

gratitude

MAY 2011 UGM.ca

**Send a kid to camp,
change a life!**
JAKE'S STORY INSIDE.



Feeding hope. Changing lives.

We thank Tech Web Direct for donating resources to print this full colour newsletter.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“I believe it takes a whole community to raise a child, and you are part of that.”

A grateful father wrote those words in thanks for the transformation he's seen in his child since going to summer camp. His son, Jake, is just one of the over 700 children who had the chance to go to camp last summer thanks to bighearted UGM donors like you.

You can read Jake's story on page six, and as you do, I encourage you to consider the kind of impact an experience like camp can have on bright, young minds like Jake's. For the hundreds of kids donors like you send to camp each year, the lifelong lessons learned – teamwork, self confidence and respect for the environment – will benefit our communities for years to come. And imagine how many more children are in need of this kind of life-changing opportunity right now.

The stresses on families in our communities are great today. At UGM, we see increasing numbers of families joining us for meals like the Easter Dinner you helped make possible. Families are feeling the pinch of a difficult economy and many are struggling just to keep their heads above water. And when parents struggle, children do as well – too often, silently.

It's up to those of us who can, to help nurture our communities' children in need.

So I ask you to please give generously to help a wonderful child have the confidence-building, spirit-lifting, life-changing experience of a week at summer camp. It's a small investment in a young life that I know our God will multiply in years to come.

As a final note, we are pleased to let our donors know that as of July 1, 2011 we will be moving to a consolidated year end receipting system whereby all gifts eligible for a charitable tax receipt will be receipted in February of the following year, in time for filling your income tax return. You will receive one receipt summarizing your total giving to UGM in the preceding calendar year. Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at 604.253.3323 or at donors@ugm.ca.

God bless you,

William B. Mollard



UNION GOSPEL MISSION

601 EAST HASTINGS ST.
VANCOUVER, BC, V6A 1J7
604.253.3323
[UGM.CA](http://ugm.ca)

EDITOR: ANIKA CORNISH
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: NATALIE DUNLOP
PHOTOGRAPHY: LEAH GREGG
DESIGN AND LAYOUT: ZACH BULLICK

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Union Gospel Mission was awarded a \$50,000 creative services grant from the Karo Group in 2010 which allowed UGM to undergo an exhaustive brand analysis and redesign process. Our new look became official in April, 2011 in conjunction with the expansion of our ministry and the move into our new facility which will double or triple UGM's capacity to help those in need. We are extremely thankful to the Karo Group (karo.com) for providing their expertise to UGM at no charge.



Thanks to you, 2,579 meals were served at this year's Easter Dinner!

A delicious Easter meal was served to every person who came through our doors on April 23, all thanks to the generosity of our faithful donors, the hard work of our tireless volunteers, and the diligent planning and care of our wonderful kitchen and outreach staff.

This year's Easter Dinner was the first big community meal to be held in our new facility in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and it was such a special day. The atmosphere was warm and friendly as guests were welcomed into the new space and greeted with a smile, some great music from our volunteer band, and an invitation to relax and enjoy their holiday meal. Guests were wide-eyed in awe and appreciation. One was overheard saying to a friend, "Isn't this place something? This is great! I think it's the best place in BC."

The bright, open space made it possible to seat more people at one-time while still allowing plenty of space for staff and

volunteers to move around and serve our guests. "We just want everyone to know that this is their place and they're welcome any time. We tell everyone: God built this for you!" shared Senior Chaplain Bruce Curtiss.

And while our new Downtown Eastside location was a beehive of activity, so too were our Drop-in Centres in New Westminster and the city of Mission. Guests there were treated to fabulous home-cooked meals shared around tables filled with friends, family and caring Outreach Workers.

At day's end, 2,579 meals were served to individuals and families in need of a meal and a little lift this Easter. Their happy faces, warm smiles and words of thanks as they left the meal spoke volumes. Your gifts brought comfort to so many this Easter. On behalf of every guest who enjoyed a meal, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

why i give

We asked UGM donors: What inspires you to give? Here are just a few responses from our amazing community of supporters.

Chris | My brother went through the UGM program and is over a year clean and sober and working in a good job now thanks to the support he received from Union Gospel Mission. This is a wonderful organization that really cares.

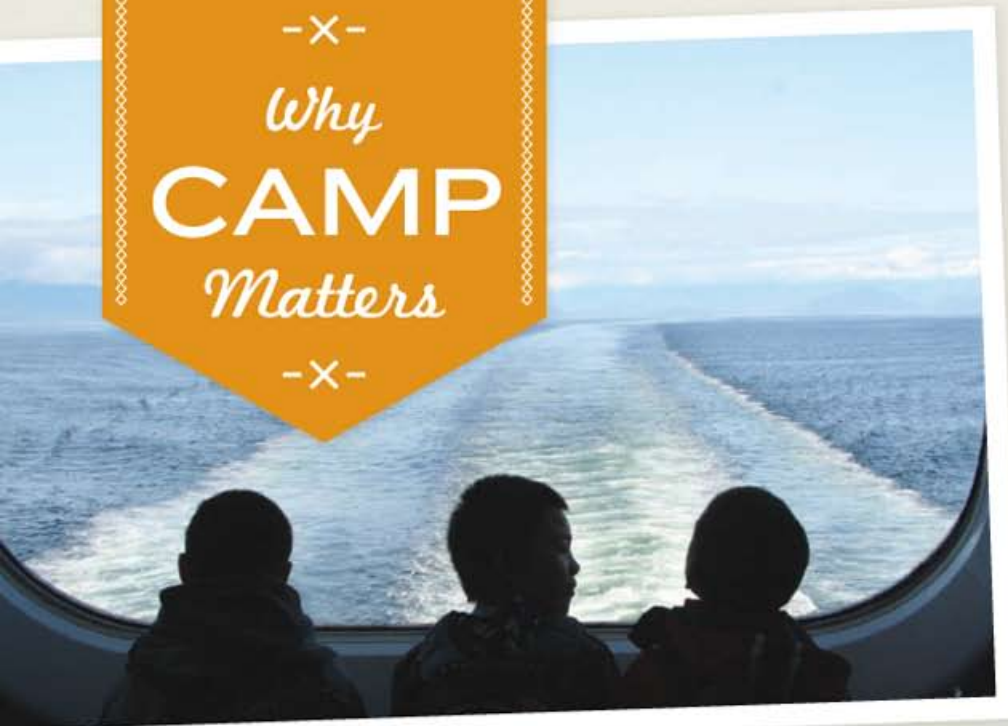
Daya | My life is so full and even though I don't have a lot of money I have abundance compared to so many others that I wanted to share a bit of what I have.

Jeanie | My own good fortune; I am so lucky, and being able to financially help an institution that helps others makes me feel MORE fortunate.

-X-

Why
CAMP
Matters

-X-



My name is Jay and I am Jake's Dad. First off I would like to thank you for being there and for everything you have done in the last few years with Jake. He has grown into being an amazing young man. He is a mentor and leader amongst his friends and family. He understands gratitude and is immensely spiritual in so many ways. I am so proud of my son.

I believe it takes a whole community to raise a child and you are part of that. Making the decision to send him to Pioneer Pacific Camp was one of the best ever made for Jake. – Jay, Proud Father



These were the first words of a two page letter our Camp Ministries staff received last year. For the past few summers, Jay's son Jake had been sponsored for a week of camp by generous UGM donors and the impact, he says, has been tremendously positive.

The letter went on to share a bit about the family's struggles and why camp was so pivotal for Jake. His father is the first to admit that Jake's childhood was turbulent. His father wrestled with alcoholism and is now a recovering alcoholic with nearly nine years of sobriety. "Jake has followed his dad around to [Alcoholics Anonymous] meetings since day one and has attended over 300," Jay shared in his letter. "We continue to work through many issues. Life is one day at a time most days."

But despite his challenges, Jake, now 17, has grown to be a remarkable young man. Both he and his father attribute a great deal of who he is today to the transformational experience of summer camp.

Camp opened up a new world of possibility for Jake. "Before camp, I came from a broken family where I was used to people being high-strung and defensive," he shares. "When I got to camp though, I found I could just relax and be myself. People just accepted me for who I am."

Jake started to develop self-confidence. He had the opportunity to take on new roles within different teams at camp, which helped him develop further.

"Before camp, when I walked into a room I wasn't confident enough to just



Camp Gives Kids the Chance to Shine

For over 60 years, Union Gospel Mission's bighearted donors have been giving kids in need, the life-changing experience of summer camp.

"Camp is a place where kids can experience God's creation in a fun, safe and supportive environment with Christ-centered programming. There, they encounter unique challenges and opportunities, develop new skills, build positive relationships, and grow personally in both faith and self-confidence. Camp is a place where every child can shine," shares Jenna, UGM's Camp & Family Ministries worker.

UGM works with 16 quality Christian camps throughout BC (listed below). Kids can choose the camp they'd like to go to - maybe one where they can try sailing or waterskiing, or one with horseback riding or a climbing wall - so no matter what camp they choose, their tailor-made experience is unforgettable!

**ANVIL ISLAND DAYBREAK
POINT BIBLE CAMP
CAMP ARTABAN
CAMP DOUGLAS
CAMP EVERGREEN
CAMP LUTHER
CAMP QWANOES
CAMP SHINING STARS
CAMP SQUEAH
CAMP STILLWOOD
CAMP SUNRISE
CHARIS CAMP
HOPE BAY BIBLE CAMP
KAWKAWA CAMP
KEATS CAMPS
PIONEER PACIFIC CAMP
TIMBERLINE RANCH CAMP**



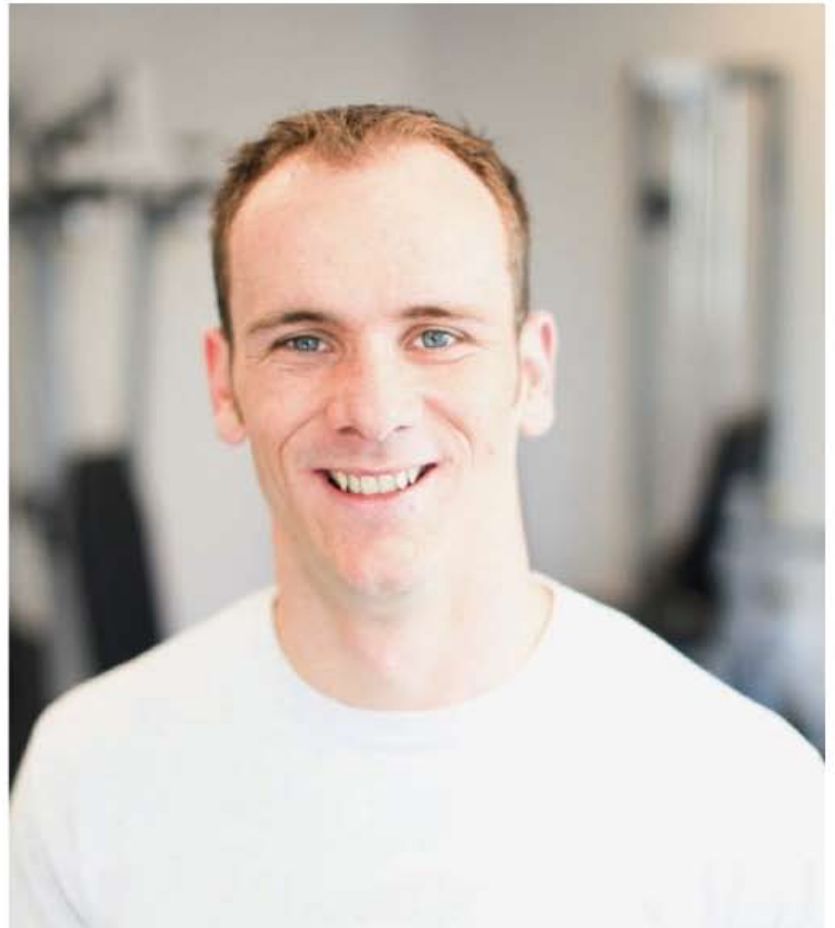
go up and talk to someone. Now I can speak in front of a bunch of people—and I do!" Each year on the anniversary of his dad's sobriety, Jake stands up in front of the 150 people gathered for the cake celebration and speaks about how his family has worked through their struggles over the years.

Today, Jake is in the final few weeks of high school, and when this smart young man graduates in June, he'll not only receive his high school diploma; through the Surrey School District's Plumbing Apprenticeship Program, he'll have also completed the first year of his apprenticeship as well.

Jake's father spoke about his son's gratitude for all he has, and in telling his story, Jake wanted to be sure to thank the donors who made the life-changing decision to help Jake get to camp: "Thank you so much for sending me to camp! It's really meant a lot to me." What's more, as a way of showing his appreciation, he hopes to soon volunteer at UGM. "I just want to give back to something that's helped me become the person I am today."

Last year UGM's bighearted donors gave over 700 kids the life-changing experience of summer camp. Give another child the same opportunity this summer.

Please give generously at ugm.ca or by returning the enclosed reply slip today.



Outreach Worker Darren Sinke shows off some of the brand new fitness equipment that will be available to residents of UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery Program thanks to a generous donation from Flaman Fitness (www.flamanfitness.com)

FOCUS *on* FITNESS



Our new facility on East Hastings was purpose-built to meet the needs of our guests – body, mind and spirit. Just one of the features we're excited about is a fitness room made possible thanks to a generous donation of brand-new equipment from Flaman Fitness.

The fitness room will be used primarily by participants of our live-in 6-month Alcohol & Drug Recovery Program and we're so pleased to be able to offer this healthy outlet on site.

While it's known that exercise is good for us, researchers are beginning to discover that regular exercise may be especially beneficial for people trying to recover from drug addictions. Why? Exercise lowers stress levels and releases endorphins, which can alleviate depression, and replace some of the so-called benefits a person struggling with addiction gets from using his or her drug of choice.

It's also simply a healthy way to spend

downtime during recovery. And for those who develop the beneficial habit, regular exercise is just one more tool to take into life post-recovery to help them continue in their success.

The kids in our Eastsiders Afterschool Program are getting in on the fun of fitness too. With a focus on making healthy choices, the kids have been learning about different ways to make physical activity part of their lives – through sports, exploring the great outdoors, or even taking a dance class. They've also had cooking classes to learn how to make yummy food that just happens to be nutritious. They're skills we all need to lead healthy lives, but they're especially important for kids growing up in a challenging neighbourhood.

Nurturing healthy lifestyles is just another way your gifts to UGM are helping create a healthier community.

Scotiabank Charity Challenge to raise funds for UGM's kids programs!

The kids from our Eastsiders afterschool program got to skate with a star as they laced up their skates and took to the ice with Vancouver Canucks forward Mason Raymond for the Scotiabank Group Charity Challenge Kickoff.

This fun event took place at the beautiful Richmond Olympic Oval this past March marking the countdown to the upcoming 13th annual Scotiabank Vancouver Half-Marathon & 5K on Sunday, June 26.

"I'm thrilled to be back for the second year as Honorary Chair of the Scotiabank Group Charity Challenge, and encourage

everyone to 'run for the sake of others' at the Scotiabank Vancouver Half-Marathon & 5K in June," said Mason Raymond.

This will be Union Gospel Mission's first year as a charity partner and we're excited to be part of such a premier event! Our goal this year is to raise \$25,000 in support of UGM's Children's Programming. We hope you'll join us and walk or run the 5K, or take on the challenge of North America's most scenic half-marathon.

Photo provided by Women & Families Team



The Eastsiders Skate with the Canucks' Mason Raymond



*Join Team UGM or
fundraise with us!*

*Register now at
vancouverhalf.com*

*For more info contact
specialgiving@ugm.ca*

Thank you so much for governing me * * *
the opportunity to go to camp this year. * *

Thank you for sponsoring me for Camp
It was the best time of my life.

My favorite parts were meeting new people, chapel Thank-you for the
Bible study, freetime, and camp fire. fun time at camp.

Dear union mission
gospel. Thank you for
paying for us to go to
Camp.

Thank u soo much
for the New Bible
I ♥ Love it

Thank you **Thank you**

You guys are being
good people. pless you

Camp was aweso me.
The leaders were great. I loved learning more about God
I'd just really like to say thank you. I had the
most outragesly, extreme, fantabulous
(fantastic + fabubus) best time... Ever!



thank you very much I really
enjoyed a chance of a life time
and hopfully I will be
able to come back next Year.

I am so excited to go to camp THANK u soo Much