



RESCUE MISSION

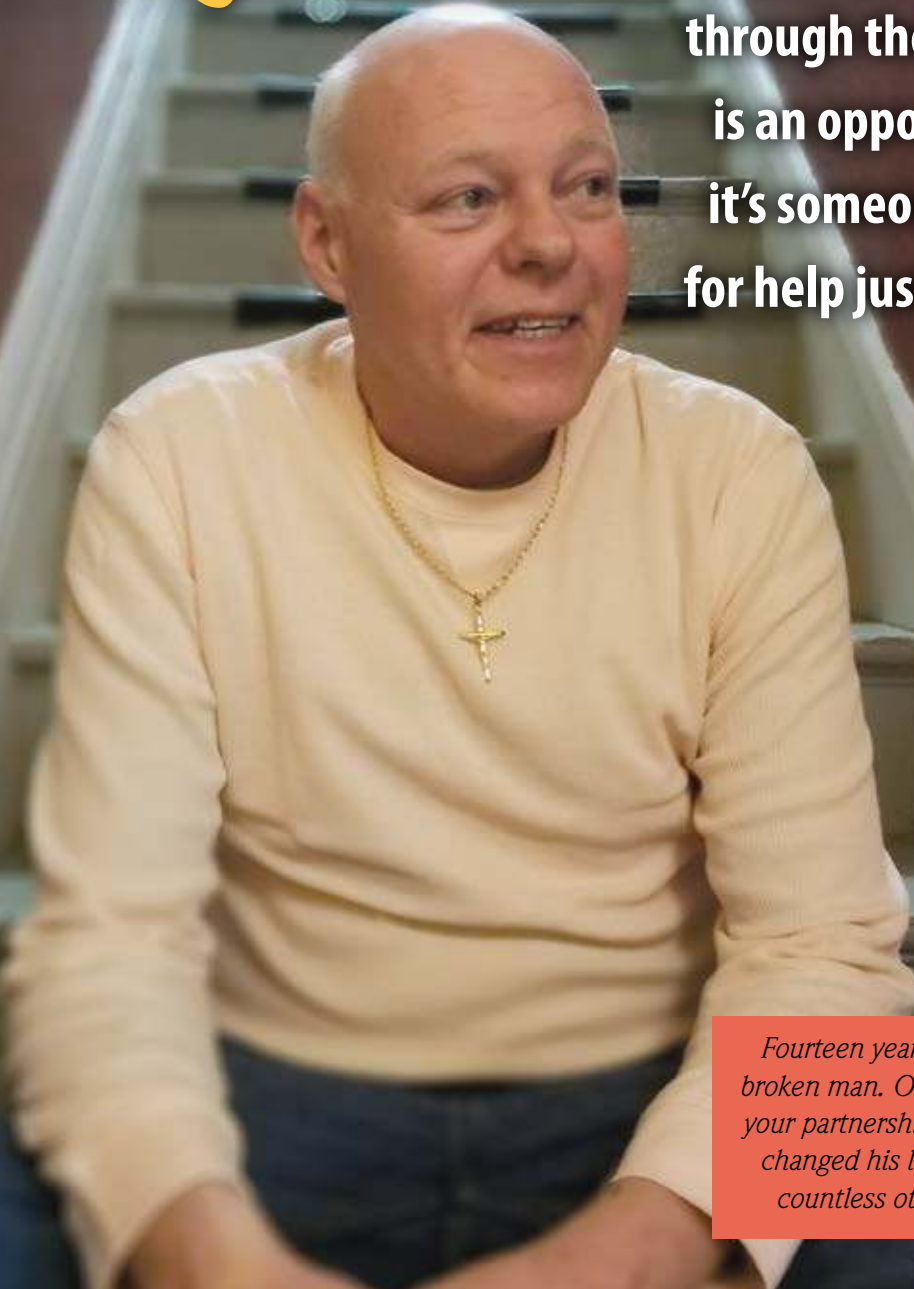
Summer 2018

News

A Publication of Bridgeport Rescue Mission • 25th Anniversary Issue

Restoring Hope and Transforming Lives... for 25 Years

“Every life who comes through these doors is an opportunity... it’s someone crying for help just as I was.”



Fourteen years ago, Larry was a broken man. On Page 3, learn how your partnership and support have changed his life and the lives of countless others since 1993.

BridgeportRescueMission.org

SERVING THE HUNGRY, HOMELESS AND ADDICTED OF COASTAL FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Get Connected ...

Dear Friend,

Bridgeport Rescue Mission has come a long way since our founders' hearts were moved by the suffering and despair of our city's less fortunate and answered God's call to help. Today, 25 years later, your gifts enable us to serve more than 1,500 meals each day, in addition to providing shelter, clothing, life recovery, job training, and more services and programs than those who gave life to this ministry might have ever imagined.

Yet more people throughout coastal Fairfield County are finding themselves without the resources to care for themselves and their families or to lead stable lives. This is the challenge we face each day: Providing them with food and shelter. Caring for their immediate and long-term needs. Sharing God's love with them.

Here's an important way **you** can help them right now: Some compassionate friends of the Mission are challenging you and other donors to match their generous \$250,000 gift with an additional \$250,000. (*Read the details on Page 4.*) That means throughout the month of May your gifts will go twice as far!

I hope when you read Larry's story on Page 3, you'll see how tremendously his life has been changed by your heartfelt gifts. **Now imagine doubling that impact to touch the lives of even more of our neighbors who are hurting and homeless.**

This ministry has always existed to help people facing huge challenges in their lives. I'm grateful for your continued partnership in restoring hope and transforming lives for those who turn to us today, tomorrow and beyond.

In His service,



Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director



Executive Director Terry Wilcox is grateful for the support and partnership of those who have enabled Bridgeport Rescue Mission to serve the hungry, homeless and addicted of coastal Fairfield County for 25 years.



Bridgeport Rescue Mission

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BridgeportRescueMission.org

Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director

Donna Romano
Director of Communications

All stories and photos in this newsletter are of students and guests at Bridgeport Rescue Mission.



Fighting Poverty
from the Inside Out
and Serving the
Hurting and Homeless
of Coastal
Fairfield County



Thank You for 25 Years of Sharing and Caring

The Mission's outreach to our community began in 1993, with the passionate efforts of founders Rev. Jim and Tammy Watson, who began cooking meals in local church kitchens and distributing them from the back of their station wagon. Those humble beginnings laid the foundation for a ministry that today brings hope to countless lives each year.

Today, we help provide...

- 550,000 meals yearly through our dining room, two Mobile Kitchens and Food Pantry, as well as our annual **Great ThanksGiving Project**.
- 37,690 nights of safe shelter yearly for men, women and children at our Men's and Women's Emergency Shelters and Guest House for Women and Children.
- Faith-based support for more than 90 men and women yearly in our New Life Program working to transform their lives.

As we remember our past and prepare for the future, we are grateful for friends like you who make our ministry possible. Thank you for continuing to stand alongside us.



“Who Wants to Try God?”

It was 2004, and Larry Edwards had recently joined the Mission’s New Life Program. Longing to overcome a decade of addiction, homelessness, lawlessness and separation from his loved ones, he was in a chapel service when the pastor posed this candid question – *and Larry raised his hand!*

“That’s when my life began to change!” he says today.

Now the owner of a successful construction business, Larry has helped with many Mission projects in the years since his graduation in 2005, recently overseeing the extensive kitchen remodel. With each renovation, he is reminded of his own transformation.

“To me, the Mission is a place to get your head together;” he says, recounting the long-term curriculum of life-skills classes and faith-based teachings that formed the foundation for a sober and stable life. “And after a few months in the program, they allowed me to go to work,” he explains. “So I took it as an opportunity and started my business from there.”

Larry also returns to the Mission monthly to play his guitar, talk about Bible teachings and share his testimony with other men in the very chapel service where he first opened his heart to the Lord. **“I’ve had guys come up to me and tell me how I’ve helped them change their lives. When you get to help other people, that’s what helps you grow inside.”**



Larry coming alongside Sammy, a graduate living in Supportive Housing.



His frequent visits to the Mission also allow him to maintain important connections with the godly staff and mentors who have become his lifelong friends. He is especially grateful for the restoration of his family who, during his troubled times, all but disowned him.

“We’re very tight now,” he says, recalling with pleasure a recent family reunion, caring for his grandchildren and the surprise party his wife organized for his 50th birthday.

Looking back at how far his life has come since he raised his hand to *try God*, Larry feels blessed by not only his business, friends and family, but also by the essentials he and his wife work hard for – their home, a freezer full of food, the ability to put gas in the car and go anywhere.

“I feel like I’m just beginning,” he says, **“and there’s so much more I can accomplish. When you become a productive member of society, you feel empowered. You feel free.”**

As the Mission marks 25 years of bringing hope to the lost and broken, we thank Larry for sharing his story of how, through support from friends like you, lives are transformed. God bless you for your gift today and for your continued generosity.

1 + YOU = TWO

Help Meet Our \$250,000 Matching Challenge!

In recognition of the Mission's 25th anniversary, a group of generous partners has contributed \$250,000 and challenges other friends of the Mission to match it by May 31. That means your gift today will provide twice as much food and shelter for people who are homeless... bring two times the hope to the men, women and children in our care... and offer faith-based programs for even more individuals seeking transformation and change.

Don't miss this important opportunity to double the impact of your generosity. Give by May 31 and help us meet this tremendous challenge!

YOUR GIFT TODAY...	HAS TWICE THE IMPACT!
\$50	\$100
\$100	\$200
\$150	\$300

DEADLINE TO GIVE: MAY 31



Partner with the Mission

There are many ways to share your time, talents and gifts to bring hope to your neighbors in need through our annual events!



Stuff-A-Truck – Pick up a few extra items for the Mission when you visit local **Stop & Shop** locations, on June 8 and 9, and drop them in our truck outside as you leave. Your church, synagogue or civic group may also choose to station a truck in your parking lot and hold a food drive to fill it!



Great Thanksgiving Project – Through this special holiday outreach, you can help us collect and give away more than 3,200 turkeys and bags of fixings, along with more than 15,000 coats, to homeless and struggling families and individuals.

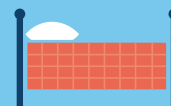


Bridgeport Block Party – Help the Mission engage the community we serve with this fun summer gathering! We welcome local church partners to be part of this event on June 23, sharing games, worship, crafts and more with our coastal Fairfield County neighbors.

Corporate Sponsorship – We invite businesses and corporations to support the Mission financially and to take part in special employee engagement and volunteer activities. In return, organizations receive benefits including communications spotlights and recognition of your special level of partnership.

Visit our website, BridgeportRescueMission.org, or contact Patti Law at (203) 333-4087, ext. 118, to learn how individuals, civic groups, companies, churches and synagogues can get involved.

Throughout the summer months, your gifts help provide...



9,490 beds



127,500 prepared meals



97,500 pantry bag meals



countless hours of guidance and education

