



JUNE 2022

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GENEROSITY

The Domino Effect

Shamaria had been living in a motel for a year after fleeing an unhealthy relationship, and her mental health had taken a beating. She was in survival mode, working up to three jobs, taking care of her kids, and just trying to make ends meet, leaving no room to take care of herself. Throughout that year in the motel, Shamaria focused solely on meeting the needs of everyone around her and sought comfort in material things, thinking that it would cure the darkness she felt. The Lord had been knocking on her heart for some time, asking her to let Him bring healing and light into her life. When she answered the Lord, she realized that her past pursuits were leaving her unfulfilled. She needed help. That is when she surrendered. And in that surrender, she found Toby's Place.

Since coming here, Shamaria says the biggest thing she has learned is the importance of taking care of herself. The structure and resources provided in the program have brought healing and growth for Shamaria, allowing her to care for her kids in a way that doesn't sacrifice her own mental health. She has found the space to unpack a lot of the burdens she had been carrying for too long. The generosity of the staff at Oliver Gospel has brought the healing and light that Shamaria was desperate to find. "It's like a domino effect...because of the generosity of Oliver Gospel and the staff here, I can be generous with my kids. I can be more patient and understanding and establish a relationship with them where we all communicate openly and healthily with each other."

Not only is Shamaria establishing healthy relationships with her kids, but she is also extending encouragement and support to the other women at Toby's Place! She is thrilled to share the tools that she has been given through our program with anyone who needs them. Now she is living out the domino effect of generosity! May each of us learn from what Shamaria so wisely realizes—it is through showing generosity that we empower others to be generous.

Principles are important. They're foundational. They are woven into the very fabric of life.

One principle that our Oliver Gospel community embodies is **"generosity begets generosity."** The idea is that as we are generous to each person in our community, they will be *inspired* to be generous too. Those who give, receive a blessing as they give of themselves. We see this principle in the book of Proverbs: "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." (*Proverbs 11:25, NIV*)

I saw this principle in action just a few weeks ago! The women at Toby's Place have been taking a poetry class, thanks to the *generosity* of one of our donors. We recently hosted a poetry night for our monthly supporters, and our residents were *inspired* to give of their stories through poetry at the event.

People often refer to the "poverty cycle" when talking about homelessness. What would our community look like if we started a "generosity cycle?" Join with me in giving generously with your time, resources, and talents. I know you will be so encouraged by the effect your generosity has on our community.

In Christ,



Travis McNeal

TRAVIS MCNEAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Pre Program Launch

There are always exciting things happening at Oliver Gospel. In March, we launched a **brand-new** program within Toby's Place: **Pre-Program**. This program is designed to meet immediate needs for women experiencing homelessness in Columbia by providing shelter, food, healthcare support, and doors to hope and transformation.

After we launched, a young woman came into the program with her child who was not-yet diagnosed with autism and had no access to health services for her and her child. Through Pre-Program, she was connected to the resources and diagnosis she needed to help her child, **and** she moved into our long-term program to continue growing spiritually, emotionally, and mentally!

This story is a great example of the need that Pre-Program fills. Pre-Program is **short-term**. By structuring it as a temporary bed (30 days maximum), we can meet their basic, immediate needs in 24 hours. For some, this is all they need to get back on their feet. Others, like this mother and her autistic child, need the support of a longer program but are unaware of where to begin.

When asked how this program will affect our community, our Connections Manager said, **"We will not be able to stop poverty in the world but will be able to break generational poverty and move individuals and families to holistic transformation."** This is the heart of why we develop these programs: creating spaces where transformation can happen.



Beyond the Classroom:

HOW UNIVERSITIES ARE SERVING THE MIDLANDS

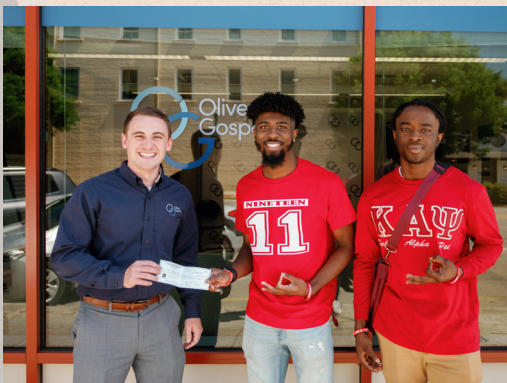


Columbia is not only South Carolina's capital city, but it is also home to many colleges and universities! From Benedict College to the University of South Carolina, these institutions bring students from all over and become their "home away from home."

Several University of South Carolina Greek-life organizations partner with us regularly by volunteering to serve meals, work at our events, and create holiday gift baskets for our guests. These students are filled with joy and gratitude at the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than themselves.



We recently had a business class from University of South Carolina create marketing plans for The Roastery at Oliver Gospel. Additionally, a group from Howard University drove down all the way from Washington D.C. to serve our community over their spring break.



Our staff and residents *love* having students around. Their energy and innovation bring life to our organization, and it is a chance to teach college students about homelessness and how to make an impact right here, even if this is just their "home away from home."

*On behalf of all the staff and residents at Oliver Gospel, we want to specifically thank **Howard University, the marketing class at the University of South Carolina, and the sororities and fraternities across the Midlands** who faithfully serve us. Thank you!*

SUMMER NEEDS & PRAYER REQUESTS

Needs:

ESV Study Bibles for Men's Center

Devotional books for Toby's Place

Biking & fishing equipment for Men's Center

Prayers:

Peace & healing for our guests

For our unbelieving guests to surrender their lives to Christ

For our program graduates to find support outside Oliver Gospel



OLLIE'S CORNER

In this issue of the Oliver Gospel Newsletter, we are talking all about:

GENEROSITY!

The dictionary says that generosity is “showing kindness toward others.” What does Jesus say about generosity? Let’s take a look!

Hiya! Ollie Here!

TIME TO LEARN!

- Jesus tells us that when we are generous to those in need, we are serving God!
- Grab your Bible and turn to the first book of the New Testament: **Matthew**. Read aloud with your family Matthew 25:35-40.

Further reading: Mark 10:17-31, Luke 6:27-36

LET'S CHAT!

- What does Jesus mean by “the least important” in Matthew 25:40?
- In Mark 10:17-31, what does Jesus say the rich man must do to enter the kingdom of God?
- In Luke 6:27-36, Jesus says that when someone hurts you, you should respond with generosity and love. Share with your family about a time when you showed generosity to someone even when they didn't deserve it.

BONUS ACTIVITY!

Take turns going around the circle and share one way that you can practice generosity this week. Write it down on an index card and keep it nearby to remind you to be generous as Jesus is generous!

SHARE THE LOVE!

If you show or receive generosity this week, snap a picture or share the story with Ollie by emailing us at **communications@olivergospel.org** or tag us on social media!



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