

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2017

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FACILITIES: 785-354-1744

Hope Center for Women & Families #8
Men's Shelter #0
Distribution Center x366
Thrift Store 785-235-9094
TRM Boutique on the Blvd 785-478-5744
Children's Palace 785-730-8810



PROGRAMS: 785-354-1744

Dining Services x322
Food Distribution x366
Education & Mentoring x338
Volunteer Services x393

COMMUNITY:

NET Reach 785-783-2535 x106
Operation Street Reach 785-230-8237

DONATIONS:

Monetary: 785-354-1744 x316
Material: 785-357-4285
Food: 785-357-4285

website: TRMonline.org
email: trm@trmonline.org

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
AMERICAN
PRE-SORT INC

NOTE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BARRY FEAKER:

I asked Amber Cunningham, Leadership Development Coordinator, to share a story about how NET Reach is working in the Hi-Crest community and the transformation occurring in hearts, minds, and lives.

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a wooden deck. He is looking down with a thoughtful or sad expression. The background is a light-colored wooden wall.

**TRANSFORMING
HEARTS, MINDS, AND ...**



TRANSFORMING HEARTS, MINDS, AND ...

A war on poverty was declared in 1964. Since then poverty continues to be a focus of government programming and ministries alike. The Topeka Rescue Mission launched 64 years ago to provide food and shelter for homeless men but as their needs grew, poverty became a word of focus for the Mission. As a nation, do we really understand poverty and its causes?

In my sixth week on the job at NetReach, a division of TRM Ministries established to address poverty, my definition of poverty is shifting. Ten years ago, I began working with the poor of Cambodia – endeavoring to understand the root causes of human trafficking. I realized that only by transforming the hearts and minds of the people, and ultimately the community, would we truly and completely solve the problem of human trafficking.

The same is true of poverty, which is a hard word to pin down because it means different things in different cultures. In Cambodia and other Third World countries, the poor live in crude structures, have no access to healthcare and are lucky if they have more than two meals a day. For some in the Western World, this is also true. In Topeka, we see it in our homeless population and neighborhoods like Hi-Crest where many homes are falling

apart and some go without basics like running water and electricity. However, the Western World defines poverty differently than Third World countries – here it's based on an economic standard. If your income is under a certain amount, then you are considered impoverished. Many who meet this technical standard of poverty still have televisions, air conditioner, refrigerators, washers and dryers, DVD players, stereos,

Cont. on page 2



Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Cont. from page 1

telephones, computers, etc. and are actually wealthier than most of the world's population.

From my experience in Cambodia, those in Third World poverty are generally joyful and vibrant individuals who band together as a community to support each other. They seem content with life even though they are without material goods that are important to western culture. It is believers living in this type of poverty that Jesus is referring to in the Beatitudes when He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." By contrast, in some of the most impoverished communities in the Western World, like Hi-Crest, we see many people living in total isolation. These aren't nurturing communities full of generosity and joy, but disconnected communities full of a survival mindset and many forms of addictions to numb suffering that leads to more dependency instead of self-sufficiency.

That was our motivation for NET Reach – a life giving presence in the heart of a high-risk community with the goal to empower and transform a neighborhood through relationships. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We walk alongside residents and connect them to resources that could help them work toward stabilizing their lives.

When Jesus walked the

earth, every soul was wounded, bound and hurting. No matter how polished the surface – at that point no one had Jesus living inside them. He hadn't paid the price for sin or conquered death by His resurrection. Each town, each encampment on the road, each home was filled with those in desperate need of a savior.

Thousands of years later many of us have heard the gospel message, some of us know Jesus deeply and others just know about Him. Yet still the world teems with wounded, bound and hurting individuals. Topeka is full of the wounded, bound and hurting. Some are homeless, some live in high risk communities like Hi-Crest and others live in affluent neighborhoods.

Suffering transcends culture, race, and socio-economic backgrounds. No one is immune – not even believers. When suffering leads to losing everything, the Rescue Mission becomes a refuge in the storm, a place to receive love and hope in the midst of despair. But where do these individuals go after the storm passes?

Some bounce back and thrive in society again but others remain trapped in generational poverty that cycles them back to the mission over and over again. Generational poverty is described as generations of families that may experience barriers such as addictions,

abuse, financial instability, poor relationships, unemployment, lower education and poor health. The Hi-Crest neighborhood has endured high crime, gangs, high percentages of domestic violence, infant mortality rates and housing that is in great disrepair. They often leave the mission with their families and go back to the very communities and homes that may have traumatized them in the first place. Is it people such as these that Jesus meant when he said, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted?”

Four years ago, NET Reach dared a group of hopeless and isolated individuals from the Hi-Crest neighborhood to dream. Through mentor relationships, job training, housing programs and improved life skills, the residents began to look up again and we celebrated new jobs and weddings, addressed addictions, obtained better education, and some regained custody of children. Through both weekly and summer camp programs we provided kids a safe and nurturing environment to have fun and also experience the love of Jesus. Through love and friendship, our mentors showed them how to dream again!

While these accomplishments are significant, we realize we are just scratching the surface. During these four years we have reached less than 10 percent of the Hi-Crest neighborhood.

So we are asking ourselves, if poverty is a symptom of a much deeper problem and NET Reach’s role is to help stabilize residents – how do we dig deeper to understand the root causes and how do we set the captives free?

I believe, the answer is the same here as it is in Cambodia. We rely on God for discernment and wisdom, as we ask tough questions and identify barriers that keep our residents stuck in generational poverty. Many people believe all they need is life skill education to overcome poverty. But as we utilize assessments focused on adverse childhood experiences (ACE), we are able to better understand how trauma often inhibits the individual’s ability to stop the cycle of generational poverty.

While continuing this effort, we already know how to set the captives free - it’s a transformation of hearts and minds through the person of Jesus Christ. When my entire world collapsed and I walked through my personal valley, I had the Peace of God that transcends all understanding and I could honestly say, it is well with my soul despite the circumstances. I understood that Jesus heals my every wound, he helps me make tough decisions, and meets my every need. We all have our valleys, our places of trial, deep hurts or trauma. Allowing Jesus to move in those

situations means the difference between remaining a captive and being set free! When we are set free, we are able to thrive and God uses our trials to help others. If Hi-Crest becomes a community of individuals who have been set free—can you imagine the shift in culture!

We need apostles to help transform the culture of Hi-Crest. Jesus was the original apostle! An apostle is one sent out with a message that influences culture and the emphasis is on the sender. God sent Jesus to us with a message and no other man in all history has influenced culture like Jesus did! We are each on a unique journey with God – mine led to Cambodia, then Kansas and finally to a forgotten community called Hi-Crest. As believers, we all have a central purpose – to act as apostles of Jesus Christ and our mission is to boldly declare the gospel message, which radically transforms the culture. Where is God sending you to declare the gospel to the broken and wounded?

We dared our Hi-Crest residents to dream and they did!! But we don’t ask them to do something we aren’t willing to do ourselves—we dream big too! Our prayer is for a revival in Hi-Crest that will become like a brush fire that spreads throughout Topeka and beyond. NET Reach will continue to stand in the gap to help residents dream again,

begin stabilizing their lives and resource those emergent needs.

WE NEED YOU, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to partner with us to radically influence the Hi-Crest community and help us reach the other 90 percent!

It may be hard and will most likely be messy! It's likely we will be rejected and persecuted but Jesus said, *"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Revival is always messy! But Jesus pursued the broken, wounded and bound –

he pursued the messy ones with desperate needs!

WE NEED APOSTLES who can embody the Beatitudes, check judgment at the door, see with a Jesus lens and show genuine affection and love to the least of these. Through the Power of the Holy Spirit we can conquer suffering, abuse, neglect, trauma, hopelessness, worthlessness, and loneliness and in doing so lift the oppression of all types of poverty! In our lifetime, it may be an impossible goal to raise

the entire Hi-Crest community above the economic poverty line. However, we desire to demonstrate the love of Jesus and watch as He transforms individuals and the community in radical ways! Jesus is calling us to be merciful and boldly sharing our faith is a great mercy! Jesus said that those who are merciful will receive mercy.

Are you called to be an apostle in Hi-Crest? God is good every day and it's a privilege and joy to serve His Kingdom! Let's set our eyes on Jesus, roll up our sleeves and get to work! †

Blessings, Amber Cunningham



NET Reach

The mission of NET Reach is to bring help and hope to neighborhoods through empowerment and transformation.

Dare To Grow

... is dedicated to nurturing youth from birth to high-school by providing Godly relationships and Biblical programming and knowledge in order to inspire a movement that impacts gangs, human trafficking and childhood trauma in Hi-Crest.

Dare To Dream

... is a leadership and mentoring program that stands in the gap to help Hi-Crest residents stabilize their lives through job readiness, housing improvements, and life skill education. As Jesus begins to transform hearts and minds, we will see a neighborhood transformed and together we dream again.



DARE TO DREAM

Graduates of the Dare To Dream program receive certificates upon completing their training.

CURRENT NEEDS LIST

FOOD ITEMS:

Gallon Cans of Vegetables & Fruits / Coffee / Sack Lunch Items (*i.e. Pudding Cups, Fruit Cups, Snack Crackers, etc.*)

SUPPLY ITEMS:

Storage Bags – Quart & Gallon / Hotel Size Shampoo, Conditioner & Lotion / Large Shampoo
Large Conditioner / Bath Towels, Hand Towels & Wash Cloths / Diapers – All Sizes / Pull-ups – Sizes 4, 5 & 6
Dish Soap / All Purpose Cleaner / Pinesol / Arm & Hammer Washing Soda / 20 Mule Team Borax
Fels Nephtha Laundry Soap / Purex Crystals / Sheet Sets: (Twin, Full, Queen & King Sizes) / Household Sponges
Scrubbers / Adult Sleeping Bags / Hair Brushes

CLOTHING:

Spring/Summer clothing for Men, Women & Children (clothing & shoes can all be used) / Men's & Women's Shoes
– All Sizes / Plus Size Clothing – Men & Women / Children's Clothing & Shoes All Sizes, especially 2T – 5T

FURNITURE *(in good condition)*

Furniture – *i.e.* Couches, Recliners, Loveseats, Dressers, Tables, Mattresses etc.

Large & Small Appliances – *i.e.* Washers, Dryers, Ranges, Freezers, Refrigerators & Microwaves