

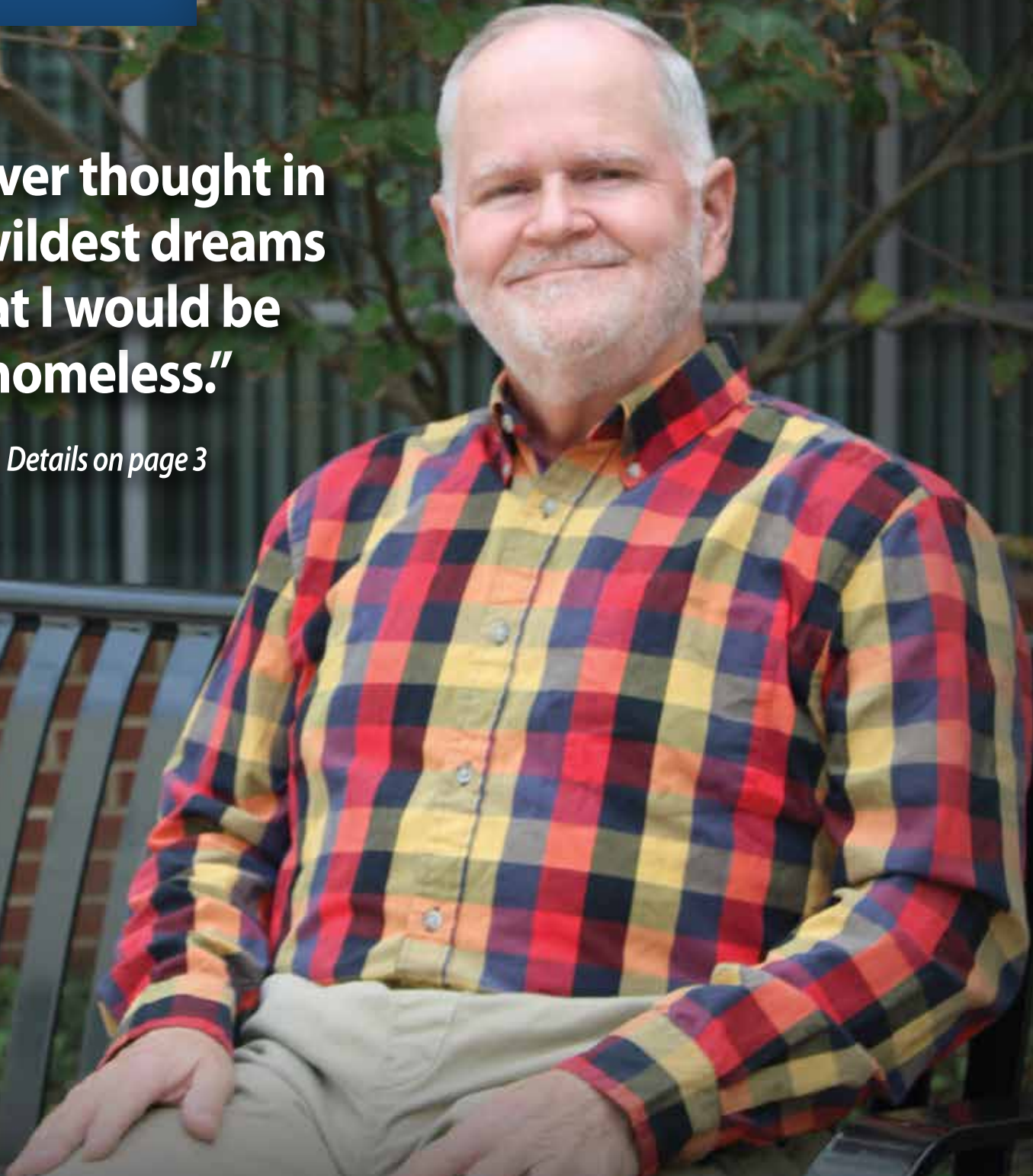
The
**UNION
MISSION**

MISSION NETWORK

Food, Clothing, Shelter ... and so much more!

**"I never thought in
my wildest dreams
that I would be
homeless."**

Details on page 3



In this season of thanks and giving, we asked some of the people staying in our shelters what they were grateful for. Here's what they had to say about the help you make possible at The Union Mission.



"I'm thankful for The Mission because by being here I have gained the confidence to reach and obtain my goals of loving, respecting, and appreciating myself more and gaining the strength to be more independent as well as a better role model for my daughters. I'm also thankful for the friends I have made and the safe environment to learn and grow with God."

Jolene

Women and Children's Shelter Guest

"I'd like The Union Mission supporters to know how much I appreciate their donations in order to help with the upkeep of his ministry so that women like myself can come in with nothing and leave with everything: spiritual courage, support, love, and savings. Thank you for believing in The Union Mission vision!"

Takeira

Women's Shelter Guest

"As for me being here, it's been a pleasure because if you do right, things will fall into place. If you do wrong, you'll suffer the consequences. I follow the rules, that long, straight line. I was raised going to church and every day that I come to the chapel, I'm in the front row. I love the Bible study. I love it here. I would tell everyone who helps fund The Union Mission, I appreciate it very deeply. I love them from the bottom of my heart, because if it wasn't for the support that The Mission gets, who knows where I and the other fellows here would be."

John Henry

Men's Shelter Guest

**Women's names are aliases as these guests prefer to remain anonymous.*

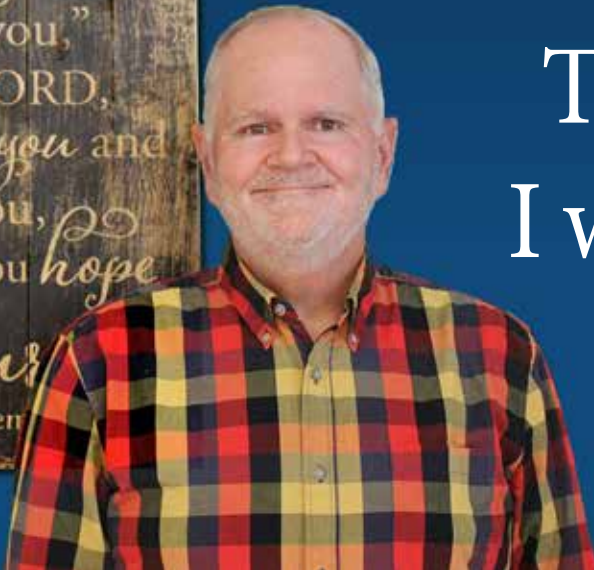
"Without The Union Mission, I probably would be out there living on the streets. It's all my fault. I take full responsibility. My parents raised me right. I didn't have a bad childhood. I just chose to follow the wrong directions. But things have turned out good for me since I've been here. The staff has grown on me. I can joke with all of them and not get upset. They pick on me and I pick on them in a good way. They've grown to be my family.... I might have a family outside and all that I could probably go stay with, but they don't understand what I'm going through. But the staff has always understood a lot. If I have a problem, they will hear me. They say, 'Let's pray about it' or 'You gotta leave it to God.'"

Andrew

Men's Shelter Rental Resident

*Notes of
Thanks*





“If it wasn’t for
The Mission,
I would be on
the street.”

“I never thought in my wildest dreams that I would be homeless,” Tim, 59, says. Raised by both parents with his sisters in rural Nathalie, Virginia, he’d grown up in church, graduated from high school, and been steadily employed in landscaping and at a manufacturing plant making whirlpools and bathtubs. But in 1999, his father was hospitalized in critical care for a month after a heart attack, then was bedridden with kidney failure. Rather than put his parents in a nursing home, Tim quit his job, emptied his 401(k), and moved into their 1972 mobile home to serve as their caregiver. “It was four years with no income, but I wouldn’t trade that time for anything.”

After both parents died in 2003, Tim ran his own small lawn care business with two part-time employees. Many of his customers were retirees, some of them needy, and few paid in full or on time. Over the next 16 years Tim eked out a meager living, but money was always tight.

One Wednesday morning in 2019, Tim no longer wanted to live. “I got up on May 1 and I saw my financial situation. Even though I knew the Lord, I just couldn’t face another day,” he says. As he planned to kill himself, the Lord spoke to his heart: “Timothy, you’re taking My

work into your hands and you’re getting ready to step off into eternity, and there’s not but two places to go. Are you ready?” In the middle of his breakdown, Tim called the sheriff’s office for help.

“I ended up in Petersburg—in a ‘nut house,’ we used to call them,” Tim says. He was diagnosed with severe depression, which improved after a few weeks of medication and counseling. His hospital case manager recommended that he be discharged to The Union Mission. Tim was scared, but the Men’s

*“It’s just a great place!
... if you are willing
there are endless
opportunities!”*

Shelter manager reassured him that as long as he followed the rules, he could stay and work toward a better future. “I always took that to heart,” Tim says. In his first few months here, Tim’s health problems caught up with him. He had pneumonia, then a heart attack that required a stent. The Mission’s Wellness Team helped him navigate his recuperation and his medications.

Tim also joined a six-month men’s discipleship program at the Mission. He loved the camaraderie and the

immersive Bible study of Romans with the staff pastors and fellow shelter guests. “It’s enlightening, it’s encouraging, you know, being around a bunch of Christ-like guys. It’s really been a blessing! But it’s not a cakewalk, I’ll tell you. Last summer I had no money, no benefits, and I couldn’t work. Oh my goodness, I had to trust the Lord! I admit it was hard to do sometimes, but He sure brought me through.”

One by one, Tim is meeting the goals he set. He’s been approved for SSDI disability and food assistance. Though he still relies on a walker because of sciatica and spine pain from years of heavy labor, he’s able to exercise at a nearby gym to regain his strength. He’s joined a local Baptist church with good preaching. Best of all, he’s moved into his own Union Mission rental room with a handicapped bathroom on the third floor of the Men’s Shelter—and he’s saving up money “so I can move into my own place and be independent again.”

“I know one day I’ll leave, but I just love it here!” Tim reflects with gratitude. “It’s just a great place! The opportunity is here for anybody. You have to do what God is asking you to do, but if you are willing there are endless opportunities. I am eternally grateful for The Union Mission!”

Give the Gift of
to those without home
or family this Christmas.

Joy

Decorate a paper lunch bag and fill it with the following items:

\$5 Fast Food Gift Card

Men's Manicure Set

Men's Underwear

Men's Wallet

Candy

Christmas Card

Bus Pass

(go to <https://gohrt.com/fares/where-to-buy/>)



Bring your completed bags to our Donation Drop Off Center (behind the Thrift Store),

MONDAY-FRIDAY | 9 AM-5 PM | BY DECEMBER 14

Hope Begins with a Meal

Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here before we know it. This year's celebrations might look a little different than in years past with all the COVID restrictions, but we will find a way to celebrate. As we sit around our holiday tables or join our families on Zoom, we will give thanks that God has been faithful despite the many challenges we faced. We will also give thanks that He sent His Son to die for us so we have the promise of eternal life in Him. As we celebrate with our families, there are hundreds of homeless people who have no family or friends to celebrate with. **You can provide a holiday meal** with all the fixings and the joy of celebrating with people who care **for just \$2.58!** Your gift of \$50 can provide for 20 people.

Give the Hope that Begins with a Meal at
unionmissionministries.org/donate.



Staff Needs

APPLY ONLINE AT
www.unionmissionministries.org

or send resume to Kathy Vaughan at kathy@ummnorva.org.

All applicants must be mature Christians.

Some positions require days, evenings, and weekends.

OVERNIGHT WOMEN'S SHELTER SUPERVISOR

- Part-time, 11 p.m.-7 a.m.
- Experience with cleaning preferred
- Female only

GIFT PROCESSOR/MAIL ANALYST

- Full-time
- Experience with finance and computer databases preferred

DONOR RELATIONS ASSISTANT

- Full time, occasional weekends/evenings
- Help coordinate and implement donor communications with focus on personal contacts that deepen relationships, maximize connections, and increase annual giving and engagement with The Union Mission.
- Excellence in customer service; written and interpersonal communications; discretion and teamwork are musts.
- Experience with databases, donor interaction, biblical stewardship, and/or nonprofit work preferred.

FACILITIES MANAGER

- Full-time
- Experience in facilities management, communications and construction required
- Only qualified candidates need apply

DRIVER

- Clean driving record
- Experience with box trucks required
- CDL preferred



5100 E. VIRGINIA BEACH BLVD.
NORFOLK, VA 23502
757-627-8686



Thank you
for Your
Generosity!



REV. JOHN W. GRAY, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020 has been filled with many challenges, but the year is almost over. As we look ahead to 2021, we do so with the hope that is found in Jesus Christ. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Through the challenges, we’ve held onto that promise and continued our work of caring for the poor and homeless. Men like Tim have not only survived, but they have thrived. Women and children who came to us desperate and alone found compassion and understanding. Most of all, they all found hope for a brighter future because you have been faithful in your giving. Despite your own challenges, you continued to give and made a lasting impact in their lives. They are grateful—and so are we! As you celebrate the holidays this year, I humbly ask that you prayerfully consider an extra year-end gift that will continue your legacy. May God bless and protect you and your family in the days ahead.

Gratefully yours,

Rev. John W. Gray, Jr.
Executive Director

Make Something Good of
2020

*It's seemed like a year
that's beyond our control,
but you can turn barriers
into hope for the future!
By making a tax-deductible
year-end gift,
you can change
someone's future
for good!*

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TODAY AT
unionmissionministries.org

Yes, Rev. Gray, I want to continue to help you care for those who are struggling.

I've enclosed: \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$150 \$_____

I would like to commit to a **monthly gift** of \$_____. My first gift is enclosed.

Method of Payment: Check VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number _____ CCV Code _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

*Please make your check payable to **The Union Mission**. To make an online donation, go to donate.unionmissionministries.org.*



Please complete this slip and return it to **The Union Mission** with your generous gift. Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send a receipt for your records.

Weathering the Storms of Adversity



A remarkable 150-year-old red oak tree had welcomed visitors to Calvin University for years—until one extremely windy day last year. Though many were shocked when the 50-foot tree crashed to the ground, longtime grounds director Charlie Huizinga knew exactly what he would do.

“I was making my rounds one day more than a decade ago,” he said, and “looking around the oak I discovered little trees coming up. Acorns were still attached to the root.” That day Charlie harvested some of the seedlings and planted them on his own property. Over the years they grew to become 20-foot trees—and one of his transplants now fills the hole the fallen oak left behind. Thanks to his plan, a new generation of oak trees will grace the campus for decades to come.

Sometimes the storms of life threaten to take out even the strongest trees. Uncertainty, grief, illness, or financial hardship can leave you feeling totally depleted, but that doesn't mean God's plan has weakened. Psalm 9:9 says, “The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.” To rise up in the face of difficulty:

PRAY

Bringing your fears to God in prayer is the first step to discovering His strength to face adversity. Ask Him to give you His perspective for your situation and to help you stand strong.

SERVE

Sometimes caring for someone else can help shift your focus away from your own problems. Choose to bless someone today and see how it blesses you, too.

SHARE

Generously giving of your resources can adjust your perspective. Find creative ways to improve someone else's life and you'll find your own source of worship, empowerment, and joy.

YOUR LEGACY GIFT TO THE UNION MISSION MINISTRIES WILL CHANGE LIVES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

For more information about giving through your assets or your will, contact Helen Sommer at 757-627-8686, x504 or hsommer@ummnorva.org.

Comments / Change of Address:

EMAIL

PHONE

No person is denied service based on race, creed, gender, disability, or national origin.

Photos are representative of actual Mission clients.

If you would like to donate food or other supplies, or volunteer your time, please call (757) 627-8686. Thank you!

In the event contributions exceed expenses, extra funds will be used to feed, shelter, and care for the hungry and homeless throughout the year.

Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-807-2214 or 888-830-4989 for NC residents.

THE UNION MISSION MINISTRIES

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