



**The Mission Newsletter**  
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**Don Shisler**  
 CEO Emeritus

## Letting the Lord Lead

When the Lord is in your life, He leads you where you need to go — and when.

It's been almost two years since I announced that I would be stepping back from my role as CEO of Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County. I've thoroughly enjoyed this time as CEO Emeritus. But the time to hand the reins over to my successor has come, and I will leave UGM-TC in very capable hands.

When I first came to UGM-TC more than 30 years ago, it was like the Wild West, very rough and tumble! There was a very small staff and few volunteers, but they were good, faithful people. Together, with support from friends like you, we built UGM-TC into what it is today: a place that offers hope, respect and new beginnings to our unsheltered neighbors through discipleship and the transformational love of Christ.

Many things have changed over the years. There's been a tremendous amount of growth, many wonderful projects that have blessed thousands of our neighbors in need. One thing has not changed — as always, our ministry comes first.

God uses weak vessels to make His glory evident. I feel very blessed that He used me for 30-plus years, and I pray He will continue to let my path cross with UGM-TC in years to come. Please keep me in your prayers, as you will be in mine.

In Christ,

**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**

— ROMANS 8:28, NKJV

## Save the Date Annual Ladies Luncheon



**TUESDAY  
 FEB. 24,  
 2026**

**11:30 AM  
 to  
 1:00 PM**

### Will Rogers Memorial Center Round Up Inn

[3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76107]

Mark your calendar to hear  
 special guest

### Grace Valentine

Please email [event@ugm-tc.org](mailto:event@ugm-tc.org)  
 for more information.



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**Father  
 Rogers Meredith**

## Our World Turned Upside Down

Several years ago, I happened to notice my neighbor decorating his home for Christmas. I struck up a conversation and invited him and his family to church. He told me he was not particularly religious. I asked him about the decorations, to which he replied, "It's just something we do every year." For many folks, Christmas carries just slightly more weight than any other normal day.

However, Christmas is anything but normal. It is our world turned upside down. If you read the Gospels with an eye towards this, it's very apparent. For instance, when the armies of heaven proclaim Jesus as King, they come to shepherds. Jesus is a King, but He is born among the animals. Kings are found in palaces wearing soft clothes, but He is decidedly not one of the well-heeled. In fact, the well-heeled want his head on a Tiffany charger.

From the start, the Christmas story predicts things are going to be anything but normal: Jesus eating with sinners and tax collectors, hanging out with those on the margins of society, and bringing the dead to life. He came to turn the world upside down, and to raise the poor to the highest estate. He lived to die and bring eternal life from death. A Jewish carpenter reigns supreme. Our world is turned upside down. And it is wonderful!

Merry Christmas!

#### Please pray:

- That our residents may enter into the joy of Christmas with full hearts and hope for the new year.
- For all our staff and volunteers who help to make the season bright for the men, women and children at UGM-TC.

#### HOW MAY WE PRAY FOR YOU?

If you have any prayer requests you would like to share, please email them to [rmeredith@ugm-tc.org](mailto:rmeredith@ugm-tc.org).



# THE MISSION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025



**HOPE STARTS HERE  
 Merry Christmas!**

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## You Provided a Family with Safety & Healing

**For almost two years, Desalin had no place to call home. After fleeing domestic violence with her two youngest children, she drifted from one temporary situation to another. Finally, after running from another violent household, Desalin looked for a long-term solution. She found it at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County.**

On her first night here, Desalin was overwhelmed and broke down in tears. But her case worker and fellow residents immediately became new

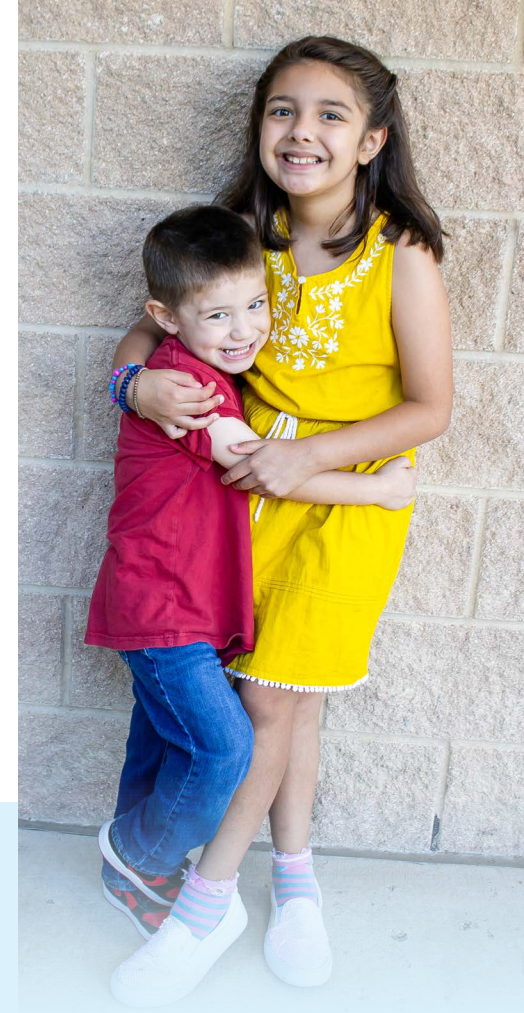
friends, comforting her and assuring her that she and her children were finally safe.

Desalin enjoyed the classes offered, especially More Than Pretty and Alpha. They profoundly influenced her faith journey, giving her a hunger for God's Word. "When my mom was alive, we would go over the Bible every morning. Now I want to get more in-depth with the Bible. Those classes made me want to grow into a better relationship with God."

Her children, Cristina, 7, and Carlos Jr., 5, love the playground and the activities

at UGM-TC, especially our Therapeutic Children's Enrichment Program [TCEP]. "At TCEP, they never stop learning," she tells us. "I always get a good report on them. Their homework is already done by the time I get them back at the end of the day. And they love their teachers."

Looking ahead, Desalin sees a more settled life for her family, grounded in the love of Christ. "I want to be the best mom for my kids," she says, "leading them up in the Lord and showing them that with God, all things are possible." Eventually, she hopes to become an advocate for



victims of domestic violence.

Desalin says she was so grateful for UGM-TC stepping in and providing the school supplies, backpacks, and clothing to prepare her children for a successful school year. With Christmas around the corner, she knows the support from UGM-TC would be a blessing for her kids.

Desalin thanks you for bringing her to this very positive point in her life. "Your donations are really worth it," she tells you. "Just seeing my kids smile again is priceless!"

## Share Christmas Joy with a Gift



**Christmas at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County is a truly special time. Residents gather for a festive meal prepared by**

**staff and volunteers, filling the season with warmth, celebration and hope for the new year.**


One of the most joyful traditions is our Christmas "store." We transform our boardroom into a cheerful space where moms and dads can lovingly choose gifts for their children — so every child wakes up to something special on Christmas morning. Adult residents and guests also receive gift bags filled with goodies, reminding our unsheltered neighbors that they are seen, valued and not forgotten.



But to make this Christmas truly bright, we need your help. Your generosity provides the toys, gifts and festive meals that turn the season into a celebration of hope. From decorating the halls to serving Christmas dinner, every act of kindness helps families and individuals experience the love of Christ in a tangible way.

Would you consider helping this Christmas? You can donate gifts, volunteer your time or help provide meals for our neighbors. Please contact Volunteer Manager Dana Walser at [dwalser@ugm-tc.org](mailto:dwalser@ugm-tc.org) or (817) 338-8402 to learn how you can be part of making the Christmas season unforgettable.

Together, we can give the gift of joy and hope this Christmas at UGM-TC.

Donate Now → 

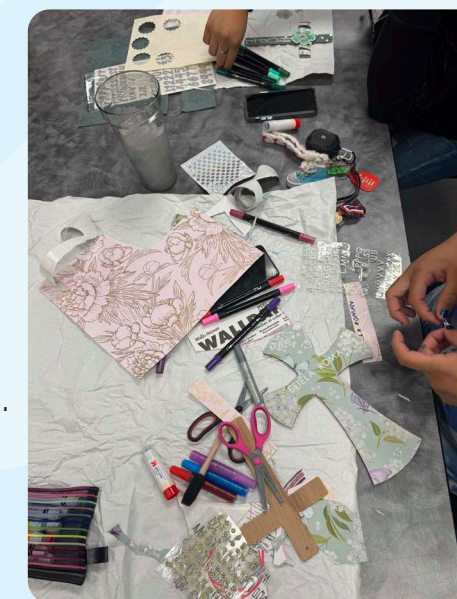


## Art as a Vehicle to Recovery

**At Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County, we know transformation can begin in unexpected ways. For longtime volunteer Kirsten, that doorway is art. With her laughter, boundless energy and compassionate heart, she uses paint, beads, clay and beyond to open something much deeper — healing.**

Kirsten first connected with the Mission more than 20 years ago. As a busy art teacher and mother, she served when she could—bringing coats, blankets and Christmas gifts to families in need. But in her heart, she dreamed of something more. "I always knew art could be a vehicle for healing," she said. "I saw it in my students. I knew I wanted to bring that here."

When she retired in 2022, Kirsten began volunteering regularly and shared her vision of an art program. What started with simple projects — making jewelry or collages — quickly became something powerful. "Art is the way to connect with others," she explains. "There's no pressure, no right or wrong. Everyone is welcome. Art is a vehicle to recovery — suddenly you belong, you're creating, you're free."



Over time, the program grew. Residents made decorative crosses for Easter, painted to music and created memory boxes. One woman told Kirsten a single art project was "life-changing," opening her eyes to new possibilities. "That's when I knew this was important work," Kirsten said.

Today, the program is flourishing. Residents are designing a mural for the basketball court, and a dedicated art studio is opening soon — something Kirsten calls "a dream come true." Plans include clay workshops, gift creation for children, guest artists and space where residents can return again and again to create.

For Kirsten, art is more than an activity; it is a ministry. "Art can change perspectives, build trust and help people see themselves in a new light," she says. "The mural for the basketball court will be designed and created by the residents, making them a part of something really big!"

Because of passionate volunteers like Kirsten — and the generosity of friends like you — UGM-TC can offer more than shelter. Together, we are nurturing souls, sparking creativity and opening doors to a brighter future.