

gratitude

NOVEMBER 2011 UGM.ca

**Miracles begin
with a Meal**



**UNION
GOSPEL
MISSION**

Feeding hope. Changing lives.

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's All About Giving Back

This message from Carl comes after a long and arduous journey through addiction and into wholeness and health.

"The Bible teaches to give back, to love your brother, to love your neighbor, and that's what we're supposed to do. We have to take care of one another. That's what God wants for us." - Carl, UGM Drug & Alcohol Program graduate

As you read Carl's story, you will see that his recovery started with a meal here at Union Gospel Mission. The meals that you provide not only physically feed those in need, they feed hope and introduce people, like Carl, to opportunities that could change their lives.

Whether a special holiday meal, or a breakfast, lunch, or dinner, that dedicated donors like you provide every day – here at UGM, we believe that a meal has potential to enliven and uplift those in need, giving them strength to take the first steps toward a life of health and wholeness.

As Carl's testimony shows, people come to UGM for the food you provide, but they receive so much more. With a full stomach and a clear head, guests can

engage with trained Outreach Workers who are there to listen and help by whatever means possible, be it providing clean clothing & shelter for the night, or connecting someone with UGM's Alcohol and Drug Recovery program.

Carl, and every one of us at Union Gospel Mission are so thankful that you continue to reach out to those in need throughout the year. Together we can incite change and help people turn their lives around.

This Christmas season, I hope you will partner with us as we serve meals to thousands of people living throughout Metro Vancouver and the city of Mission. For just \$3.29, you can provide a meal that could help someone transform their life.

God's richest blessing to you and yours this Christmas season,

William B. Mollard



Feeding hope. Changing lives.

UNION GOSPEL MISSION

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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 3,593 meals were served at our 24th annual Thanksgiving Dinner!

A hot, turkey dinner was served to every person who came through our doors at this year's Thanksgiving celebration on October 10th. With combined support from our generous & faithful donors, our tireless volunteers, and the hard-working kitchen & outreach staff, Union Gospel Mission was able to feed thousands of men, women and children across Metro Vancouver and the city of Mission.

Guests sat down to an amazing Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings while enjoying cool live music and a warm sense of community. Alumni of UGM's Alcohol & Drug Recovery program played an important role in making guests feel welcome, chatting with them over dinner, and connecting as peers. Skilled Outreach Workers also had many meaningful conversations with guests, listening, sharing information about UGM's transformational services, and offering a tangible sense of hope. For countless people this meal represented a new beginning. Many discussions were started about UGM's alcohol & drug recovery programs

and emergency shelters, which we all know can lead to major life-transformations.

Thanksgiving dinners were also served across Metro Vancouver at our facilities in New Westminster and the city of Mission. Guests were treated to delicious home cooked meals, while sharing in thanksgiving with friends, family and caring Outreach Workers.

By the end of the day 3,593 meals were served to individuals and families in need. There was a beautiful spirit in the air as guests paused to offer sincere thanks for the blessing of a nutritious Thanksgiving feast. The holidays can be a lonely and difficult time for many, but thanks to your outpouring of love, our guests left with a sense of family, and a reminder that they are cared for.

Your generosity warmed hearts this Thanksgiving. Thank you for sharing with those in need.

why i give

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

Sharon | Even though we are going through tough financial times ourselves right now, there are people out there less fortunate than we are and we should help them.

Jay | I give thanks for the bounty I am blessed with and wish to share it with others.

Angela | I know that God is using UGM to help those who are seeking and have come in contact with Jesus through your love and devotion. Thanks so much for all you do. God bless.

healing the *whole* person

THE STORY OF CARL

At the age of 11, Carl started using drugs and alcohol to cope with severe childhood abuse and trauma. Later, his drug use escalated when he got a job with a travelling carnival based out of Winnipeg. Working nearly 20 hours a day, getting 3 hours of sleep a night, Carl relied on drugs just to stay awake for his shifts. “After a few years on the job”, he shares, “the hours were getting to me so I increased the drug use, snorting more coke, smoking more crack – all day, every day. It was a blur for 5 years. I lost control of everything.”

In 2000, a friend asked Carl to help him move from Winnipeg to Vancouver. While the trip was meant to be only a week long, Carl was struck by the beauty of the coast and decided to stay. After a few days living out of hotels in the Downtown Eastside, Carl was also struck by the harsh violence present on the streets of Vancouver. He and his friend scouted out places for free meals in the neighborhood and quickly decided that Union Gospel Mission had the best food.

Drawn back repeatedly for the great meals, Carl was also touched by the ever-present love and attention from Outreach Workers. “They shook my hand, asked my name, and asked how I was doing. They had genuine concern and they cared about me. That’s why I kept coming here.”

Over time Carl developed a trusting relationship with UGM’s staff and volunteers. Feeling uplifted and inspired within this supportive community, Carl decided to join UGM’s Alcohol & Drug Recovery Program. While working through the program, Carl experienced a major transformation in his perspective. He realized that, while his life had been filled with darkness and strife, he had a very special gift to share: The gift of



encouragement. “The more sober I became and the more clear headed I was thinking, I noticed that if you’re happy and you’re positive, you encourage people, it spreads it around and everybody gets it. I also noticed that ever since I’ve come back to God, the more I give away the more He gives me.”

Today, Carl is nearly 2 years clean and sober and is employed at UGM in shipping & receiving. Carl reflects on his transformation, “For me, it all started with a meal and, thanks to the support of donors, my life today is positive and upbeat.”

Carl is a real blessing to those he meets and it is truly evident that he is committed to following God’s lead, serving however he can. And Carl wanted to pass on this inspiring message to readers, donors, and to everybody else...

“The Bible teaches us to give back, to love your brothers and sisters, and that’s what we’re supposed to do. We have to take care of one another. That is what God wants for us.”

God gives us grace, mercy and love and he wants us to give it to everybody else.

You can create the Miracle

Simply by providing a delicious, hearty meal to someone in need at Union Gospel Mission's Christmas Dinner, you are opening a door which can lead to miraculous transformations. On December 10th thousands of men, women and children will come to UGM for a fantastic Christmas Dinner that has become a long-time Vancouver tradition.

As Carl's story has demonstrated, one small act of kindness - like a meal - has the power to feed hope and inspire change in someone's life. We invite you to invest in this tradition of caring by offering your support through our 71st annual Christmas Dinner. Hosted by friendly volunteers and trained Outreach Workers, guests can feel at home, be taken care of, and learn more about UGM's comprehensive range of programs from alcohol & drug recovery, to education & employment services, to affordable housing.

It's a holiday feast with all the trimmings that will nourish bodies, warm hearts and uplift the spirits of those most in need. Ultimately, it's the beginning of a journey to health and wholeness that wouldn't be possible without you.

Your \$3.29 can change a life this Christmas.

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY AT UGM.ca





It's about my love for Vancouver and supporting Union Gospel Mission.

Check out Chandler's designs at oleoriginals.com. \$5 from each retro logo t-shirt goes back to UGM.

Make It! The Handmade Revolution

For the past 2 years, siblings, Jenna and Chandler Herbut have been partnering with UGM by setting up a silent auction table at their bi-annual crafts fare, *Make It! The Handmade Revolution*. 100% of the proceeds from the silent auction go to UGM and after 4 shows they have raised over \$3,000!

Featuring 115 different artisans from all over Canada, along with delicious food and live local music, this event is a chance for Jenna and Chandler to channel their passion for unique, ethically made goods in a way that supports their community. Approximately half of the artisans donate items for the auction - anything from art, photography, fashion, jewellery, t-shirts, soap, ceramics, and more.

Events like these are called Community Partnership Events (CPE's) and they are a great way to take your personal talents & interests and use them for good by partnering with UGM. Come out and support us and *Make It! The Handmade Revolution*. This year's fall craft fair will be held at the Croatian Cultural Center, November 24-27. Tickets are \$5 (\$2 off coupons available online at makeitproductions.com).

Get Involved

If you are interested in hosting a Community Partnership Event contact us at annualgiving@ugm.ca or visit ugm.ca/get-involved.



What came first, the turkey or the egg?

Let's call it a tie and say thanks for both! Thank you to BC Turkey & Egg Producers Associations for raising over \$36,000 at their 6th annual golf tournament in support of Union Gospel Mission - raising their total contribution over the years to nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

Since 2005, BC Turkey & Egg Producers have been partnering with UGM year round, providing eggs and turkey products for our daily meals. High quality protein is vital to a well balanced diet, yet is often in short supply across the Downtown Eastside.

UGM and our guests are ever grateful for your continuing support!

Uncovering Vision

For the 3rd year running, UGM guests took part in two art exploration courses this past summer and fall: *Art for the Heart* with Pamela Masik (masik.ca) and *Photo 101* with Leah Gregg (UGM's Community Engagement Specialist + Photographer) and Kevin Clark (kevinclarkphotography.com).

Renowned Vancouver artists, Masik and Clark have been volunteering their time and resources to mentor men and women who are taking part in UGM's transformational programs in the Downtown Eastside. This

year, we were also blessed to be able to offer Art Therapy sessions with Sara Prins Hankinson. Students in all of these courses learned to express themselves through photography, painting and mixed-media and developed immensely as artists, sharing their stories in healthy, meaningful ways. To learn more contact Leah at lgregg@ugm.ca

This year's art students are excited to share their work with you at the annual Eastside Culture Crawl. We hope you'll stop by!

“Photo 101 has changed my life. Even though Kevin Clark and I facilitate the program, we are usually the ones that learn the most. It's such a special opportunity for our group to capture beauty in areas of our city that many people avoid. And the art that these students produce is phenomenal.” – Leah Gregg



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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH @ 5PM

NOVEMBER 18-20, 2011
MAURICE MCELREA PLACE
361 HEATLEY AVENUE

FRIDAY 5PM-10PM
SATURDAY & SUNDAY 11AM-6PM



*Join UGM's artists at the
Eastside Culture Crawl*



Volunteers take on the incredible task of packing UGM's much appreciated Christmas hampers.

Gifts of Hope

By this time of year we are well on our way to preparing 300 hampers that will go to people in need this holiday season, thanks to churches, schools and our corporate partners.

How can you get involved?

Consider sponsoring a family in need this Christmas. We will pair your family with one who would otherwise not be able to afford Christmas dinner, gifts, and the other luxuries that many enjoy every year. Because the need is so immense, we accept sponsorships right until Christmas day.

The hampers, packed into large Rubbermaid containers, average a value of \$300 depending on the size of the recipient family.

Generally, we receive an abundance of gifts for young children, but the community could always use more gifts that are geared towards adults and teens.

For more information, contact us at hampers@ugm.ca or 604.215.5440 ext. 343

UGM Auxiliary presents their Annual Christmas Luncheon

The luncheon will feature live local music, a special guest speaker, and a report from UGM President, Bill Mollard. This event is a great chance for you to learn more about UGM, break bread with friends and enjoy some fantastic entertainment.

We would love for you to join us. All are welcome!

Tuesday, November 22, 10am

**Ebenezer Baptist Church,
lower auditorium
6858 Fraser Street**

**Tickets are \$12 - to reserve tickets
contact Sarah at 604.215.5452 ext. 369**

From Vancouver to the city of Mission, a story of true transformation

In the early 2000's, Linda found herself in desperate need of help. Her life had spiraled out of control. She was caught in a life of drugs, alcohol, and prostitution, and was looking for a way out. Linda was drawn to the Women's Ministry at 616 East Cordova where she met with kind and compassionate young women, Outreach Workers who cared for her and helped get her into a recovery program at Lydia Home (UGM's facility for women).

By moving from Vancouver to Mission, Linda was taking some big steps towards a fresh start. Transformation was on the horizon, but it wasn't easy. Recovery at Lydia Home was a new and somewhat daunting experience. She didn't

I am grateful to God and UGM for the new life I now have. - Linda

know how to handle the big changes and intense challenges all on her own. Linda turned to God for support, realizing that her recovery depended on a relationship with Him. While at Lydia Home, Linda learned so much about herself

and received care that prepared her for her next big steps. She hopes that many other women who are struggling with addiction will try this recovery program because it made such a difference in her life.

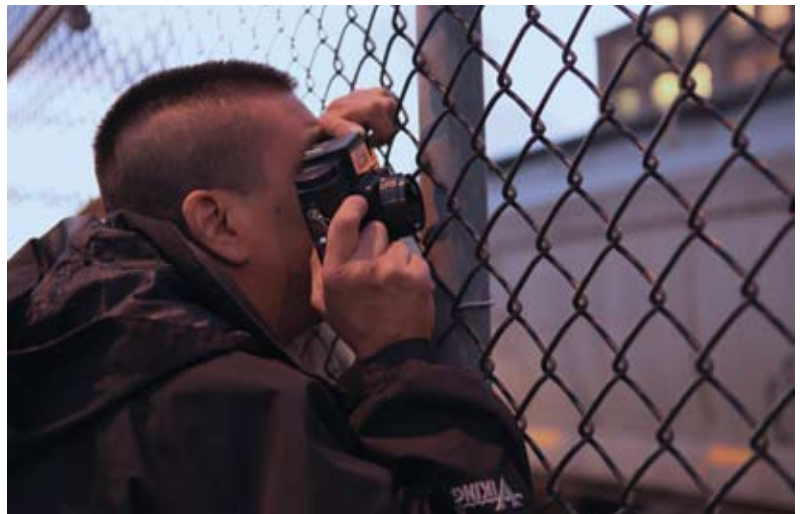
After graduating from Lydia Home, many new opportunities arose for Linda. She is now working as a volunteer at a local thrift store and she has been blessed with a beautiful home in the city of Mission. Linda enjoys fellowship at her church and attends programs at UGM in the city of Mission. She loves the Alpha Course and the Bible studies that are offered there, as well as the delicious meals. Linda regularly visits Lydia Home for their weekly AA meetings for women and appreciates the support she still gets from the staff and the residents who are in the recovery program there.

UGM in the city of Mission offers drop-in services, life skills programs, relapse prevention, anger management, health & wellness, Bible studies, and meals (Mon-Fri).

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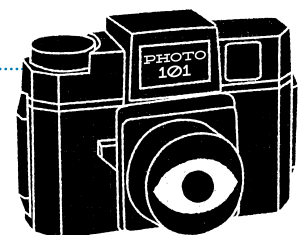
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Spreading the love

Union Gospel Mission has a long standing reputation as being a place where people can turn for support, love and encouragement when they are most vulnerable. Caring for those in need can take on many forms - offering a hot meal, sharing a meaningful conversation, or helping someone get into a recovery program. Unknowingly, the smallest action can help someone turn their life around.

Hearing that our actions have helped someone can be a real blessing, especially on a hard day. Andrea Sali, Outreach Worker from UGM New Westminster, shares how one man's note was an answer to prayer and encouraged her to keep serving her community through UGM.

"The work we do isn't always easy, and admittedly there are days I feel completely defeated, and leave wondering "Am I really helping anyone?" I woke up one morning, began to pray and ask God "Do you still want me to be doing this, or am I here because it's familiar? Because Lord, I just don't know if what I'm doing is enough."

After Chapel, I blessed the food and went back to work. A little later on, someone placed a piece of paper in front of me. As I looked up I only saw the back of a man walking out the door. I picked the piece of paper up and began to read it. It was indeed the answer to the prayer I prayed earlier that morning before work."

The note read:

Several years ago I was sitting in this room waiting for the meal to be served when I heard a young lady, you, explain how the Bible was a love story, a treasure hunt. You explained how Christ changed everything

in your life. I said to myself, "I want what she's got." Thanks in part to you and many others, today I have that. I left here that same day, hopped onto a bus and spent the next 14 months at Wagner Hills* being disciplined. KEEP IT UP! (you are a powerful witness for Christ!)

Thank you,
R. G. Disciple in Christ.

Andrea keeps notes like these in her wallet and pulls them out when she's had a tough day. Her story demonstrates that, whether we know it or not, the small things we do can have an incredible impact on those around us. Through her Bible message, Andrea had unknowingly encouraged this gentleman to change his life, and years later, through his little note, R.G. showed Andrea that the work she does is important and incredibly valuable.

*Wagner Hills Ministries is a Christian healing community that offers residential care and counselling to men who struggle with addictive and otherwise broken lifestyles. wagnerhills.com

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