

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2021

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PRESSING ON IN 2021



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Remembering TRM's Food Service Director, Mike Shinkle, our very own Santa.
Photo Credit: Erin Tomlinson

We knew at the beginning of this pandemic that in order to keep our doors open to those in need, there would be risks. We knew that in order to face the battle ahead we would have to stay vigilant, and make a daily choice to take on the challenge of continuing to shelter and feed the homeless and hungry even in the midst of deep uncertainty.

But just like every day before the pandemic, TRM staff and volunteers continued to go to work to help those who need us - because that is what we have been called to do.

In late November and December, as cases spiraled in our nation and our community, several of our TRM team members became victims of Covid-19. Unfortunately we lost a dear brother, wonderful servant and staff member to the effects of the virus. Mike Shinkle was the Director of TRM Food Services for over 20 years, a pastor of a local church and a beloved member of the TRM family who faithfully served the homeless, the hungry and the

hurting, creating changes of love and light in the lives of those around him.

His family, church family and TRM staff, volunteers and guests knew him as a man with a supernatural attentiveness to the Holy Spirit, seeking Jesus in everything he did. Volunteers knew him as the guy who made the TRM kitchen the “best place to volunteer” due to the lightheartedness and joy he created around him. Many in the

community knew him as “Santa”, playing the role at TRM and other events for many years every Christmas.

The homeless and those in need knew him as a man of love in action. He had a way of seeing every person individually, working daily with those who had experienced trauma, abuse, addiction and loss and giving them dignity and honor even when society had forgotten them.

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Marissa, a TRM staff member who worked closely with him said: “Mike knew innately that food can be a catalyst for something more, and ultimately a catalyst for deeper relationships. In the different roles that Mike played food was often a central part. He had an understanding that we see in the life of Christ, that he broke bread with his disciples and fed the multitudes.”

For over 20 years he faithfully oversaw TRM food operations, taking on every responsibility that was given to him and helping to provide millions of meals to those in need in the Topeka community, often bringing his family to help him pack sack lunches and serve meals when we didn't have enough volunteers. Mike

understood the simple act of giving food to someone in need can create opportunities for connection, and set the groundwork for transforming a life.

Kourtney, another TRM staff member says, “To be around Mike was to be in the presence of the Lord, because he was such a carrier of the presence of God. He looked at days differently than we looked at them. What I might see as a mundane or prosaic day, Mike would look at as a grace given day, with wonder and awe at the little things. He carried himself in a way that was different, that made people gravitate toward him... He was like the modern day Paul for me.”

Even in the midst of a pandemic and knowing the risks he was taking, Mike went to work every day with an understanding of Christ's love and sacrifice and that gave him boldness to live his life in a way that built treasures in Heaven. He built treasures in his family as well, the father of nine children, 13 grandchildren and a husband to his wife Kim.

The loss of Mike is great, not only to

TRM but also to the homeless and the many in our community who knew him. But in the midst of this loss we remember what Mike taught us over his 20 years of service: he taught us to be faithful, to listen for the voice of God, and even in the face of uncertainty and risk to continue working every day for those who need us.

A few weeks before his death Mike shared a scripture that had been a guiding light in his life:

**From the ends of the earth I call to you,
I call as my heart grows faint;
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
For you have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the foe.
I long to dwell in your tent forever
and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.
Psalm 61:2-4**

Barry Feaker, the Executive Director of TRM says of Mike: “Some people make headlines, and some people write on people's hearts. And that's what Mike did. He truly was an example of loving the one in front of you. Not only was he great at serving millions of meals over the years, but more importantly are the lives that he touched - day in and day out.”

We ask all of you to join us in praying for the Shinkle family

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Often how we saw Mike; in prayer.

as well as all the staff, volunteers and guests at TRM who have been affected by Covid. 2020 taught us and many others that we will have to work together to find solutions in a changing world, and while we work to find those solutions in this new year we carry on in memory of Mike, inspired by the love he shared with the world around him every day.

What is our objective in the new year? As the apostle Paul stated, “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, **but I press on** to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken



Mickey Moore, Barry Feaker and Mike Shinkle

hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **I press on** toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 3:12-14 NIV.

With your continued support and prayers, like our dear brother Mike Shinkle did so well, **we will press on** in our calling to reach the hurting, the hungry, the sick and the homeless with the love of Jesus Christ throughout 2021. †

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