

# MILESTONES

*Recovery happens in relationships.*

**EASTER 2023**



## **Easter is Proof God Doesn't Give Up. *Neither Should We.***

*"As a functioning alcoholic you think you have everything under control, but really I was just trying to die." — Kelli*

**I**F GOD HAD DECIDED to give up on us — if He had never sent Jesus — where would you be?

Where would Kelli be if we had given up on her? Where will the men and women on the streets and on the verge of death be in two months if we give up on them today? Think about that as you read Kelli's story.

*"My mom was an alcoholic," she says. "My dad was a heroin addict."*

They married when Kelli's mom got pregnant. She was a sophomore in high school; Kelli's dad was a senior. Their marriage didn't last.

*"My parents never really raised me. After they got a divorce, my mom started drinking a lot more and pawned me off on anybody who would take care of me," she says.*

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# Easter is Proof God Doesn't Give Up. Neither Should We.

*Continued from cover*

Kelli, who graduated in 2016, now works at the Mission helping other women who are struggling, showing them the importance of building healthy relationships and experiencing transformation from the inside out.

*"I feel that I have finally found where I need to be in my life," she says.*

Kelli was always lonely, feeling like no one loved her, so she did the one thing her parents taught her to do. She drank.

When she met a man and got married and had a daughter, she thought she had found the only thing she'd ever been missing — a loving family. But when her daughter grew up and her husband left, Kelli found herself desperate and alone all over again.

## ***Drinking to Die***

*"I was renting rooms at a motel and just drinking vodka to die. I just didn't want to be here anymore," she says.*

Kelli got so drunk one day that she fell down the steps outside of her room. She was injured and spent a week in the hospital. After she got out, she went right back to drinking.

Her daughter, who was an adult by this time, knew that if someone didn't do something, Kelli would die. In desperation, she called Kelli's stepmother and asked her to help. Kelli's stepmother picked Kelli up and brought her to Bethel House here at the Mission.

## ***Transformation Isn't Always a Straight Line***

Kelli enrolled in our recovery program and got sober. But she still struggled to feel like her life had purpose. She was just going through the motions of recovery, rather than living a transformed life.

She started isolating and ended up relapsing. But because she had the tools from her time at the Mission, Kelli was able to ask for help and kept moving forward.

Kelli has been clean and sober three years now! She is truly living a new life.

*"I feel like I have a purpose now," she says.*

The love and support Kelli felt through the generosity of people like you helped her see that God loves her deeply. She now has a relationship with Jesus, and He has allowed her to reconcile with her daughter and form loving, healthy relationships with other people in our community.

*"I feel that I'm truly blessed, and the good Lord blesses me continuously," she says.*

***This Easter, let's come together and bless others who are drinking themselves to death. Let's offer them the hope of Jesus and new life! A gift of \$93.14 can help one person!***







## A NOTE OF FRIENDSHIP FROM ROLF GEYLING

# The Outsiders

I LOVE THE WAY that the Gospel of Mark shares the story of the Resurrection. I recently went through it with the women at Bethel House and it's so good I want to share some of the key points with you, too.

After the resurrection, Jesus is very strategic about who hears the Good News first. It's not government leaders, celebrities of the day, or even apostles who are first told that Jesus has risen. Instead, those chosen to share the message were people on the margins of society — frightened, confused, grieving women.

I love how Jesus turns society's beliefs on its head and gives these women dignity by giving them not only the Good News first, but the task to go and tell others — Peter and the disciples.

You, Kelli, and I wouldn't be who we are today if it weren't for those amazing women, who were seen as "outsiders" in their culture and community! Their story is a reminder that those on the outside of our society aren't on the outside to Jesus.

He sees them. He knows them. He loves them.

And this Easter we have the privilege of sharing that with others who are the "outsiders." This Easter, we get to show them that the Good News is for them, too!

Rolf Geyling  
President

## Have you ever wondered? Rolf Answers Your Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** What is the relationship between homelessness and addiction?

**Answer:** In spite of what some people think, not every person who is homeless is battling addiction. I'd say in my experience it's about 50/50. And while not every person on the streets is addicted, if unchecked, nearly every addict will become homeless

*because addiction, by definition, takes everything. It takes people's livelihood, their family, their relationships, and if allowed to run its course, people end up with nothing, like Kelli.*

*The most important thing to remember is that God calls us to see past both addiction and homelessness, to see the person, and to help them as He enables.*

**We look forward to your questions. If you've "ever wondered," please email Rolf at [newsletter@sbrm.org](mailto:newsletter@sbrm.org)**



# Knitting A New Life

When Jenna Peterson was hired as the Operations Associate this past summer, she had several goals, one of which was to restart the knitting and crochet group at Bethel House that had been suspended during the pandemic.

*"I started this knitting group out of my passion for knitting and crocheting," she says. "Knitting and crochet have given me confidence, provides stress relief, and also serve as an outlet for my creativity. I wanted to share those benefits with the ladies at the Mission who need those more than I do."*

Instruction is given by Jenna and her mom, Carolee, one-on-one to match each person's skill level.

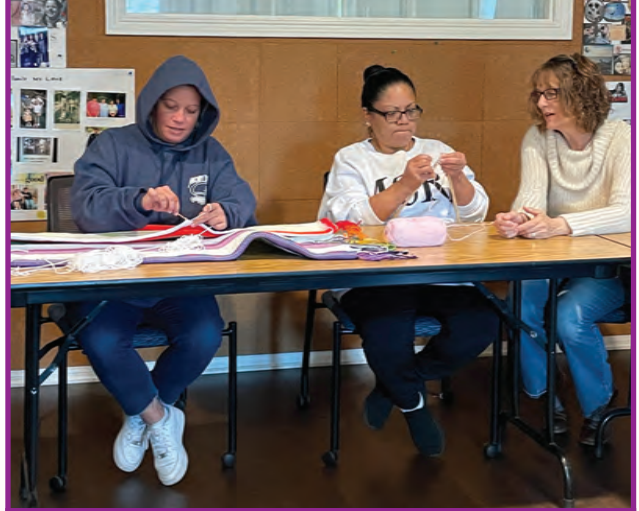
*"Right now, we are working on learning the basic stitches so that they can put their skills together and choose what they would like to create later down the road," Jenna says.*

All the supplies are provided by the Women's Auxiliary so that the ladies don't need to worry about affording needles or yarn.

Now whenever the ladies in the program have "flex-time," you can find some of them in the living room at Bethel House, crafting away, often while listening to Lauren Daigle.

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Some of the proven benefits of knitting include reduced depression and anxiety, increased sense of wellbeing, reduced loneliness and isolation, and lowered blood pressure.







# Ricardo Robinson

## A LIFE WELL LIVED

**July 18, 1951 – August 16, 2022**

*"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." — Psalm 139:16*

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WHEN RICARDO "RICK" ROBINSON graduated from the Mission's 12-month Residential Recovery program in 2004, he knew his life had a new purpose: to live out the Gospel and share Jesus' love with as many people as he could.

He faithfully did that every day until he passed away on August 16, 2022 at the age of 71.

Rick was on staff at the Mission for 14 years and served as an unforgettable presence on our treatment team. He offered counsel, lovingly confronted program participants on their behavior, and jumped at any opportunity to preach and share a message of God's love.

Whenever anyone asked Rick how he was doing, his answer was always the same: *blessed*. Even months after he departed, Rick's deep resounding voice still seems to echo through our building.

As much as we miss him, we know he is now blessed beyond measure.





*Right now, there are other men and women drinking themselves to death like Kelli was. This Easter, we can save their lives and put them on the path to lasting transformation!*

## Offer Lasting Transformation With an Easter Gift

Most of the people who struggle with homelessness and addiction don't lack willpower any more than the rest of us.

They lack healthy relationships. Often, as Kelli's story shows, it's not their fault.

**This Easter, we have the opportunity to show our hurting neighbors that they aren't alone.**

We have the opportunity to help them learn to trust others by showing them care and compassion.

We have the opportunity to introduce them to Jesus.

We have the opportunity to help them experience lasting transformation and start a new life!

**Will you help by sending an Easter gift? Each \$93.15 you give now will provide a day of care, restoration, and healing for one person.**



**Lasting transformation is possible!  
Each \$93.15 you give can help change one life.  
You can also give online at [sbrm.org/hope](https://sbrm.org/hope)**

# EASTER FEAST!

We're so thankful that friends like you make it possible for us to host holiday meals, like our upcoming Easter Feast, for men and women in our community who have nowhere else to turn.

Meals are often the first things that bring someone to the Mission and every meal served gives us the opportunity to share God's love and build relationships with hurting men and women. Meals open doors to help them begin to transform their lives.

We're praying that a lot of people will be impacted this year. Will you pray, too? The Easter Feast will be on April 6. If you'd like to help provide meals, go to: [sbrm.org/give](https://sbrm.org/give)

## MILESTONES

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