

missionary



Lenard's transformation story

“Thank you for helping me get my life back on track”

“I would escape to the bottom of a bottle,” says Lenard. “I couldn’t pass a liquor store.”

Alcohol was the only way Lenard knew how to cope with the disappointments of life. And for him, there were many—family struggles, a rocky marriage and losing his job to the pandemic. With each one, he turned to drinking.

“I found myself slipping, slipping and slipping down a path of alcoholism—all while trying to make sure my two kids were taken care of. I realized I needed to pump my brakes and get myself back on track. I can’t

be an alcoholic and look after my son and daughter.”

Lenard found a recovery program, graduated and lined up a promising housing situation. One small step at a time, life was starting to change for the better. As he was deciding his next move, Lenard was presented with a promising option—moving back in with his ex wife and making things work.

“I missed my kids, so I decided to move back in,” says Lenard. “. . . only to find out my wife was in an income-restricted apartment and wasn’t able to have me there due to terms in her lease.”

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Christmas Challenge will **DOUBLE** your impact!

An unexpected blessing (Continued from pg. 1)

Lenard was forced to leave with nowhere to go. “I didn’t want to violate the lease and cause turmoil for my family,” says Lenard. He became homeless.

“It’s no fun looking for a place to sleep on the streets,” Lenard says. He hopped from shelter to shelter and began looking online for a place he could truly rebuild. Central Union Mission popped up—and he remembered his summers as a child going to Camp Bennett. All these years later, Lenard would walk through the Mission’s doors again.

THE POWER OF YOUR GIVING

“This place has helped me tremendously,” says Lenard. “They’ve provided me with a place to sleep, they’ve provided me with food and they’ve given me resources to get my life back on track. There are quite a few programs in the city. This one is the best.”

Safe shelter and three meals a day have helped Lenard take next steps with a clear mind. Because you give, he found the resources he needed to prepare for job interviews and begin securing his own housing. Lenard is leaning on the strong community of Central Union Mission. But above all, he’s leaning on God’s faithfulness.

“I think that’s what’s needed most—to have God in your life and to live within His words and His realm and His wants,” says Lenard. “I like that it’s a God-oriented program here. I’ve changed my mindset.”

UNLOCKING TRUE POTENTIAL

Looking five years down the road, Lenard wants to be living in his own apartment, working a stable IT job, reconnecting with his family, giving back to the community at the Mission and looking back on this season as a learning experience.

“I want my kids to have a dad who is there for them and is looking out for their best interest,” says Lenard. “I want to settle back into the norms of everyday life. When you have stability, you can take it for granted—something as simple as being able to come home and cook something.”

“Every little bit you give helps men like me . . .”

Because you give, Lenard is well on his way to achieving his goals and highest potential.

“The leaders here truly care about what’s happening to people in our community and helping people get their lives back in order,” says Lenard. “Every little bit you give helps men like me regain themselves. Thank you for helping me get my life back on track.”

Help restore the joy to Christmas for local men, women and children hurting from poverty!

For a man, woman or child experiencing poverty, Christmas is just another day of hunger and loneliness. *There’s nothing special about it.*

That’s why, with help from your and our Mission friends, we go all out to restore the joy of Christmas! Every guest who walks through our doors receives extra love from the community. They find hope for the holidays—and their future.

Give children in need a reason to smile!

Provide Christmas morning presents for struggling local families through Operation Christmas Miracle! On December 16, we expect more than 500 children from our program-participant families and the surrounding community to join us at our Comprehensive Family Resource Center or Mission: NOVA for this annual event full of joy and laughter!



Care for people who feel forgotten

At our *Show Some Love* event on December 15, we’ll pull out all the stops to lift the spirits of men experiencing homelessness. This special event is a full afternoon—haircuts, holiday music, fellowship, gift bags and an elegant dinner. It all ensures no one feels alone or unloved on Christmas!



Christ’s power on display



JOE METTIMANO
President & CEO

When each man, woman or child walks out of our doors with the tools to achieve lasting stability, they display the power of Christ to a broken world.

A single mom who once struggled to put food on the table is now providing stability for her children. Or a man who was once trapped in years of homelessness and addiction is now sober, thriving in his dream career and pursuing Jesus.

We love to pull out all the stops with holiday feasts and presents. But a fresh start is the best Christmas gift our guests this season could ask for. Your prayers and partnership make it all possible.

As Christmas approaches, I’m thinking of our Savior and His entrance into the world. He came for you and me and for every person who has struggled—and will ever struggle—in poverty. His heart is for these weary souls. And your generosity tells me yours is, too.

Thank you for partnering with the Mission to see broken stories turn into beautiful testimonies of transformation!





Living and giving made simple

When schedules fall out of balance and clutter fills your life, here are five ways you can practice living lighter:

1. FULLY SURRENDER.

Quieting your life to hear God's voice helps you make wise decisions.

2. STREAMLINE SCHEDULES.

Every time you say "yes" to something, you're saying "no" to something else. This clarifies what (and who) deserves the gift of your time.

3. SPEND WISELY. Change how you view your finances and give out of what God has given you.

4. STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS. Trust God, care for others and live as a person of peace.

5. INVEST IN SOMETHING LASTING. Use resources like IRAs, real estate, stocks, life insurance or a gift in your will to bless ministries like the Mission.

Want to learn more about how you can give creatively this Christmas? For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "5 Steps for Living Lighter" by contacting Megan Schmall at (202) 745-7118 ext. 219 or mschmall@missiondc.org

Every \$3.21 provides TWO meals!

DOUBLE your impact and make a local difference this Christmas season

Every \$3.21 you give now will multiply to feed two (*yes, two!*) people who are hungry, lonely and fighting to make it through the holidays.

Thanks to a \$100,000 Christmas Challenge Grant, any amount you send now will instantly double in impact. That's *twice* as many hot meals shared around a community who cares. *Twice* as many safe nights of shelter. *Twice* as many open doors to transformation.

So many community members—men, women, veterans and children—are longing for lasting stability. Will you give them everything they need to journey from homelessness to hope? It all starts with your gift of meals—just \$3.21 each.

To ensure your impact is doubled, please send the best gift you can before Tuesday, December 31. Thank you for reaching out to those in deepest need in this special season!

3 EASY STEPS to bless TWICE as many people in need

1 CHOOSE one or more of the Meal Tickets to send with your gift.

2 WRITE out your check for that amount.

3 RETURN your Meal Ticket(s), reply form and check in the envelope provided.



To help now, scan this QR code with your mobile device. Or visit missiondc.org/DecemberNL24