



Roseburg Rescue Mission

*A Beacon of Hope
for the Homeless*

FEBRUARY 2018

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Faces Of Homelessness Changing

Rebecca, her husband and four children were a family. She worked full-time as a cashier in a retail store; he worked full-time for an industrial fabrication company. There was addiction and stress in their home. An incident occurred out of anger. The father inflicted harm to one of their children. They reported it to a school counselor. A safety plan had to be put into place. A Child Protective Services caseworker contacted Rebecca. This was an urgent problem. The father had to move out of the house. There was a no contact order put in place between him and the children. A year later, he was sentenced to three months in jail. Rebecca was torn between her husband and her children. She could not be with both anymore. The children lived with an uncle, while she was with her husband. But eventually choosing their children strained the marriage. Rebecca and her children lived with her sister-in-law for a time. One day at work, Rebecca received an unexpected text message that read something like, "Its too stressful. It would be better for you and the kids to go to Samaritan Inn." She was flushed with fear of losing her children. She did not know that she could be here with them. She left work and map searched Samaritan Inn. Along the way, she thought, "What am I doing? Where am I going? How can I do this?" Walking and crying, she knew she had been set up to lose her children by a now vengeful ex-husband.

***There were 98 at
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and 28 children.***

The faces of homelessness are changing. The other night, there were 98 at Samaritan Inn, with 18 mothers and 28 children. Our society has increasing issues with domestic violence, addiction, a lack of marriage commitment, and a decreasing network of family and friends. So a family of five moved into our Samaritan Inn. Rebecca described her children as hostile and angry at first. But she said that after two days, they mellowed out. She liked the structure for meal times, bed times, no video games, and the scheduling of chores for each one. When they move from here, she is taking those routines with them. She said, "I got back to being mom to my kids - having consequences to behavior, not parenting out of guilt." After eight months, she said, "It is amazing here, this is home. I was actually crying last week that I have to leave, because we have a place to go."

Rebecca became a Christian through the influence of her grandfather. When she first arrived at Samaritan Inn, she said, "My relationship with the Lord was broken. I couldn't understand why He was allowing all this to happen. The more I listened in chapel, the more He was speaking to me. It was like a still small voice that was saying, 'Don't be afraid.'" Her favorite Scripture is Psalm 46:5, "God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day."

Homeless Versus Counterculture

The word "homeless" is a very broad term, generally used to describe anyone without a home; it implies nothing about a person's goals in life. The word "camper" only states that a person is living outdoors. "Counterculture" is a term that explains one's choice to not live in the same way as the majority of society. These descriptive words are not about name-calling or categorizing individuals in some negative way; it is only about having a basic understanding of those generally referred to as "homeless." There are people that do not want a home, however they got to that frame of mind, whether by drugs, alcohol, mental illness or rebellion.

There are people that do not want a home.

Some do not want to do what it takes to achieve or maintain a home. A "homeless" person will go to a shelter for help. A "counterculture" person might go to a shelter, but he or she will leave when the conditions of working on independence are imposed. In a large city, it is difficult to distinguish between these two groups; they are on the streets together, because their shelter beds are often full. But in Roseburg, the difference is very clear, because our shelter beds are not full and part-time minimum wage jobs are available. Using these definitions, Roseburg does not have a "homeless" problem on the streets, we have a "counterculture" problem. Adding shelter beds here would have no effect. The homeless men's population at the Mission is not growing, but the counterculture population on the streets is growing. We have to be mindful of who we as a community are supporting.

From the story of the Prodigal Son:

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father.'"

Luke 15:17-18

The Prodigal Son rebelled, but he acknowledged his waywardness and returned to his father for help. The Word of God can cut through even the most calloused layers of opposition. Tough love consequences can be hard to require and watch. In the end, people have to want help. Pushing help on people can enable them, even re-inforce bad behavior. In this free country that we are blessed to have, people cannot be forced against their will to receive assistance, unless they become an immediate threat to their own life or that of others. The terms, "homeless versus counterculture," are over simplified; every person has his or her own situation in life. But, it does provide a better understanding of these individuals, so we can help the homeless and not enable the counterculture.

There is a pendulum of sorts that swings between accountability and compassion. If it moves too far one way, a hardened attitude can develop that would leave the needy to fend for themselves alone. Too far the other way and a culture of total dependence is developed. Neither extreme is good for the giver or receiver. The giver cannot just be charitable for the sake of feeling good about themselves; there is a responsibility to know the net effect on the receiver, lest he be harmed instead.

Thank you, Lynn Antis, Executive Director



Rescue Roseburg

BASIC SERVICES

For Men, Women and Children

Food: 3 meals every day at Men's Mission and Samaritan Inn.

Clothing: Available to all who are staying at either shelter.

Housing: 128 beds for men in Dormitory, New Life Program, and Transitional Housing Program. 104 beds for women in Dormitory, New Life Program, and Family Rooms.

Recovery Program: Open to men and women.

Dayrooms: Open all day at both shelters. Restrooms, showers, laundry, telephone, social service help. No requirement to stay here to use these services.

ITEMS NEEDED:

Large Cans of
Fruit & Vegetables
Rolled Oats
Pancake Mix & Syrup
Spaghetti Noodles
Salt & Pepper
Cooking Oil
Tomato Sauce
Diapers & Baby Wipes
Children's Coats
Men's Shoes & Boots
Bicycles

Vehicle Donations Accepted



Receipts for
Tax Deduction
Provided