

# the *Light of Hope*

www.ourm.org • March 2011



Since 1948, bringing the hungry, hurting and homeless to new life, new goals and a new future in Christ.

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**ORLANDO UNION  
RESCUE MISSION**

*Since 1948*

**RESTORING HOPE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST**

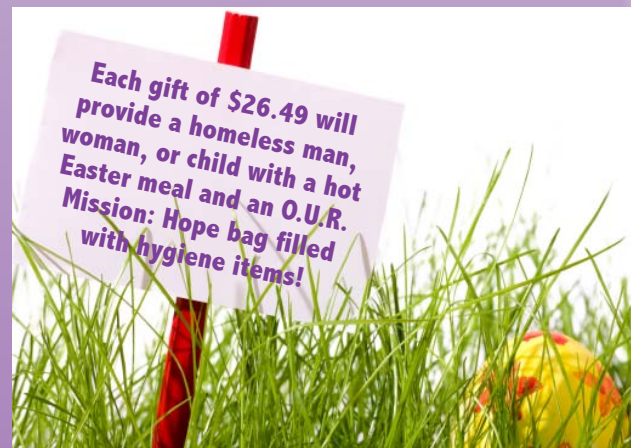


ALLEN HARDEN, PRESIDENT/CEO

Imagine not being able to recognize yourself in the mirror. Having long, disheveled hair, stained teeth, and skin caked with grime from spending night after night on the streets. That is the painful reality facing many of Central Florida's homeless.

Not being able to afford items that many of us take for granted – such as a hairbrush or a bar of soap – can cause the homeless to endure a devastating loss of hope. But you can help restore that lost hope to broken, hurting souls this Easter by participating in "O.U.R. Mission: Hope" campaign. By providing basic hygiene items, men, women and families – ready to give up – find new strength and reach toward the hope for a brighter future that lies ahead.

During the Mission's Annual Easter Banquet on April 22nd, our team of staff and volunteers will distribute hygiene items and hope to more than 800 men, women and children on the streets of Central Florida. Each guest will leave this outreach knowing they are loved and cared about not only by those in our community, but more importantly by a loving Savior who sacrificed His life for their good. Don't miss your opportunity to give hope and change a precious life this Easter!



**THE MISSION: HOPE**  
Orlando Union Rescue Mission



**O.U.R. Mission: Hope is currently in FULL SWING!**

The Mission is collecting new, unopened hygiene items to distribute to the homeless men, women, and children of Central Florida during our Annual Easter Banquet.

**HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

Request as many "O.U.R. Mission: Hope" bags as you can fill with new and unopened hygiene items for homeless men, women, or children and return the filled bags to the Mission by April 1st.

**With your help Central Florida's neediest will have hope to hold on to this Easter!**

For more information on how you can help this Easter please contact 407-422-4855 ext 1109.

**SHOPPING LIST:**

*Adult Bag Ideas*

- Hair Products
- Insect Repellent
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Undergarments
- Razors
- Rain Ponchos
- Soap
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Socks/T-Shirts
- Q-tips
- Feminine Hygiene Products

**SHOPPING LIST:**

*Child/Infant Bag Ideas*

- Band-aids
- Hair Accessories
- Hand Sanitizer
- Diapers/Pull-ups
- Teething Rings
- Pacifiers
- Baby Blankets
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Baby Wipes
- Dry Baby Formula
- Children's Medicine
- Diaper Ointment



**MILES TO GO FOR HOPE**

The story of Alesha Bridgeman – current resident at O.U.R. Mission Home



**W**ith sweat dripping down their weary bodies and carrying their only possessions, Alesha Bridgeman and her three small children walked miles through the blazing Florida heat to find shelter at the Orlando Union Rescue Mission- their last hope. All the while Alesha wondered how she could have gotten to this point.

Alesha had worked hard since she was 16 years old and had never been in any financial trouble. She married young and by the time she was 21, she and her husband had three beautiful children and were living in the suburbs of Chicago. "Everything was perfect," Alesha says as she describes her past. Both Alesha and her husband had steady jobs and their children were well taken care of.

But shortly after the birth of their youngest child, things began to spiral downward. Alesha's husband was laid off from his job and not long after, Alesha was also laid off from hers. This led to constant fighting about finances and the situation eventually became unbearable. "Financial stress put a huge strain on our relationship," Alesha sadly recalls. After months of trying to work through this crisis, the marriage soon became a casualty of their financial struggles and Alesha found herself with nowhere to turn.

**"I ran out of diapers, and my son had to go without diapers for days – it was the worst feeling in the world."**

Having family in Florida, Alesha decided to take her life savings and move her family down south. They moved into their new home and initially everything seemed to be going well. However, after getting settled in, things rapidly became harder than anticipated. Having three small children at home and no childcare made finding work nearly impossible. Alesha's savings quickly began to run out and she was eventually left with nothing. She had no money to buy even simple necessities. "I had to skip meals in order for my kids to eat, I had no detergent to wash clothes, I ran out of diapers and my son had to go without diapers for days - It was the worst feeling in the world," Alesha says. Sadly, things only became worse.

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### *Thanks to you...*

2010 was a life changing year for so many broken souls!

We praise the Lord for His constant faithfulness at the Mission and look forward to another year of serving the hungry, hurting, and homeless of Central Florida!

**1,376**

lost souls found hope in Christ!

**281,865**

hot meals served!  
More than ever before!

**87,773**

nights of shelter provided!

Thank you for allowing the Lord to work through you and for being a faithful supporter of this ministry.

So many homeless men, women, and children are continually blessed because of your generosity.

*MILES TO GO continued...*

Having nothing left, she was soon also faced with eviction. Her only option was to sleep on the floor of a family member's one-bedroom house with her three children. But the cramped living quarters soon became too much to bear and Alesha was told she needed to find other arrangements. Determined not to let her children sleep on the streets, Alesha gathered up all they had, and she and her family walked down the streets of Orlando to get to their new home - the Orlando Union Rescue Mission.

The first night at the Mission was the best night of sleep Alesha and her children had experienced in months. "After sleeping on the floor for so long we really just appreciated having a bed that night," says Alesha. There have been many changes in their family since coming to the Mission. "I'm not as bitter as I was before coming here, and my relationship with God has improved," she says. Her three children have adjusted well and Alesha now has hope and a new sense of security knowing that while at the Mission her needs are being provided, and she is able to focus on rebuilding a great life for her and her family.

For more information about the life-changing programs offered for women and children like Alesha and her family, visit our website at [www.ourm.org](http://www.ourm.org).

## **What does it take to put together the O.U.R.M. Easter Banquet?**



The Mission's Annual Easter Banquet is just around the corner and preparations are being made to feed hundreds of Central Florida's neediest.

So what does it take to provide this many homeless men, women, and children with a hot nutritious meal?

- **Over 500 pounds of ham**
- **150 volunteers**
- **Two weeks of meal preparation**
- **15 cooks**
- **Great amounts of prayer from our generous supporters!**

If you would like more information about how you can serve this Easter please call 407-422-4855 ext 1109.

The Orlando Union Rescue Mission is a non-profit, faith based organization whose mission is to provide those in need with food, shelter, clothing, education and other resources to help the homeless achieve self-sufficiency. The foundation of our work is Biblically based - to bring people to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

P.O. Box 2791 • Orlando, FL 32802 • 407-422-4855 • [ourmission@ourm.org](mailto:ourmission@ourm.org) • [www.ourm.org](http://www.ourm.org)

*Call 407-422-4855 ext 1109 to learn about opportunities to volunteer and to get involved this Easter.*

**Don't forget to send your gift by April 15th to make a difference this Easter!**

### **MISSION IN ACTION REMINDER**

**Don't miss an exciting  
Mission in Action meeting  
on March 14!  
Call 407-422-4855  
for details.**