

Don't
miss...



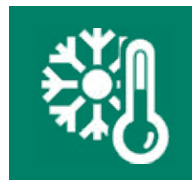
Celebrating
the HOPE of
Christmas

2



"With God
in my heart,
I can do it!"

3



Winter
Weather
Needs

4

Thanks to you...

ABDUL HAS
HOPE THIS
Christmas!

Celebrating the HOPE of Christmas

How comforting it is to know that our Lord, Jesus Christ, has shared in our humanity. He knows our struggles and the struggles of our homeless neighbors too!

On the eve of his birth, Jesus and his earthly parents Joseph and Mary experienced being turned away and told there was “no room at the inn.” It reminds me that Christ understands the pain and fear of our guests who also have nowhere else to turn.

Here at Rescue Mission of Utica, we will always do everything in our ability to welcome and support a hurting person who comes to our doors. Even so, many of our guests have faced years of homelessness... poverty... and other challenges that have left them feeling unloved and unwelcome.

During the holidays, caring friends like you help remind them they are not forgotten. Your gifts to provide hot meals, safe shelter and recovery are meaningful expressions to them of the Lord's kindness and care in their life.

This Christmas, I invite you to extend Christ's love and grace to our neighbors – like Abdul (whose story is on the next page). Your generosity will surround them with hope this holiday season! Thank you, and may God bless you now and into the New Year.

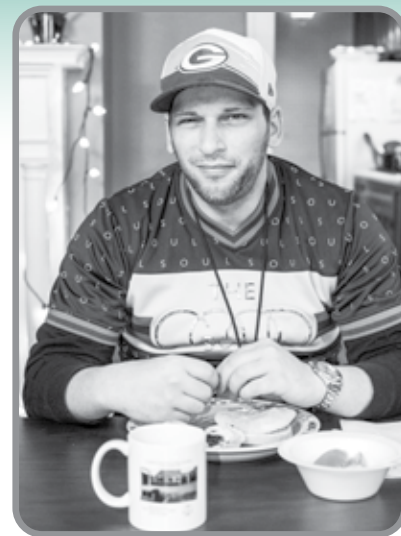


Wendy L. Goetz

Wendy Goetz
Executive Director

Share Hope AND A Christmas Meal...

It's hard to have hope when you're struggling with hunger or homelessness. **YOU can make this Christmas a time of celebration for our neighbors in need with your gift to help them today!**



\$2.65
for 1 hot meal



\$37.00
for 1 night of
safe shelter

**CAN GIVE
SOMEONE**



Please Send Your Christmas Gift Today!

\$50,000 Year-End Matching Challenge **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!**



Here's a huge blessing as we end this year: Thanks to a generous group of partners, **when you give between now and December 31, your generosity will go 2x as far** to provide food, shelter and care... and above all *hope* for our struggling neighbors!

DEADLINE TO GIVE: 12/31

- ✉ Add your special year-end gift to the reply card and send it today.
- 💻 Give online anytime at uticamission.org.

THANK YOU
for doubling your
impact during
our Matching
Challenge!



..... “

When I thought I couldn't do it, **THE MISSION** knew I could.

..... ”

Looking at the entrance of our Emergency Shelter, Abdul is reminded of what he went through to get where he is today, serving as our Program Coordinator. He can relate to the perils and pain of being homeless and addicted... After all, he's walked through that same door.

Abdul was raised in a middle-class home by parents who wanted the best for him, but there was a dark side to his childhood: abuse at the hands of a sibling. “It was never talked about, and that put me into a terrible place of being out of touch with my own feelings,” he shares.

Shame followed Abdul into adulthood, but he kept it hidden. In college, he was introduced to drugs – a welcome escape. Later, he helped create a beautiful family of his own, but he couldn't stop using.

The first time Abdul came to the Mission, he converted to Christianity. “It was in my mind, but not my heart,” he admits. Without a strong foundation, his faith faltered, and he eventually relapsed.

As Abdul's addiction continued, his behaviors became more self-destructive – his marriage fell apart, and he landed in prison. There, in the midst of fear and loneliness, he prayed, “Lord, please get me through this day.” It worked, every day, and he began to understand Christ's love.

“This is how God works. None of this would have happened without Him in my heart.”

After his release, Abdul's parole officer led him to the Mission. “At first, I was ashamed,” he shares. “But care, love and compassion were all around me.”

Abdul completed the Parker House Residential Aftercare Program for the second time with a stronger, Christ-centered support network for continued recovery. Now, with a dream job at the Mission, he shares his own experience, strength and hope with men who are hungry and hurting like he once was.

Abdul has hope this Christmas – and he wants to thank YOU for supporting his journey toward a new life. “Faith guided me here to this wonderful place of second chances, and I'm so grateful.”

Colder Days = Increased Needs

Falling temperatures will put lives at risk this holiday season.

With average lows of 37° in Utica and the Mohawk Valley – and added factors like rain and wind – our neighbors are at risk of hypothermia and other health challenges as the weather sets in.

Help us bring them in from the cold at Rescue Mission of Utica:

- **Safe shelter.** We provide a warm bed and a roof over their heads.
- **Hot food.** Each plate of food offers comfort to cold, weary neighbors.
- **Winter clothes.** Warm winter coats, clothing and shoes go faster than we can stock them.

To see our most urgently needed items, visit uticamission.org/needslist.

YOU MAKE CHRISTMAS AT THE MISSION SPECIAL!

Christmas Morning: Thanks to local toy & donation drives and the generosity of people like you, our Mission guests experience the joy of waking up to Christmas gifts.



Holiday Feast: Your gifts help provide a delicious Christmas meal for our residents – for many, the first holiday feast they've enjoyed in years.

The Miracle of Jesus: Worship, prayer, fellowship and a message of God's love – our guests gather in the chapel to celebrate the hope of Christmas together.



Thanks to you, our neighbors don't have to spend this Christmas on the streets. Your support provides gifts, hot meals and a reminder of the true reason for the season!