeless. Contact Bill Thompson at 214-637-6117 ext. 114.

### CURRENT NEEDS

- **CONSTANT PRAYER!**
- 30 Folding Tables
- Engine Hoist
- Laptop Computers
- LCD Projectors/Screens
- Clothing Bailer
- Mailing Equipment
- Portable Air Compressor
- Shredders
- Tool Chest/Kits
- Scrub Uniforms
- Clothing & Shoes—Men, Women, Children
- LARGE PRINT Bibles (New or Used)
- Christian DVD's (Teaching, Stories, Movies)
- Automobiles, Motorcycles, Boats, RVs
- Lawn Equipment: Mowers, Edgers & Weed Eaters
- Donations for Publishing Book on UGM's History

#### For Kitchen:

- 6" Strainer Pans (4)
- 4" Steam Table Pans (10)
- 6" Insert Steam Table Pans (10)
- Commerical Can Opener & Cutlery
- Professional Quisinar
- 10 Kitchen Knives (Butcher, Chopping, etc.)
- Slip-Proof Rubber Floor Mats
- Colanders (2)
- Blender (1)

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please go to [ugmdallas.org](http://ugmdallas.org) and click on Contact Us.

### OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT UGM

- The Union Gospel Mission **Tom Thumb Reward Card**. Ask the Tom Thumb Customer Service Desk to link your Rewards Card to UGM's Charity Number 5454.
- Shop at The UGM Thrift Store located at the corner of Story Road and Hwy. 183 in Irving, Texas.



Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to feed, clothe, and shelter the hungry and homeless at the Union Gospel Mission.

\$15  \$20  \$35  \$50  \$100  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ LITE 0111

PLEASE PRINT (PERSON GIVING GIFT/NAME ON CREDIT CARD):

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

My credit card#: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SEND ME A TOM THUMB REWARDS CARD**

**FOR VOLUNTEER INFO** visit [UGMdallas.org](http://UGMdallas.org). Click "Volunteer."

Please make your check payable to the **Union Gospel Mission** and return it with this form. We will send you a receipt for your tax-deductible gift.

Mail to: Union Gospel Mission • 3211 Irving Blvd. • Dallas, TX 75247 • (214) 637-6117

The purpose of the Union Gospel Mission is to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of homeless men, women and children in the Dallas, Texas area. The physical needs are met by providing meals, clothing, shelter, emergency medical referral, and daycare for children. The emotional needs are met through evaluation and referral to professional counselors. The spiritual needs are met through Chapel services and Bible studies.

Our goal is to restore the last, least, lost and lonely to a productive life by giving them needed life and job skills, as well as teaching them to build a new life on the solid foundation of the Christian faith.

The Union Gospel Mission is non-denominational and is supported by donations from individuals, churches and businesses.



## Mechanic Finds Healing



There is no one face of homelessness. Jimmy Comer went to college, was in the Air Force during Vietnam, and did Civil Service work at Carswell Air Force Base. He later married and worked at his father-in-law's lumberyard. Eventually he lost everything, and has lived on the street for ten years. He slept in a customized cardboard box he

made to work in hot, cold, or rainy weather.

Now 63 years old, he heard about the VA Per Diem Program here at the Mission and was accepted at the local Veteran's Administration office. His impressions of the program: "People here care and treat me with respect. I go to staff devotions and I now attend Skillman Road Bible Church."

Jimmy is on staff as mechanic in UGM's newly renovated Auto Shop. If you donate a car to UGM, Jimmy fixes it to make sure you get the maximum tax deduction when sold to the public.

This life turnaround, in less than five months, has made Jimmy Comer's belief in God's healing even stronger. ■

Continued Testimony from page 1.

### Terrice Wilson: Cut to the Quick



is not all about me."

He came to Dallas specifically to enter the Discipleship Program at UGM. What he found was a program that was longer and more structured than he had anticipated. After about four months, whatever anxiety Terrice might

have been feeling turned into a relaxing peace that he knew could come only from God. Terrice is in the third phase, after he graduates the Discipleship Program he wants to stay in Dallas, become involved in a local church and help young men.

"By help I mean prayerfully win them to Christ instead of losing them to the streets. I know God has brought me through a lot. He has plans; I want to be available to receive God's plans; I feel so blessed to be receiving such great teaching and mentoring from all my chaplains, Dr. Cobby, Brother Isaac and Brother Jim, as well as Executive Director Bill Thompson." ■