AFTER A DECADE of heartache and abuse, Amanda finally found the relationship she longed for.

Read the story of her transformation on Page 3

A Publication of CITY UNION MISSION

THE LIGHT

Vol. 57, No. 4 • 2017 Summer Issue

The challenges homeless families face – Page 3
Give where you live this summer – Page 4
Provide back-to-school clothes for kids – Page 4 flap
Dear Friend,

Try to imagine finding yourself without a home, without the funds to quickly find another home, without reliable transportation, and without a network of support that could help you through such a depressing situation. Probably no one reading this will ever be in such a frightening place, but many who come to our Family Shelter each day have experienced and are living such a scenario.

I’ve seen firsthand a father, mother and children arriving at our Family Shelter. They often feel overwhelmed with fear, discouragement, hopelessness and embarrassment. As compassionate staff and volunteers sit down with each person or family, their calmness and hope return. No one wants to find themselves in a homeless condition, but with caring staff providing encouragement and hope, they know they will be okay.

Our staff works hard to make families as comfortable as possible in their time of crisis. Families learn right away that they will receive three meals a day, clean beds, counseling and case management to help them toward stability. Those who come to us with more serious issues are encouraged to consider one of our long-term programs, where they can learn life skills to avoid homelessness and maintain independence in the future.

Your gifts allow us to provide our critical and multifaceted outreach. Thank you for partnering with us to bring hope to Kansas City’s homeless families.

For His glory,

Rev. Dan Doty
Executive Director

Make September Mission Month

During September, we invite you to help us prepare for the months ahead as we focus on feeding our hurting neighbors and meeting special fall and winter needs. We’re requesting collections of canned corn, green beans, mixed vegetables and fruits to include in the more than 685 meals prepared daily for our residents and hungry guests. Your donations of these items by October 1 would be especially appreciated.

You might also consider kicking off Mission Month by inviting a Mission representative to speak to your civic or church group about ways they can assist our ministry in bringing hope to people in need.

For details on these and other Mission Month activities, visit cityunionmission.org.
Finding Her Worth in the Lord

Amanda’s painfully low sense of self-esteem emerged right after high school and drove her into one destructive relationship after another. Some were abusive. Others left her homeless. “When one relationship fell apart, I would start up with another man or end up in a shelter,” she explains. “I had no control. I couldn’t stop.” It was a pattern that continued for 10 years.

She had three children who were taken from her because of the unhealthy environments she lived in. When she learned a fourth child was on the way, concern for the life of her new baby was the catalyst she needed to change her own.

“I can’t lose another child – I want to be a mother,” she recalls thinking to herself. She called her father for help, and he brought her to City Union Mission where she joined our New Life Program. Through our life-skills and parenting classes – made possible through your gifts – she’s learning how to live on her own and to be a good mother for her son. Now 2 years old, the little boy is happy, healthy and blossoming from the care and attention he receives from his mom and the Mission staff.

Amanda, too, is blossoming with newfound confidence and self-worth as she builds and strengthens her relationship with the Lord – the relationship she’s been searching for all her life. She loves to write and hopes to work for a Christian magazine or newsletter, sharing the story of how God transformed her life.

“I was addicted to relationships,” Amanda says. “I felt like I always had to have a man with me to feel worthwhile or special. Otherwise, I was basically a nobody.”

Your gifts and prayers allow the Mission to be a place where homeless and hurting families are assisted with their physical, spiritual and educational needs, and are presented with a new way of life that is Christ-centered and biblically based.

God bless you for your ongoing support.
How Your Thrift Store Donations Impact Our Ministry

Your gifts of clothing, household goods, collectibles and other items donated to our CityThrift stores provide year-round support for our life-changing programs, while benefiting our less-fortunate neighbors. Follow your donation’s journey as it brings hope to those who are homeless and struggling.

1. Donors schedule pickups, participate in drives or drop off items at donation bins or CityThrift locations.*

2. Merchandise is received and sorted. The Mission retains items needed for our programs and services and the men, women and children in our care.

3. Merchandise that the Mission does not need stocks the racks and shelves of our CityThrift stores and is sold at affordable prices to the public.

4. Unsold items are provided free-of-charge to struggling families and individuals through our Lexington location and Mission clothing rooms.

*Visit CityThrift.org for store hours, locations and donation pickup information!
City Union Mission's back-to-school outreach provides proper school clothing for impoverished children, building their self-esteem and giving them every opportunity for a good education. Our goal is to outfit 400 students from income-qualified families, and we're inviting the community to help.

Boys and girls in grades K through 6th will receive clothing items required by the Kansas City Missouri School District – shirts, skirts and pants. A gift of $35 will cover the cost of clothing for one child.

If you can help, simply check the box on the reply card and return it with your gift, or make a gift online at cityunionmission.org and be sure to include “back to school” in the donation comments. Thank you for helping our city’s children return to school with confidence!
Join Our 97-Day Summer Campaign

Right here in our community, there are people who are wondering where they'll sleep tonight... when they'll eat their next meal... or how they'll overcome their desperate circumstances. But because friends like you love your neighbors and show your compassion through your gifts to the Mission, they have hope!

Throughout the 97 days of summer, from Memorial Day through Labor Day, we’re relying on your financial support to provide safe beds, nutritious meals and faith-based counseling to homeless and struggling individuals and families.

Our expenses for June, July and August combined are expected to run as high as $1,933,842. This is the goal of our 97-Day Summer Campaign – and we need your help to meet it.

In addition to your regular gift today, please prayerfully consider making special donations again this month and in August. Your generosity will ensure we can continue to meet essential needs and provide life-changing guidance this summer and all year round.

Give online, anytime, at cityunionmission.org!

Meet Bill Snooks

Joining our development team as a grant proposal writer, Bill Snooks is glad his new role will give him the opportunity to tell the Mission’s story to those who have a passion for our work and the resources to support our outreach. His experience as a volunteer mentor to residents in our Christian Life Program has given him the foundation to share our story from a very personal level.

“I’ve learned how isolated these men are,” Bill says. “They need another man to come alongside them – a Christian man who cares about them and can help them develop a Christian life – and I feel a calling to do that.”

With experience in the financial services industry, Bill has served on the boards of other nonprofit organizations, where he participated in grant proposal preparation.

To learn more about being a volunteer mentor, check out the video at cityunionmission.org/success-stories/mentoring.