

THE MISSION

let's end homelessness in LA



Please Help Transform Another Life Today

Union Rescue Mission helps transform the lives of men, women, and children — mind, body, and spirit — through a variety of programs with the compassion of Christ. After meeting their basic needs, URM offers more personalized and comprehensive solutions.

Your gift today of \$15, \$25, or more will not only provide meals and shelter, it will help hurting people develop a personal relationship with Jesus, rebuild family relationships, create financial stability, restore physical health, and much more.

So please do more than save a life today. Help change someone's life. Don't wait. Please send the most generous gift you can. Thank you!

To put your gift to work even faster, go to www.urm.org/NewLife

Give generously today to change lives.

Our Mission

UNION RESCUE MISSION
Sharing the Compassion of Christ for 125 years

545 S. San Pedro Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013
1-888-77-THE WAY HOME (888-778-4392)
www.urm.org



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Notes from Andy Your Life-Changing Work

It may never get made into a movie, but Robert and Kimberly's tale in this issue of *The Mission* is a real love story. Robert, the brash, funny, smart, likeable, life-long alcoholic — the college sophomore who never grew up. And Kimberly, the beautiful, faithful, caring wife who refused to ever give up on Robert, despite his self-destructive addiction. Robert caused Kimberly a whole lot of heartache and trouble!

But when Robert hit his rock bottom, it was Kimberly who picked him up and brought him to Union Rescue Mission. Robert slowly came around, and his wit and outgoing charm emerged with him. I cheered him on every step of the way. The love he experienced here at the Mission transformed him. But it was Kim's love that saved him.

Yet there's a deeper love here, too. Robert spent 50 years walking a long, dark journey of addiction. But that long, dark journey ended at the cross of Jesus. Thanks to God's love, and Jesus' death and resurrection, Robert is a completely new man. That's the promise of Easter. And that promise of Easter is what Union Rescue Mission is all about. And it's what YOU are all about. Your support means Easter miracles.

Blessings,



To read Andy's blog, please visit revandysblog.com



How I Drank My Way From the Ivy League to Skid Row

After 50 years of drinking and drug abuse, Robert lost everything — everything but his wife's love.

"I once lived with a view of the ocean. Now my view was Skid Row."

When I came to Union Rescue Mission, I had one foot in the tomb. I hadn't spent two days sober in more than 50 years. I'd lost everything — my family, home, career — and I was in deep debt. I once lived with a view of the ocean. Now my view was Skid Row.

Quite a fall for a man with a master's degree from one Ivy League university and who once served as Dean of Men at another.

I started drinking when I was 15. I was already an alcoholic in college. I met my wife, Kim, in a New York

bar. By the time we married, she quit drinking. I didn't. For more than 20 years, she tried to get me to stop. She made my life miserable. Now I realize she was the one person who showed me what real love looks like.

As my drinking became unbearable, Kim kicked me out. So I drank even more. To pay rent, I borrowed from my wife and my mother.

In August 2014, I got evicted from my apartment. That's when Kim brought me to Union Rescue

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The Love That Saved Robert's Life



Some people say that a successful marriage is just two people who refuse to give up on each other. Kimberly, Robert's wife for more than 35 years, models that adage.

"Bob's drinking was hard to deal with. I could have divorced him, but I didn't want my son to go through that," Kimberly says. "Besides, I care about Bob. I really care. He's smart, he's funny. And he has a good heart. So I had to find a way to help him and to make our marriage work."

When Kimberly met Robert, she was a self-described alcoholic, too. After she started experiencing blackouts, however, she quit drinking and tried to get Robert to quit, as well. He refused.

The marriage was difficult from the beginning. Then, as Robert's drinking worsened, Kimberly became a "born-again" Christian. She found solace in her new faith, but the marriage got worse. "We argued and kept falling further away from each other. Then, when we fell behind in paying our bills, I got more and more resentful. I finally had to get him out of the house for both our sakes. But I never stopped caring for him."

Another Miracle on Skid Row

One day, she started listening to Rev. Andy Bales on URM's *Amazing Stories From Skid Row* radio program, which features men and women at Union Rescue Mission who are overcoming addictions and homelessness. She knew what she had to do. In August 2014, she brought him to the Mission.

Her tough love paid off. "I see a miracle taking place in Bob," she says. "He's a changed man. He loves the Lord and every day he's getting healthier. I've always known that he loved me and our son, but now I'm seeing it every day. There's still a long way to go, but we're gaining our trust in each other again, now that we have Jesus in our lives. I truly believe that all things are possible when we reach out to our heavenly Father. Union Rescue Mission is an amazing place."

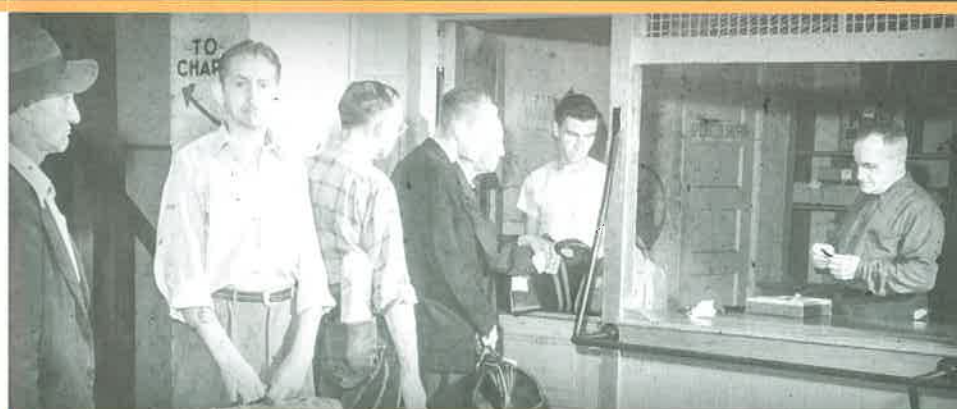
"THE LONE DRINKER" CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Mission. When I told her, "I'm not going in there!" she responded, "Then you can live under a bridge." She saved my life that day.

I stayed. But that meant I had to face the lies I had built my life upon: *I'm not an alcoholic; I can quit any time I want. Lie: I'm too smart for this; I have an Ivy League education! Lie: I'm not as bad as all these other alcoholics and junkies. And the Lie of lies: God hates me for what I've done.*

Slowly, I gave up every one of those lies but the last one — until my chaplain looked me in the eyes and asked, "Who told you God hated you?" My chaplain started going through scripture with me and enabled me to realize God didn't hate me: He loved me unconditionally. Nothing could ever make Him stop loving me. When I understood that, I could finally face the incredible shame and guilt that kept me drinking for 50 years. And I left all that shame and guilt on the cross of Jesus Christ.

After Jesus died on that cross, He lay dead in a tomb. When I came to URM, I lay dead in that same tomb. But here's the thing: Three days after they put Jesus in that tomb, He walked out with a resurrected life. And when He walked out, He carried me with Him. Now I have a hope and a future. Hallelujah!



Going Strong for 125 Years Because of YOU: A Testimony From 1905

For 18 years, I was rarely sober. In fact, there was a saying back in the town where I lived that if you wanted to do any business with me, you'd better get to me before 5 o'clock — because by 6 o'clock, I was too far gone.

I simply couldn't stop drinking. I lost everything. My family wanted nothing to do with me. Even my own father denounced me.

I tried over and over to quit drinking. I couldn't do it. But one day, I walked into Union Rescue Mission because I was curious. I listened to an old man talk about how he had spent 35 years drinking, and he was completely drunk the day he walked in here. But then he prayed to God and he had been sober for nine months.

That's when I realized that I had tried everything to quit drinking except Jesus Christ. So I went up to the altar and cried out to Jesus Christ. He came into my life that night and I have been sober now for more than two years.

No more box cars, no more empty pockets. Today, I am a free man. I am a trusted employee in a large corporation. I share a Christian home with my beautiful wife and a fine baby boy. And now I can look the whole world in the face and praise God.

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL Hearts for Hope Gala

On **March 5**, Union Rescue Mission and the Hearts for Hope Committee will host the seventh annual *Hearts for Hope Evening of Entertainment Event* at the beautiful **Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village** to benefit **Hope Gardens Family Center**.

Hope Gardens Family Center is a transitional housing facility where women and children experiencing homelessness can find rest, regain hope, and get the chance to build a better life. Today, Hope Gardens Family Center is a safe refuge for over 50 moms, 80 children, and 25 senior women.

This year's event will include a shopping boutique, silent and live auction, raffles with great prizes, dinner, entertainment, and the presentation of our 2016 **Heart for Service Awards**.

Hearts for Hope Gala "A Generation of Hope"

Date: March 5, 2016

Time: 5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Location: Four Seasons Hotel
Westlake Village
Two Dole Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91362

Cost: \$225

For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Karmen Herring at (213) 347-6311 or visit www.urm.org/Hearts2016

Remember Our Hope

This Lenten and Easter season, we invite you to join us for a few moments each day to reflect on our real hope for healing and new life. Receive Andy's devotional emails by signing up at

www.urm.org/Devotionals

"We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." — Romans 6:4

