



Friends,

When trying to tackle social issues in our community, it's always wise to identify what the issues really are before coming up with workable solutions.

So, let's assess this picture on the left. By looking at it, what do you think the problem is? Is it litter? Maybe we need more trash cans placed on the greenway. Is it crime? Maybe more jail space would help. Is it used heroin needles? Maybe more sharps containers placed throughout the city would solve the problem. Is it graffiti? I hear there is a new anti-graffiti coating we could apply to public surfaces. Is it drug abuse? I hear that spending more money on treatment would take care of that. Is the problem public defecation? I know more porta-potties would be nice. Is the problem that people don't have enough free stuff? That sounds kind of ridiculous doesn't it, but when our community responds to issues like this by giving out more stuff like needles, camping equipment, and fire extinguishers, the problems only get worse. Is the reason there is such a mess along Bear Creek a few hundred yards from my house because

## What's really going on?

there isn't enough housing? I hear that once we have enough housing for everyone, this problem will go away.

Homelessness is the catch-all phrase that is most often used to describe the complex social problems that our community is facing, and housing is often seen as the catch-all solution. In reality, all these issues are a result of something much more devastating than the lack of housing. And if we misdiagnose what the real problem is, we are going to come up with solutions that don't get to the core problem.

In the book *When Helping Hurts*, Brian Fikkert writes, "If we treat only the symptoms or if we misdiagnose the underlying problem, we will not improve their situation, and we might actually make their lives worse."

So what's the underlying problem? I would say the underlying problem is broken relationships. You see, God created us in His image and established four key relationships before the fall; relationship with God, with self, with others, and with the rest of creation. Relationships matter to God, and they should matter to us as well.

With that in mind, look at the picture again. What do you think the relational problem is? Do the people that were living this way have a relationship with God? By looking at the remnants of their lives, this relationship is broken at best. What about their relationship with self? It is most likely clouded by substances that are covering up guilt or shame from their past. What about their relationship with others? Whatever healthy support system they once had is most likely fractured and the relationships that remain encourage crime and debauchery.

We are funded by generous donations from people in our community and we do not accept any federal, state, or local government funds

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What about their relationship with creation, our community? Our community has become a place to simply exist and waste the days waiting to be run off only to simply exist somewhere else.

God is in the business of restoring relationships, yours, mine, and the men and women in our programs. With that said, restoring relationships can be difficult and cannot be pursued without the grace of God. Because of this, God is our primary relationship. In fact all other relationship flow out of it. We are created to praise our Creator and serve Him in our thoughts, words, and actions.

This changes how we see ourselves, created with dignity and worth, not burying our identities in guilt and shame. This also changes how we see others, made to know, love, and encourage one another with the gifting God has blessed us with. Lastly, this equips us to have a healthy relationship with God's creation not only appreciating it, but thriving in it as we pursue our place in it, living for His glory.

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

~Romans 5:1-5~

We are passionate about restoring relationships at the Mission, and blessed to be able to reach people that are lost in despair with the amazing good news of Christ. For Christ restores us as well as those that find themselves with no hope as they turn to Him in faith.

So next time you see the result of people living hopeless lives in our community, know that we are doing all we can to reach these individuals with the hope of the Gospel. And know that your support and prayers have equipped us to bring true life change to thousands of individuals over the past 63 years. Thank you!

Thank you for your support! 

# GIFTS FROM THE HEART

**In honor of Jesus Christ**  
by Ken & Diane Capp  
and by Barbara Carse

**In memory of Earl Best**  
by Nickolas & Lindsay Boosalis  
**In memory of David Bishop**  
by Carolyn Bishop

**In memory of Jami Anne Burk**  
by Pete & Margaret Jackson  
and by Roberta Hawkins

**In memory of Mary Dew**  
by Brice & Frances Brandt  
**In memory of Steve Eart**  
by Bill & Sandy Earl

**In memory of Buck & Steve Fixsen**  
by Patricia Fixsen

**In memory of Ernie Gallo**  
by Muriel Gallo

**In memory of Doris Grosch**  
by Gloria Holloway

**In memory of Sharie Harvey**  
by Floyd & Julia Grimes

**In memory of Billie Joe & Joan Hunter**  
by Dusty & Debbie Hoffman

**In memory of Clarence & Irel Lee Hunter**  
by Sarah Hunter-Bailey

**In memory of My Husband**  
by Barbara McCoy

**In memory of Lu Lull**  
by Joyce Lull

**In memory of Willard Marsh**  
by Marilyn Marsh

**In memory of Ronelda McCollum**  
by Kathleen Frazier

**In memory of Bunny Morrison**  
by Jim & Marilyn Kelley

**In memory of My Dear Mother**  
by Lynn Baker

**In memory of Bonnie Nutter**  
by Kenneth Nutter

**In memory of Patricia Piter**  
by Steve Piter

**In memory of Don Ray**  
by Beryl McCollough

**In memory of Zachary Russell**  
by Debra Russell

**In memory of Carl Sandberg**  
by Dorothy Sandberg

**In memory of Jerry Scheid**  
by Jackie Scheid

**In memory of Dorothee Shadzad**  
by Michelle Hobbs

**In memory of Duane Shinn**  
by Garland & Roberta Shinn  
and by Dianne Carter

**In memory of Karen Siebrecht**  
by Robert & Lynn Casad

**In memory of Helen Stanley**  
by Gary & Nancy Payton

**In memory of Wayne, Flo, & Bill Vincent**  
by Patricia Hoffman

**In memory of Horst & Margaret Wauer**  
by David & Helene Uhreen

**In memory of Garry Wilson**  
by Arline Wilson