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HOPE *Rising*

THE NEWSLETTER OF PHOENIX RESCUE MISSION

The Best Gifts can't be Wrapped

Before coming to the Mission, Ashley hadn't seen her son for eight years.

Not for his birthday.
Not for Thanksgiving.
Not for Christmas.

In fact, while she was on the streets and trapped in addiction, she didn't celebrate any of those things. She couldn't. She didn't even realize what day it was.

There's No Christmas on the Streets

"We didn't even know if it was Christmas," she remembers. "We're just walking around, like, 'Why are all the stores closed?'"

Then Ashley came to the Mission and had a real holiday experience for the first time in years.

Continues inside ▶▶▶

"If I could, I'd give you a big hug," she says. "Making a place like this where you can come and actually heal, it's priceless."
– Ashley



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The Best Gifts continued from cover

"The holidays at the Mission were great. I worked in the kitchen, so I was always in the back cooking, and we would all get together and it was just such a great atmosphere."

Having grown up in church, Ashley knew about God, but had distanced herself from Him until she hit rock bottom.

"I prayed, 'Please take over because this is my last go-around,'" Ashley says. "It got to the point where I thought, if I go any deeper, there might not be any coming back."

Fully Alive

That's when Ashley came to the Mission, where her entire life changed. She knows that wouldn't have happened if we weren't rooted in Christ.

"The biggest part was God," Ashley says. "I have a real relationship with Him. I understand things from a different perspective. . . Without Phoenix Rescue Mission, I'd be in prison or dead."

But Ashley isn't dead. And she's already finished her probation and is living a life off the streets that she loves. The biggest blessing has been reconnecting with her family and spending the holidays with them.

Healthy Holidays Surrounded by Family

"I've been able to see my girls for almost every holiday since I've been here," she says. "I saw them on Mother's Day. They told me Happy Mother's Day for the first time ever . . . I was able to be there for my son's birthday and actually buy him presents."

Ashley knows there is still a lot of restoration ahead, but for now, she's grateful for every day of the new life friends like you made possible.

"If I could, I'd give you a big hug," she says. "Making a place like this where you can come and actually heal, it's priceless."

Thank you for giving Ashley the best gift ever – a chance to come home.

After graduating from our recovery program in MONTH, Ashley moved onto Ministry Training. *"I love serving the community and giving back to what helped me," she says.*





Celebrating Christmas at the Mission

You'd be hard-pressed to find anywhere as full of love and Christmas spirit as Phoenix Rescue Mission — and there's a reason for that.

For neighbors like Ashley, Christmas hasn't always been filled with joy or belonging. But with your help, that changes here.

Together, we make the season as special as possible — creating moments of hope, care, and celebration that remind every guest of their worth and the brighter future ahead.

Here's a glimpse of what your support provides:

- Sparkling Christmas trees.
- Kids' activities like ornament making and cookie decorating.
- A visit from Santa.
- A "Gift Shop" where parents can select gifts to give their children — no one is left out!
- Decorations everywhere!
- Amazing food and special treats topped off with a traditional Christmas dinner.



christmas can be
kind of hard...
I am so glad
I get to be with
my mom this year.
Devon



I really like
all of the treats
and the fun things
we get to do!
Evan

Last year we didn't have a tree...
[this year] there's already one up
and we're decorating! — Aliyah

Photos and names have been changed to protect privacy.

Home for Christmas

Christmas has always been one of my favorite seasons — not just for the lights, the music, and the traditions, but for what it represents: the joy of coming home.

For many of our neighbors, like Ashley, “home” hasn’t always been safe, stable, or filled with love. But thanks to your generosity, Phoenix Rescue Mission becomes a place where men, women, and children find more than a place to lay their head — they find belonging, restoration, and the start of a new chapter.

This season, you are helping families gather around a table, children open presents with wide eyes, and our guests rediscover the peace of knowing they are not forgotten. Everyone deserves a chance to come home — and because of you, that’s possible.

Thank you for walking with us and making Christmas a season of hope for so many across the Valley.

Merry Christmas,



Ken Brissa
Chief Executive Officer



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Partner Spotlight: City of Glendale



This year's Hometown Christmas Parade starts December 13 at 11:00am! Come early to grab a seat anywhere along W. Glendale Ave. from N. 52nd to N. 58th.

Each year, the Hometown Christmas Parade non-profit organization brings the community together for a tradition that's full of joy, cheer, and hometown tradition: the Hometown Christmas Parade in the heart of downtown Glendale.

Yes, there are dazzling floats, festive marching bands, and plenty of Christmas spirit — but at its heart, the parade is about celebrating the true reason for the season — Jesus Christ.

"This parade has become a tradition, and the committee that makes this event happen every year takes great joy in bringing the event to our downtown," said Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers. *"We have participants and sponsors from across the Valley that are all focused on one thing; celebrating the reason for the season."*

Mark your calendar: the 2025 Hometown Christmas Parade is happening on Saturday, December 13! And keep an eye out for the Phoenix Rescue Mission float — a reminder of the relentless care and community spirit that make this season so special.

Every dollar raised and every can of food collected through the parade supports Phoenix Rescue Mission's Hope for Hunger Food Bank, making sure families across the Valley can enjoy a warm holiday meal.

We look forward to seeing you at all the parade! For more information, please visit hctparade.org.

Scan here to give in time for Christmas



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