

MISSION

UNION RESCUE MISSION
OF WESTERN MARYLAND, INC.

VISITOR



"Doorway to Hope at the Gateway to the West"

| Fall 2021 |

Life from Death

The challenges faced by the individuals who grace the Union Rescue Mission at times seem suffocating. The overwhelming weight of a world set up for financial gain and earthly success can seem insurmountable through the eyes of those whose trauma has left almost incapable of conforming to societal norms. The pain of everyday life can feel impossible to bear, leaving no other option in their minds than to numb it with substances, ultimately leading to a life of addiction. These past two years have brought about a world of change, further isolating the population served at the Union Rescue Mission. The level of hopelessness and self-medication has seemed to increase exponentially in response to the increased pressures from the pandemic. Deaths from overdoses, from untreated illnesses, and from COVID have left a devastating mark on those who are loved at the Mission.



Charlie T.

Out of darkness, the light shines brightly. This is the case for our friend, Charlie. Charlie is no stranger to the Union Rescue Mission. He has utilized the resources of the Mission for multiple years, but simply on the fringes. Charlie would come for the hot meals and at times for shelter from the cold, but would not make a commitment to enter the URM and take advantage of the full resources the Mission has to offer. Shortly after the death of one of his friends, Charlie came into the Mission's main offices and spoke with Pastor David and Aaron about his future. Before him were two separate paths, one of recovery and one of addiction.

Charlie had been battling addiction for multiple years. His story is like many others encountered at the Mission when it comes to drug use. Charlie became addicted to pain medication following a car accident in the year 2000 when he was legally prescribed and taking oxycontin. It was relayed to him that this medication did not have addictive properties, as he was very particular regarding any chemicals he placed in his body. Charlie at the time was a power lifter and body builder, taking great care of and pride in his physique. His body's physical need for the chemical soon derailed his focus on his bodily well being and lead him down the slope of true addiction.

The atmosphere of the environment in which Charlie was living highlighted the obvious fact that his current path of addiction would most likely lead to death sooner rather than later. The death of his friend was one of multiple that have been grieved at the Mission. Our staff feared Charlie would be one of the many names we

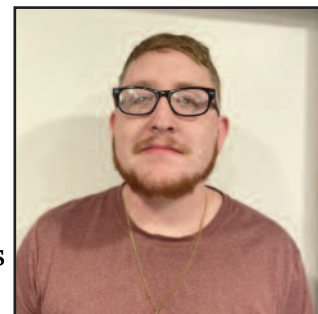
mention only in memory. Of greatest importance, Charlie's eternal destination was not secure. His belief in Jesus was one of surface knowledge and not of a true heart transformation. Charlie was given a choice during that conversation, to choose life or choose death, and was offered all the assistance the mission has to give if his decision rested upon life. He took the evening to count the cost, but returned the next morning ready to pursue a life free from the chains of addiction and following what God has for him instead. That first step happened on November 30, 2020.

Charlie entered into a rehab program in Frederick, Maryland, where he began his new life in sobriety. Aaron kept consistent contact with Charlie, completing virtual Bible studies together and spending time in deep prayer. Charlie wrapped up his time in Frederick after completing his rehab services and working his way through a sober living home before returning to the Cumberland area as a resident of the URM Axis House.

Since Charlie's return, he has dedicated his time to pursuing the life Christ died for him to have. Though his path has had ups and downs, his heart has been made new and his identity is now found in Jesus. The hope that Charlie found in the Lord truly released him from the death hold of addiction, allowing him to break free from his bondage and walk as a new creation. Charlie is currently working full time for Hunter Douglas, supervising the Axis House, and serving at the Union Rescue Mission to help others find the light out of the darkness of their own addiction. Please join us in continued prayer for Charlie as he not only works out his salvation as Paul expressed to the Philippian church, but also as he strives to be a bearer of hope for Christ to the lost in the world we serve. And if you see him on November 30, congratulate him on his year of sobriety!

Promising Future

One of the major goals of the Union Rescue Mission is to prepare residents for success and independence when they leave the shelter. Logan came to the Mission in August with a goal in mind. Logan has been extremely self motivated, with a goal of serving our country by entering the Navy. One of our faithful volunteers, a Naval Veteran himself, took Logan under his wing, encouraging him and helping him to make the contacts necessary to reach his goal. Please keep Logan in your prayers, as he officially ships out on November 4, 2021 for basic training.



Logan C.

Night of Promise Update



This year's Night of Promise celebration was slated for Sunday, September 26, 2021 at the Day Dream Venue in Ridgeley, WV. In early September, as COVID cases in Allegany County were reaching their highest rates of the pandemic, the difficult decision was made to cancel this yearly celebration for a second consecutive year. Throughout the pandemic, the URM and staff have not wavered on their call to serve those in need, and God has protected this service. After much prayer and seeking of counsel, both from the faith and the medical communities, it was decided this event was not absolutely necessary to continue our daily

operations and should be cancelled for the sake of public safety. Multiple churches and companies donated to this cause prior to the cancellation, but when given the option, decided to maintain their sponsorship despite the cancellation of the physical event. The Union Rescue Mission would like to acknowledge and thank those sponsors:

Silver Sponsors:

Cornerstone Baptist Church
C & M Construction, Inc.
Highland Thrift Shop
Jerusalem Christian Church

Contributors:

National Day of Prayer
Chessie Federal Credit Union
UPMC Western Maryland
Friendship Haven Church
Allegany Surgical Associates
Memorial Heights Baptist Church
Mountain City Cabinets
Upchurch Funeral Home

Thank you all so much for your continued generosity and faithfulness, especially in such uncertain times!

In lieu of a live testimonial presentation that normally takes place during the celebration, those who would have given their testimony of change and hope found through Christ have agreed to be part of a video presentation as a platform to share their stories. This video will be available upon request for distribution, as well as available on social media.

Status of the Union Rescue Mission

The annual Night of Promise has historically served as a platform to share the faithfulness of God throughout the year. It is an evening where those who take a vested interest in the Mission, whether through prayer, giving or serving, gather together to celebrate another year of transformation in the lives of those who are served. This night is not only comprised of individual testimonies, but also includes updates and the vision of the Union Rescue Mission as a whole. The population served is consistently changing, and at this moment seems

Ways to Help this Season!

There are daily volunteer opportunities at the URM, but here are a few through the holiday season that we really need help with:

- **Christmas Food Box Volunteer:** We are planning on delivering 450 food boxes this year, with a delivery system mirroring what we utilized in 2020. Boxes will be delivered to designated churches, individuals receiving boxes will be given the name of that church, and recipients will pick their box up from the assigned church. If you want to assist in the distribution of boxes, or your church wants to volunteer as a box pick-up spot, please contact the Union Rescue Mission for details. The delivery date will be announced in the near future.
- **Turkey Donation:** These turkeys are used during our Thanksgiving meal served on Thanksgiving Day from 1-3 pm, open to both our residents as well as the public.
- **Sponsor a Child's Christmas:** We gather Christmas lists from children living at the URM and those we know who are in desperate need. You can offer to sponsor these children and provide an amazing Christmas for a local child in need.
- **Blankets & Pillows:** As the cold weather rolls in, we will soon begin our **Cold Weather Shelter**. We use a lot of blankets and pillows this time of year. We do accept gently used items.

Please feel free to contact our office at (301) 724-1585 for further details on ways you can help.

Ways You Can Help!

Monetary Donations: The URM operates off of the generosity of many donors. Every dollar donated to the URM makes an immediate impact on the lost, hurting, and broken in the Tri-State area. Please consider making a donation today. You can send donations to:

Union Rescue Mission
P.O. Box 1614
Cumberland, MD 21501

or donate online at:
www.urmcumberland.org

Supply Donation: God meets some of our daily needs through amazing donation of supplies. You can drop off supply donations any day between 8 AM - 5 PM in the URM Kitchen. Here is our list of immediate needs:

- Diapers: Size 4-6
- Baby Wipes
- Pillows
- Towels and washcloths
- Blankets
- Shampoo
- Men's Deodorant
- Feminine Hygiene Items
- Gloves and Hats
- Canned Meats
- Peanut Butter

Volunteer: We can always use your help. From serving meals to teaching bible studies, your skills are needed. If you or your church would like to volunteer at the URM, please call Pastor David or Andrea at our office at 301-724-1585.

to be growing in number. The salvation message stands true and never changes, and will always be the center of the ministry of the URM. The physical services provided and future vision for the Union Rescue Mission facility are required to adapt to both the changing environment and the changing population.

The Axis House was introduced in a previous Visitor, opened as a discipleship home for those seeking freedom and support in leaving the old chains of sin behind. This ministry continues to grow and flourish as multiple men have claimed this home as their residence, participating in daily bible studies, prayer times, and additional staff support to help pursue a life of sobriety and, more importantly, discipleship in Christ.

Another project currently progressing is the remodel of a multi-unit home that had been donated to the Mission approximately 2 years ago. This home has three separate apartment units, each with multiple bedrooms. As we pray for a solidified vision for the future, discussion for the use has included female transitional housing, female discipleship home, potential residence for young women aging out of foster care, and potential use for temporary shelter in the event the Union Rescue Mission dorms would be remodeled. Though the vision for this house is not concrete at present, we continue to work to get the property ready for residency.

As of late, the Mission has been in the local newspaper related to a potential move to other locations in the city of Cumberland. Discussions have occurred with the Cumberland Economic Development Committee, and most recently between the CEDC and the City Council, related to properties in the area that could potentially house the URM. Feasibility studies are being completed, specifically with the property located at 11 Columbia Street, however no official plans have been formed. The buildings that currently house the URM are in desperate need of remodel, having an infrastructure that has been in place for well over 100 years. Regardless of whether a move or a remodel is in the future, the facilities of the Union Rescue Mission will need to be addressed in the very near future in order to safely continue the ministry. Please be in prayer for clarity in future vision, for community support, and for the Lord to make the path He desires for the Union Rescue Mission obvious and open.