



The Inner City Pulse

Hope for the Hungry, Hurting and Homeless... since 1940



Annual Report 2009/2010 Edition

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Jemal Prays for a Homeless Man by Vancouver artist Felicity Don. Ms. Don captured this scene as Union Gospel Mission Outreach Worker Jemal prayed for a guest living on the streets.

Message from the

President and Chairman of the Board of Directors

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UNION GOSPEL MISSION

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It has been another year of tremendous blessings at Union Gospel Mission. It is our privilege and joy to serve Metro Vancouver's hungry, hurting and homeless as we help struggling people regain their God-given dignity, see them move from homelessness to stability, and bear witness to the miracle of a life being restored.

The communities we serve are still reeling from the effects of the brutal economy of the past three years. For many families and individuals living on the brink, this was an economic hit from which they could not recover. They turned to UGM for the practical help of meals, shelter and clothing, as well as for spiritual support and assistance in finding housing and employment.

The increase of those in desperate need is indicative of a trend we have observed for some time now. Over the past several years, we have seen the demand for our meals, shelter, and recovery programs grow dramatically, and your support as UGM responds to this rising need is critical. Every month, thousands of individuals turn to UGM for help in making it through another day. Over the years, your prayers and financial support have allowed us to provide effective, best practices programming that affords each man, woman or child an opportunity to achieve a brighter, healthier tomorrow. None of which would have been possible without your help, and now, more than ever, we need Metro Vancouverites to join with us to affect permanent change.

In Spring 2011, we will launch the single largest expansion of programming in UGM's history as we open the doors of our one-of-a-kind six-storey community facility at 601 East Hastings. Allowing program capacity to double or triple in many areas, this new facility has the potential to transform this Downtown Eastside neighbourhood.

We are poised to make a dramatic difference in Vancouver, and your support right now is crucial. It's an incredibly exciting time to be part of the work of Union Gospel Mission and if we are able to continue to form strong alliances with caring and generous Metro Vancouverites like you, there's really nothing we can't accomplish.

Your generosity demonstrates that you share our vision to end the heartbreaking cycle of poverty, homelessness, and addiction. Through diligent labour, prayerfully considered programming and faith in God's providence, UGM commits to working with you to create profound and lasting change in our communities.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your compassion and care for those we serve.

God Bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Mollard', written over a light blue horizontal line.

William B. Mollard
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Pasman', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Robert Pasman
Chairman of the Board of Directors



William B. Mollard
President



Robert Pasman
Chairman



ASSOCIATION
OF GOSPEL
RESCUE
MISSIONS

Year in Review

Union Gospel Mission & Union Gospel Housing Societies

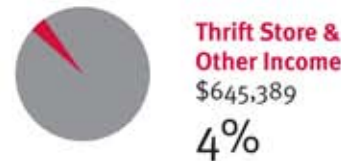
EXPENSES & DESIGNATED FUNDS

\$15,286,227



DONATIONS & INCOME

\$15,286,227



Income and Expenditures are for March 1, 2009 to February 28, 2010. Programs and services include \$1,619,528 in social housing expenses and \$2,201,432 for planned future expansion of programs. The above financial information is based on individual audited financial statements comprising the UGM group of entities. Request these audited financial statements by calling 604.253.3323.

Who We Are

Union Gospel Mission is a non-profit urban relief organization that has been reaching out to Vancouver's hungry, hurting and homeless for 70 years. With locations throughout Metro Vancouver and the city of Mission, UGM is ideally positioned to help those who need it most. The heart of UGM is to demonstrate God's transforming love, ease the burden of the most vulnerable, rebuild the lives of the broken and offer dignity to those who feel cast aside.

Through a comprehensive range of life-changing programs and services—including meals, outreach, emergency shelter, alcohol and drug recovery, employment and education, affordable housing, and children and families programs—UGM offers help and hope while creating brighter futures for men, women and children in our communities.

Contributions in Action

Here's a snapshot of what donors like you made happen last year:

 **A Cozy Sweater and a Warm Blanket**
24,215 People Received Clothing & Bedding

 **Lives Restored**
58 Alcohol & Drug Recovery Program Alumni

 **Kids' Lives Impacted**
750 Children Sent to Summer Camp

 **Getting Back on their Feet**
90 Employment Services Class Graduates

 **A Home Cooked Meal**
240,215 Meals Served

 **A Place to Call Home**
156 Affordable Housing Units

 **Shelter from the Cold**
11,669 Emergency Shelter Bed Nights



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Let UGM President Bill Mollard

At UGM our goal is to transform lives. Our staff work diligently to give physical, mental and spiritual support to men, women and children in need as they build or rebuild their lives. Whether through a meal, a night of shelter, or an offer of help from an Outreach Worker, so many miraculous stories of triumph over adversity begin at UGM.

Rather than just tell you about them myself, I thought I'd reintroduce you to just a few of the men and women you've already met in various 2010 issues of the Inner City Pulse. While I could only tell you of their experiences, I think it's best to hear from those who actually lived them.

Like virtually all UGM success stories, many begin through an Outreach encounter, so let's begin there.

Outreach

MIKE G. had been homeless for five difficult years and had been battling an addiction to alcohol for thirty years when UGM's state-of-the-art Mobile Mission rescue vehicle came upon him late one night in a Richmond park.

The Mobile Mission is one arm of our Outreach program, which exists to share Christ's love, meet people where they are, provide for guests' practical needs and develop trusting relationships that can help struggling people take positive steps to improve their circumstances. Operated by Outreach Workers Arnold and Scott, the Mobile Mission is on the streets five nights a week, extending UGM's reach to the "hidden homeless" – those who live off-the-beaten-path all over Metro Vancouver.

That's exactly what happened for Mike G. Arnold offered him a coffee and sandwich and talked about his options. Ready to make a change, Mike G. accepted a ride to UGM's Emergency Shelter that very night and soon entered our Alcohol & Drug Recovery program. He completed the six-month recovery program and is today employed, housed and looking to the future.

"On the street for so long, I didn't have much to smile about, but today I have a reason to be happy."

The other common entry point which allows UGM to come into someone's life is perhaps our oldest and best known tradition, and it's as simple as it is vital: meals. The ability to break bread, offer a hungry soul the chance for nourishment and the opportunity to seek help is literally, a life-saver.

Meals

PAUL'S life was falling apart. He had recently lost his job and his home because of a fierce addiction to cocaine and was sleeping in a Downtown Eastside park. Despite the seeming hopelessness of his position, Paul's path began to change the morning he awoke to see the park he called home being transformed for UGM's annual Summer BBQ.

Miracles really do begin with a meal at UGM, and that day Paul saw his first glimpse of hope, as he was offered delicious food and shared conversations with Outreach Workers and Alcohol & Drug Recovery program Alumni. He made the decision to enter recovery at UGM, and after completing the six-month program, he volunteered serving meals to others. Clean, sober, and employed, Paul was ready to help the next person in need and grateful for the miracle that had occurred in his own life.

"One meal can change your life, and certainly UGM's BBQ changed mine."

Through UGM's three daily meals and four annual holiday dinners, individuals like Paul, as well as families in need, have access to a nutritious meal and fellowship with trained Outreach Workers. It's a meal that can be the turning point in many lives. And it's provided by donors like you each and every day.

Usually after UGM has addressed a person's immediate issues of hunger, and has begun the often tenuous journey of gaining trust, one core need remains in the short term: shelter. Compassion and food won't keep you safe and warm at night, but the reprieve that comes from not having to sleep on the streets provides an essential comfort most of us take for granted. It's not the long term solution, but emergency shelter is most definitely a start.

Lives
Changed



Walk You Through Union Gospel Mission's Continuum

Shelter

STEPHEN had been using heroin and vodka every day for 7 ½ years. He was at the end of his rope and had overdosed many times attempting to kill himself. While on the streets struggling in his addiction, Stephen sought refuge and a warm bed in UGM's Emergency Shelter, which is open 365 days a year.

During his time in the shelter and at UGM's daily meals, Stephen started talking to Outreach Workers about his options for recovery. He realized he had a serious drug problem and he had been considering getting off heroin for some time now, but he knew it would be very difficult.

Stephen soon committed himself to regaining his sobriety and began UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery program. Through diligent work and with the guidance of counsellors at the mission, Stephen graduated from the recovery program and started a new life.

He is now employed with UGM's Thrift Store, living in UGM's Affordable Housing at Maurice McElrea Place and has a life he enjoys. And it all began with a night of shelter and a meal.

"Today I'm alive, 27 months ago I was a walking corpse...and today I have life. Without UGM...I would be dead."

When a person knows help is available, that they will be fed, and that they don't have to return to sleeping on the street, they are able, often for the first time in years, to take the long view on their lives, and that often means facing their addictions.

Alcohol & Drug Recovery

After 17 years of alcoholism and two stunted attempts at recovery, **KARI** wasn't sure she'd ever be able to live a sober life. But when her health began to deteriorate from her years of drinking, Kari knew she needed to change.

"Basically, my heart stopped and I almost died. I was unconscious for over a day in the cardiac unit of the hospital. When I came to, the first words out of my mouth were, 'I need a telephone,' and I called Lydia Home."

Lydia Home is UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery program for women, and there Kari worked hard to learn a new way of living while working through her own addiction issues. Now celebrating over a year of sobriety, Kari says she has never felt better.

UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery programs for men and women are effective, live-in programs that offer freedom from addictive lifestyles. UGM counsellors have developed and fine-tuned successful live-in recovery programs that give residents their best chance to succeed and regain their God-given dignity, free from the horrors of addiction.

As people advance through UGM's continuum of care and their lives continue to stabilize, often the next focus is on how to improve their opportunities for a healthy and productive future going forward. That's where UGM's Education and Employment Services come in. When people are able to access these crucial resources, they continue to see doors open and the barriers that previously seemed insurmountable start to fade away due to the options that come through an education.

Education & Employment

A 40-something year old man, **MIKE J.** was living a good life. He had conquered addiction issues, was now employed and happily married with three wonderful children. He had a fulfilling spiritual life and worked hard each day to share Christ's love with those around him. **"There was one thing missing from my life: a diploma."**

Having dropped out of school as a teenager, Mike J. had never completed his education. He knew he had to set a good example for his children and wanted to create a future filled with opportunity for himself and his family. Not able to afford to pay for courses, Mike J. sought the help of teachers and volunteers at UGM's Hope Learning Centre. Over the next many months, he studied hard to prepare for his Grade 12 Equivalency Exam even working through his most challenging subject: math. And Mike J's efforts led to success! He is now the proud bearer of a High School Completion Certificate and he and his family are proud of his accomplishment.

The Hope Learning Centre is free of charge and open to anyone wanting to upgrade their education or find a job through our education and employment services. Here, adult students can study for their GED (Grade 12 Equivalency), gain literacy skills, take a course in financial management or access resumé-writing help. An excellent resource for those finishing UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery program, The Hope Learning Centre allows men and women to reach their potential through supportive, student-focused learning.

This next stage of the continuum is so important because it marks the real beginning of a return to independence. Housing is the key to permanently keeping people off the streets. I like this part because after all they have come through, this is a very proud time for our former guests. It marks a fresh beginning and an opportunity to start life anew, and I believe that's what Christ wants for all His children, to live strong, healthy and happy lives. For you and I to play even a small role in this process is as humbling as it is inspirational.



Continuum Of Care

Affordable Housing

JOHN had been addicted to alcohol and drugs for 40 years and before he came to UGM, he had been homeless and living under a bridge, or, when he had the money, in a filthy single room occupancy hotel in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. One day, John was alone with his crack pipe, using a candle for light, when he felt God calling him to change his ways. He soon entered UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery program and poured himself into rebuilding his life as well as his relationship with God.

Once he'd graduated from the recovery program John found sober-living housing at Maurice McElrea Place, one of UGM's two affordable housing complexes. At Maurice McElrea Place, John can afford to live in clean, well-maintained housing while being supported in his sobriety by a community of people committed to living without alcohol or drugs. It's an ideal stepping stone as John gets back into the workforce and continues to improve his life.

"Thanks to UGM and God's grace, the future is wide open."

Affordable Housing units at Maurice McElrea Place (Vancouver) and The Orchard (Surrey) offer men, women and families a warm, supportive and clean place to call home. A total of 81 suites in Maurice McElrea Place offer sober-living housing, while The Orchard townhouse complex offers 14 subsidized and 61 low-rent units for family-oriented living.

I struggled with where to include this aspect of UGM's continuum of care. It doesn't necessarily come last, but instead, often presents itself anywhere throughout the process. I decided to end our Annual Report with the Children & Families Ministry because I believe it is the most strategic aspect of all we do here and I want to leave you with this as final thought. Poverty and addiction can often be multigenerational and if we are ever going to put an end to the insidious pain they cause, it has to happen early, and it starts with our kids.

Children & Families Ministry

At 18, **HANNAH** has spent much of her life in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. She perhaps isn't whom you might picture when you think of someone from this part of town, but Hannah, just like hundreds of kids today, grew up calling this tough neighbourhood home. She's a smart, beautiful young woman who has successfully navigated the landmines of adolescence here, thanks in part to the Children & Families programs at UGM.

When Hannah was nine, a donor with a heart for kids sponsored her for a week of camp through UGM's Summer Camp sponsorship program. Each year, over 700 children in need attend quality summer camps thanks to the generosity of donors. It's a week that can have a lasting impact on a child's life. For Hannah, camp was a place where she matured in her Christian faith, learned about teamwork, and experienced the wonders of nature (something she didn't see every day in her neighbourhood). Hannah eventually returned to camp to take part in their leadership training program, and now mentors children from the Downtown Eastside.

"The kinds of stories that I've heard from some of these children are really hard stories," shares Hannah, **"but just to see the kind of joy they experience at camp is always very encouraging and uplifting."**

The Downtown Eastside is full of bright kids like Hannah who need support as they grow. That's why UGM offers programming throughout the year, including an afterschool club, Saturday morning activities, mentorship, summer camp, day camps, teen girls activities, teen boys nights, and seasonal offerings. UGM's Children & Families Ministry nurtures entire families by supporting struggling parents, and helping provide necessities such as baby formula, diapers, clothing, and food and gift hampers at Christmas.

When you get up each day and are able to be part of all of this, the change it makes within you is indescribable. But that opportunity isn't only for UGM staff, it is your opportunity as well. We need you. We need your faith and commitment to finding a better way forward for those in need. Be it as a donor, a volunteer or potential staff member. The future has never looked brighter at Union Gospel Mission and I encourage you to partner with us.



William B. Mollard
President



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