

New Beginnings Together – EVERY DAY!

The journey began in Oregon where Angela Kelly was raised in a Christian home. Her parents, recovering and sober addicts, had turned their lives around and had good careers, and built a strong – church going family. Angela became a Christian, was baptized at New Beginnings Church and knew she was loved by God.

As a young adult, Angela moved to Washington State, began a relationship and became a mother of two. Soon after, both of Angela's parents passed away and she became depressed and started drinking. Much of her social life with her children's father included what she calls "Texas BBQ's and lots of drinking." She was a stay at home mom and began to experience abuse and his cheating. After much soul searching, even in the midst of her progressing alcoholism, she felt God nudging her to leave.

On her own, Angela enrolled and graduated from culinary school – but every time she got a job her drinking and depression would cause her to be fired. She packed up and moved to Stockton to be with her sister and her drinking led to homelessness and a life on the streets.

Throughout all of this time, she had many street friends and felt the need to help them, to remind them they were loved by God and that there was a life in Christ. She knew her life would turn back around someday, but for now, the alcohol had a hold on her. While she was in temporary housing, she opened the door to find a strung-out addict on her porch. She invited him in, offered him a hot shower and a meal.

Cover photo by Stephanie Rodriguez



continued on back page



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Really Big Plans for 2020!

What an amazing year for the Gospel Center Rescue Mission! We held six New Life Program Graduations where restored lives were celebrated; we acquired the building permit and final bids for the New Life Women's Home (formerly the Alustiza Hotel and Restaurant); a new property has been added to the Campus (218 E. Sonora Street between the Men's Recuperative Care Center and New Hope Family Shelter, with 6 small bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen and living room); a remodeled and upgraded SSA/SSI Representative Payee Service Center was opened (bullet proof walls, door and service windows), and a refurbished Men's Shelter! We have been blessed with these and so much more!

Just when you think that 2020 might be a year to coast, the Lord has different plans. Really Big Plans. Here are a few upcoming events that if God wills...

- Six Graduations. Our first in 2020 is January 17th. All graduations are listed on our website. If you want to support our graduates, and be blessed, put these dates on your calendar and join us.
- Renovation of the New Life Women's Home with plans for a Grand Opening in 2021!
- The expanded Men's Emergency Shelter in the Chapel consisting of 50 additional men (beyond 100 normal nightly guests) will continue through March. **Thank you, City of Stockton, San Joaquin County and Kaiser Permanente** for funding this.
- Our adorable playground renovation for our Mission Children should be completed this month! **Thank you, Rotary of Stockton**, for a new rubberized play surface!
- Our Kitchen and Dining Room expansion/renovation will begin in the spring. The Kitchen expansion will also incorporate our new Food Service Trade School.

This funding came from **San Joaquin County and anonymous donors**.

- The Men's Emergency Lodge Bathroom renovation will also take place in the spring. This funding came from the **City of Stockton**.
- Roll up your sleeves! Stay tuned for a **Community Service Day** this spring where we plan on sprucing up the exterior renovation of the E. Sonora property along with other Campus projects.
- Our warehouse is scheduled to receive electrical and storage metal rack shelving upgrades.
- We await the required Environmental Internal Review, parking waiver and work towards a building permit for the 2022 demolition of two side-by-side, two-story Victorians on Campus. It will be replaced with the creation of a three-story, 178 capacity Men's New Life (Program) Home by 2025. We will be diligently working hard on this in 2020.
- Save the date for our **New Life Program Scholarship Gala** to be held Thursday, July 23rd at Villa Angelica. The New Life Scholarship Program continues to ramp up. Student Scholarships of \$5,000 not only add funds but match our students with amazing sponsors - like you - who become mentors for life!

As you have read, a lot is in store this year at the Gospel Center! I believe that God will also have other unplanned blessings and major tasks in store for us. So please stay tuned. If you are receiving *The Vision*, it's because you are already connected with us in some way. Thank you for believing in what the Lord is doing here. Know that God is using you through your generosity. As Hebrews 6:10 states: *God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.*

With you in Christ in 2020 and always!

Wayne G. Richardson

GRADUATING CLASS – NOVEMBER 2019



Congratulations to the Graduating Class of November 2019. A special thank you to Dana Bockstahler, CEO, BAC Community Bank for your words of encouragement.

SAVE *the* DATE

2020 Graduation Schedule

All graduations are at 1:30pm

- Friday, January 17
- Friday, March 20
- Friday, May 8
- Friday, July 17
- Friday, September 18
- Friday, November 20



Christmas Tea Party

The women in our shelter were blessed by the thoughtfulness of **Sharon Benninger, Chinu Medhi from Uplift All Foundation, and their Christmas helpers!** They hosted a Christmas Tea, complete with quaint china and teacups. Each student received a beautiful wristwatch as a Christmas gift. The outpouring of love from these volunteers continues to amaze us!



Thank you to so many for generous gifts throughout the holidays. These are a few we were able to capture in motion!



Gobble. Gobble.
A simple Facebook post turned a request for turkeys into a full-blown Turkey Drive. More than 60 turkeys, \$700 in cash and several sacks of potatoes were donated!
Thank you to all who participated. A special thank you to Chad and

Pilar Hardcastle, owners of **Journey Transportation** for delivering the turkeys to the Mission just in time for Thanksgiving!



Once again, **Lincoln Center and their merchants** have been champions of the Coat and Sock Drive held at the Center throughout the Holiday Season. Distributed to GCRM students, as well as the GCRM Clothing Plus Program for the homeless, these much-needed, warm articles of clothing are appreciated. **Lincoln Center**, a great friend of the Mission, we thank you!!!



Holiday Cheer! Many homes and offices throughout the community were beautifully decorated with more than 500 Poinsettia's that were purchased to benefit the Mission. **Thank you to all who bought plants**, to **Jan Watt and her crew** for organizing, selling and distributing the beautiful Poinsettia's. Thank you to **First Baptist Church of Stockton** for allowing us to turn their Community Center into a distribution center!



Pastor Derek Metro baptizes GCRM Student Brenton McCoy at First Baptist Church of Stockton.

Car Tunes N' Tint & Emerald Foundation
Thank you for including GCRM as a beneficiary for your Annual Toy Drive.

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

restoring lives since 1940

445 S. San Joaquin Street
Stockton, CA 95203
(209) 320-2310
gcrms.org

Celebrate new beginnings this year!

Continued from cover

He stayed and eventually she and Deandre went from being best friends to becoming a couple. Moving back and forth to Washington, San Francisco, and back again to Stockton, Angela continued, even in her binging, to share the joy and love of Christ to her street friends. She really wanted to help the homeless and addicted, even though she was in a bad place in her life. One day her sister said, "You can't help them if you don't help yourself."

After a heartbreaking miscarriage, Angela and Deandre became pregnant again. Together, they knew it was time to get help. They made the decision to enter the New Life Program at Gospel Center Rescue Mission. That was January of 2019, just one year ago this month, and they have been sober ever since. They both worked through their anger and hurt. Through the classes and counseling found forgiveness and most importantly renewed their relationship with their Savior.

As they began this new journey they have experienced many new beginnings. On August 1st, they became parents to a beautiful, healthy baby girl Azariyah. Soon after, with the help of the volunteer ladies of the Mission, they planned their wedding. They were married in the Mission Chapel on September 17th by CEO Wayne Richardson. They honeymooned at a beautiful condominium in Sea Scape, a gift from a GCRM volunteer. Deandre graduated from his Phase I program in July, but he waited to walk with Angela when she graduated in September. The graduation was another exciting step to their recovery.

Today, as the new year begins – one year after entering the New Life Program at Gospel Center Rescue Mission, Deandre is

gainfully employed as the custodian of First Baptist Church of Stockton. Their family has settled into one of the apartments on the church campus. Angela is enjoying being a stay at home mom, honing her culinary skills – with French and Mexican cuisine being her favorite. She believes she is being led to working in women's ministry with the homeless and addicted. Angela describes her life as *joy unspeakable*. "I am not being fearful. I know Christ clearly has everything under control. Together, Deandre and I are experiencing change. Together, we continue to move forward. Together, we are learning something new every day."



Azariyah, one of our beautiful GCRM babies.

Many of us anticipate the new year with resolutions to get back to the gym, to be healthy, resolve to be nicer people, be disciplined in our walk with Christ and be present in our relationships – only to struggle to stay on track. Christ has given us an example in Angela and Deandre that life is to be lived one day at a time. New beginnings are real and life can change. Even though every journey and every path is different, with Christ we can all walk hand in hand to make this journey called life a bit easier for all of us. New beginnings every day - Together!



Angela, Azariyah and Deandre Kelly