



Oliver Gospel

SUMMER 2023

NEWSLETTER

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“ I still have wounds, but now they’re more like a beautiful scar. ”

Your gift provided hope for Marra!

Community of Hope

“I love learning about the Lord and nurturing my relationship with Him. I’ve really found who I am at Toby’s Place.”



Marra’s newborn son means everything to her. When a judge said she would lose custody of him because of her addiction, she was devastated. As that reality swept through her mind, she reflected on how she got here.

Marra first became homeless at age 16 after escaping an abusive situation. With no community to support her, Marra battled addiction, a miscarriage, and chronic

homelessness for the next ten years. She was lonely. No one was there for her when she needed it most.

“I didn’t think there was going to be anything better for me. I didn’t think I was better than that lifestyle.”

She began to pray. She had to prove she could take care of her new baby boy or face losing custody of him. The thought of losing another child was too much to bear alone. She needed

people to support and encourage her, so Marra got to work and enrolled in a recovery program.

In recovery, Marra sought God through Scripture and prayer. The staff noticed her strong faith, and when she finished the program, they recommended her to a Christ-centered community where she would thrive: Toby’s Place.

Marra’s hopes soared when she took



OLLIE NEEDS YOUR HELP!



**OLLIE'S
CORNER**

This summer, make care kits filled with essentials for your neighbors experiencing homelessness! Here’s how:

Step 1: Gather your supplies! Below is a list of the best items to include in your care kits:

- Soap and shampoo
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Wipes
- Small towels or rags
- Compact ponchos

Step 2: Get a group together to assemble your kits

These can be completed by yourself OR in a group with your church, friends, or family. Make it fun! See who can fill their bags the quickest, or come up with a song to sing while you pack!

Step 3: Drop off your care kits at Oliver Gospel

You can drop off at our Men’s Center on weekdays between 8 am – 4 pm. We will hand out the kits throughout the summer, helping those in need stay cool and clean.



VOLUNTEER TODAY!



We anticipate serving **17,640 meals** this summer to our neighbors in need and we need your help to make it happen. Volunteer to serve a meal this summer and see firsthand how your generosity helps those in need.

Go to olivergospel.org/ volunteer to help us fill all the slots we need



that first step through the door. Toby's Place was more beautiful than she imagined. Everyone's face lit up with a smile and greeted her with joy.

She settled into Toby's Place quickly. Her faith continued to grow, and her peers uplifted her spirits with their love, care, and support. She learned important lessons about overcoming trauma, creating boundaries, and setting goals for the future. She thanked God for hearing her prayers.

Marra was supported and encouraged in all areas of life by the staff and residents at Toby's Place. She made lifelong friends, worked towards her GED, and was baptized at her new home church! When Marra graduated from Toby's Place, there were many tearful hugs as the women celebrated how far Marra has come.

Today, Marra continues to grow and thrive. She is working full-time and saving to move into permanent

housing. She is grateful for God's faithfulness to heal her past and excited for what He has in store next.

Her transformation was made possible by partners like you, who support the spiritual community that gave her the support she needed to thrive.

A donation of just \$12.50 provides a full day of classes, care, and meals for a woman like Marra, and \$9,000 will see one woman through the entire program.

WHAT'S THE LATEST AT OLIVER GOSPEL?

In 1888, Reverend Robert Oliver began helping our homeless community experience the power of Christ's love through meeting their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

135 years later, Oliver Gospel continues to serve that purpose. Here are a few ways we continue to build on Reverend Oliver's legacy in 2023!

We introduced a new recovery curriculum in March. The curriculum unites the 12 Steps of Recovery with biblical teachings, encouraging our residents to implement God's Word into their everyday lives.

The Lord continues to work miracles throughout all our programs. Seven women have already graduated from Toby's Place in 2023, and many men and women have found full-time employment.

In May, five residents at Toby's Place accepted the Lord and were baptized at their home church,

Calvary Chapel Northeast. It is so encouraging to see how God is working throughout our organization!

None of this would be possible without faithful and loyal supporters like you, who continue to provide meals, shelter, and life-changing services to those who need it most in our community. Thank you for helping us transform lives!





A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

TO PRAY FOR:

- Pray that the Lord will provide safety, security, and good health for those experiencing homelessness through the hot summer months.
- Pray for those in our programs who are new believers as they grow their understanding and appreciation of Jesus and His gospel.
- Join us in thanking God for our volunteers who give their time, talent, and treasure to serve our organization.

Community sounds so simple and unifying. It has a nice, soothing quality that propels us to get along. If only it were that easy!

Community is not simply a place or an organization; it isn't an exchange of information over the Internet. Community is both a feeling and a set of relationships among people. People form and maintain communities to meet common needs.

This is manifested at Oliver Gospel as God's love is alive and active, penetrating the hearts of each resident. As trust is discovered, walls crumble, faith is built, and fears gradually melt away.

I witness true community every time that I attend our graduations. I hear our residents testify to how far they've come and how Jesus carried them. I watch fellow classmates pour words of encouragement into each graduate. Together, residents and

staff are exhibiting and experiencing a "Christlikeness", what it means to be "made new again", as they struggle together, laugh together, pray together, learn together, and experience life together. What a beautiful thing it is!

In a true community, individuals have a sense of trust, belonging, safety, care, hope, and love for each other. They have a collective sense that life can be better and with God, "ALL things are possible." Matthew 19:26.

I want to encourage you to strengthen our community by praying for us daily, donating financially and serving someone in your circle of influence more deeply.

TRAVIS MCNEAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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Donate
online
today!



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