



Led by the *Holy Spirit*

When you hear Jesus whispering in your ear to come back home and come into His presence – and then you choose to listen, follow His voice, and obey – amazing life changes are in store! Karen Douglas did just that, and after many unfortunate circumstances, the Lord led her to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission. It's the place where not only her life experienced significant change, she was able to witness and experience the many changes that have occurred at the Mission throughout the years. Most significant is the history of the very building where she gave her life back to the Lord – the building that is now ready to reopen its doors to women and women with children!

Here is a glimpse into her life. Born and raised in San Francisco, Karen was blessed to be raised by Christian parents, involved in church, and was a great student. Soon after graduating from high school she went to work for the telephone company.

Unfortunately, she became involved in an unhealthy relationship that involved drugs and alcohol. Enduring this lifestyle and bad relationship – as she stated “really bad relationship” for more than a decade - she realized that her life was moving in a very wrong direction, especially for her three children. She knew that she had to reconnect with Jesus Christ.

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September Is Still (Virtual) Alumni Homecoming!

September marks our third year of building an annual tradition for our Homecoming Celebration here at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission! Although this year will be different due to COVID-19, we will still be highlighting our Alumni and Graduates!

Celebrate with us!

- **Celebrate Karen Douglas!** The cover story in this issue of *The Vision* features Karen Douglas, our 2020 Gospel Center Rescue Mission *Distinguished Graduate Award* recipient.
- **Celebrate our Graduates!** We will live stream our Graduation on September 17th at 1:30pm. Although closed to the public, you can view it at facebook.com/gospelcenterrescuemission.
- **Celebrate seeing the progress!** Once you feel safe – we offer an open invitation to all Alumni to return and take a campus and programs tour.
- **Celebrate your Involvement!** To our faithful friends and supporters. Our annual Homecoming is a chance to be reminded of the impact of your support that represents changed lives!
- **Celebrate Life!** For our “Old Grads.” Homecoming is a time to reflect on how God used the Rescue Mission to offer “New Life” to you, given through Jesus that brought you to a God of grace, mercy, healing and an abundant life! Praise God!

Wayne G. Richardson

WILLIAM R. “BILL” BROWN BUILDING



Public Phase Update

as of August 17, 2020

	<u>\$ RAISED</u>
New Life Scholarships (\$590K Requirement @ \$5K Each)...	\$10,000
Dog Foster Program (10K for 1 Year)	\$0
28 Passenger Bus (\$70K Requirement).....	\$0
Dormitory Full Furnishings (166K Requirement).....	\$166,000
Kid’s Sprinkler Park (100K Requirement).....	\$100,000
Construction Loan (1M Requirement)	\$23,000



The Gospel Center received a month-long 'shout out' on the BIG L at Lincoln Center. Thank you SASSI Public Relations.



Wayne Richardson, along with a host of other community leaders, was featured in the San Joaquin County "Mask On" Campaign.

COVID-19 House Update

On June 3, we opened the first temporary non-hospital, non-profit quarantine facility in San Joaquin County for Covid-19 positive homeless patients. The facility is located at our Sonora Street property.

Since the opening, 100 men, women and children have been guests at the COVID Campus, as of this writing. Continue to pray for these individuals that we serve, as well as our entire community as we all navigate through this unprecedented time.



Our Mission kids enjoying a water balloon toss in the hot summer sun! Any kid supplies are welcome donations!

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES



Keynote Speaker City of Stockton Councilmember Susan Lenz with New Life Program Graduates Sarah Zavala, Lori Smith, Gabriel Roman, Amber Padilla, Hailey Chamblin, Ayannah James-Cook at the July 2020 Graduation.

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

restoring lives since 1940

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gcrms.org

September is Homecoming!

Continued from cover

So, on Easter Sunday 1984, she packed up her children and boarded a Greyhound Bus headed for Modesto, California. Too ashamed, she did not go to her mother's home. Instead, with kids in tow and pregnant with her 4th child, she went to the Salvation Army. They put her up in a hotel for one night and the next day referred her to the Gospel Center in Stockton where they had room for her.

Upon entering the gates at the Mission, she knew that this was where she needed to be. Inside the old former Alustiza Hotel on the Mission campus, she sat down on the bed with her children and just cried. She knew she needed a change – a good change. And the change would begin right here.

Pastor Jenkins, the Chaplain at the Mission who also was her church Pastor, ministered to Karen, and she renewed her relationship with Christ. With her life back on track her stay at the Mission was short, but being a bit restless, she chose to come back to the Mission as a volunteer. She answered phones, did administrative work and helped wherever she was needed. With her life turning around Karen also felt led to be involved at her church – teaching Sunday School and making announcements, and even got involved in the community by planning and organizing the annual Martin Luther King community celebrations. In 1985 the Mission hired Karen. Over her tenure, she worked with three Executive Directors: Carl Ellison (1956-1976); Jim Porteous, (1976-1991); and Bill Brown (1991-2016).



Each leader had a different style and focus, and each was effective in moving the Mission forward. They also made an impact on her life. As a student, volunteer and an employee of the Mission, her faith grew stronger, and she learned many lessons under the leadership of these Directors. It was a blessing and gave her the stability she needed throughout her life because, as she stated, *"They were there for me, helping me find my way."*

And as the Mission is in the final stages of renovating the old Alustiza Hotel – now named the William R. "Bill" Brown Building, it is certainly not surprising that this building holds a special place in Karen's heart.

"It is not just a building," Karen began. "It's what's in that building. It's a place where women can feel safe, where they can receive Christ. In that building lives and hearts *will* be changed." It is the very place on the day she arrived, where she sat on the side of her bed and cried. It is here that she began her new walk with Christ.

From a student in the midst of a life crisis to a member of the Board of Directors, this month Karen is being recognized as the Gospel Center Rescue Mission *2020 Distinguished Graduate* and Keynote Speaker at the September Graduation and Homecoming. Her changed life is an example for all future New Life Program "Students" to emulate. We have an awesome God!