

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2018

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FACILITIES: 785-354-1744

Hope Center for Women & Families #8

Men's Shelter #0

Distribution Center x366

Thrift Store 785-235-9094

TRM Boutique on the Blvd 785-478-5744

Children's Palace 785-730-8810

PROGRAMS: 785-354-1744

Dining Services x322

Food Distribution x366

Education & Mentoring x338

Volunteer Services x393

COMMUNITY:

NET Reach 785-783-2535 x106

Operation Street Reach 785-230-8237

DONATIONS:

Monetary: 785-354-1744 x316

Material: 785-357-4285

Food: 785-357-4285

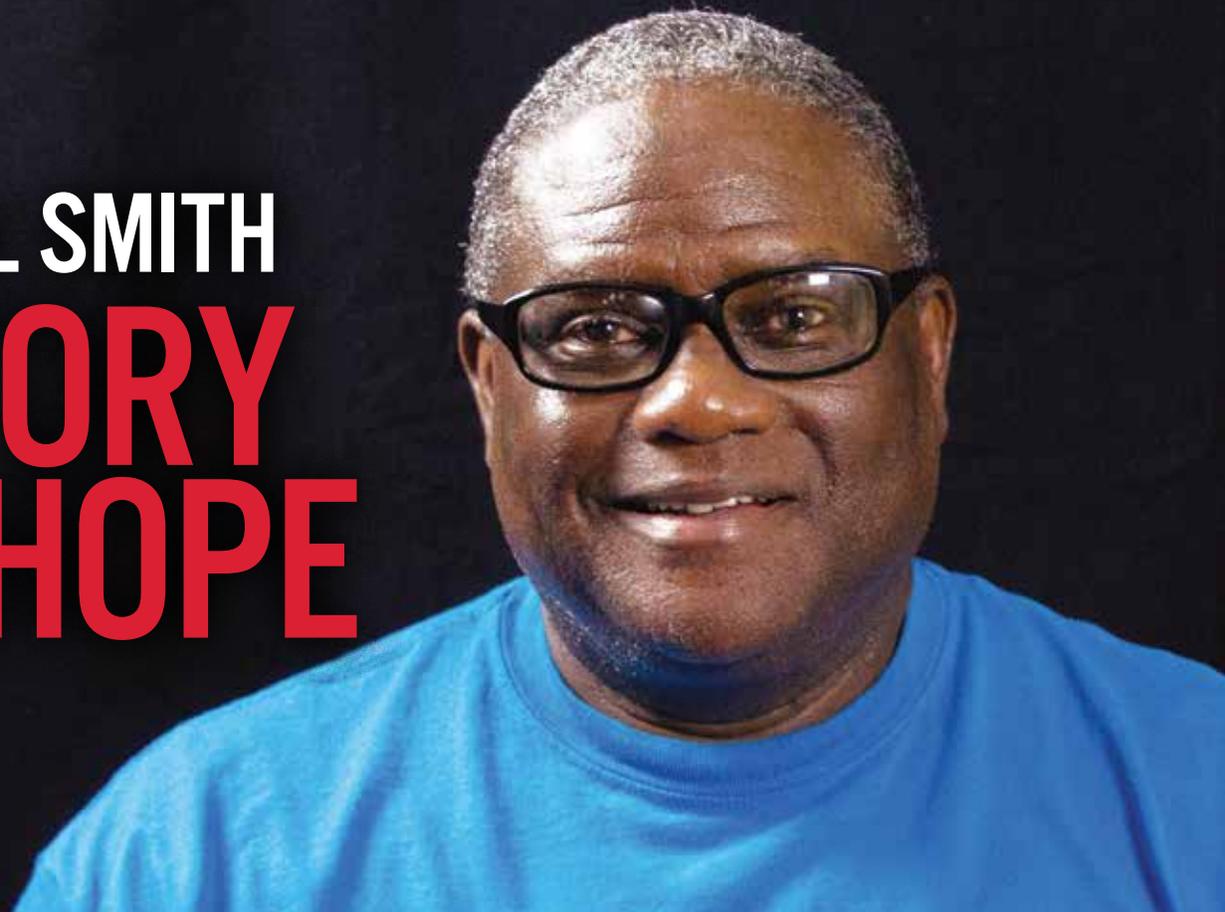
website: TRMonline.org

email: trm@trmonline.org



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AMERICAN
PRE-SORT INC

CARL SMITH STORY OF HOPE





CARL SMITH **STORY OF HOPE**

Hi my name is Carl Smith. I am presently employed here at the Topeka Rescue Mission's Distribution Center as a truck driver. I was born in a place called Weisbaden in what was West Germany. My dad was in the Air Force and my mom went over to join him. At the age of three years, we moved back to Chicago and I lived there until I was 18. My parents were both very good people and were married for 57 years before my dad passed away. He was always a strong influence in my life; weren't the best of friends but we weren't the worst of enemies either. My mom was always a consistent calming factor in our family. I had an older sister and a younger brother and we got along well.

I attended one year at Lakeland College in Sheboygan, WI before transferring to Upper Iowa University where I received a bachelor's degree in physical education, recreation, dance and safety. Following graduation, I worked as an advocate for juvenile delinquents through Cook County in Chicago. I eventually went into teaching and coaching for a Chicago high school followed by

teaching at an elementary school where I performed a dual role of physical education teacher and playground teacher. Chicago district had playground teachers, which worked with at-risk children through after-school programs. In addition to that I worked the night shift at Northern Trust Bank.

I got married for the first time in 1978. Our first child, Drew Lanier,

passed away at three months old. I think that is when I turned my back on God and I let the devil come into my life in the form of freebase cocaine. When our second son, Travis, was 1 ½, I was offered a coaching position at Fort Hays State University. When I decided to accept the position, my wife chose not to go with me, which ended our marriage. I took Travis with me and began my

Cont. on page 2

career at FHSU. At that time, I was using cocaine once or twice a month with a couple of other people who were in the education field as well. We would hit it hard for a couple of nights and then go back to our professions. You wouldn't look at me or any of them and think we were drug addicts or even susceptible to addiction. You know, I came from a good home with good parents who were fairly well-off so when money got tight, all I had to do was ask for help and my parents would loan me some money which I always paid back. I share that because many times people think addicts are people who are strung out on drugs or people who are homeless and come from bad situations. I believe part of my story is that you don't have to come from bad situations and bad backgrounds to get caught up with the devil. It boils down to the choices

that we make.

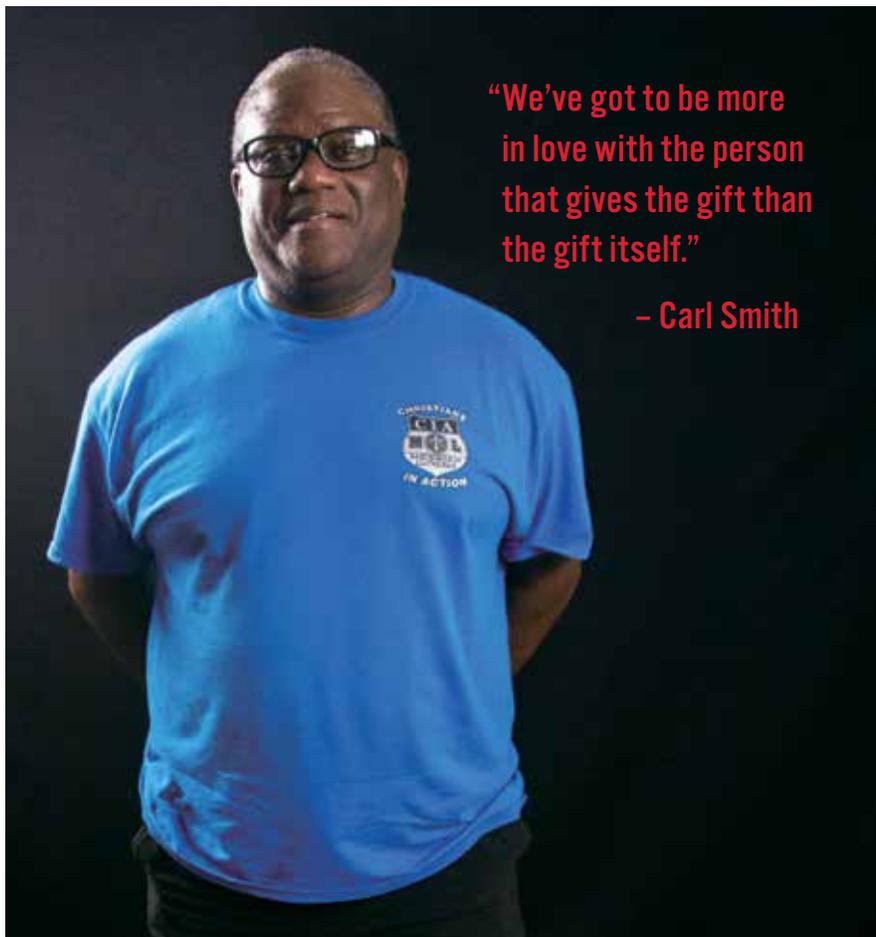
I lost a lot of good work friends because I chose to live a double life. In James, it talks about being an unstable man and I was unstable. I was teaching and doing the things that society wants to see you do, but at night I was running around with a bad sort doing things I shouldn't. I was blessed to have the job I did, a career in teaching and coaching for over 30 some years. I remember reading in Alcoholics Anonymous big book about a man who owned his own business. He had been drinking and one of his friends told him if he didn't stop drinking he would lose everything. He agreed to stop but not quit. He said he would start again once retired – he died within six months of retiring. Well, I pretty much did the same thing. I quit using crack cocaine for quite a few years. The Lord blessed me with

more opportunities, like being head coach at a small school in Texas and later a position at the University of Kansas. Mark Mangino created a job for me as the video coordinator for the outside linebacker coach. But because of that demon inside of me every now and then I would, as my friend Bill would say, go back and touch it up just a little bit. When I touched it up, I destroyed things. I lost that job because of that so when I finally retired I said to heck with it you know, I had a nice bank account and some other properties and didn't care about life anymore.

I went out and stayed with my daughter in Hays, Kansas. I wasn't doing the Lord's work during that time. I got another job in Topeka and started attending Messiah Lutheran Church but I wasn't buying into the Jesus thing and I was still angry with God over my son who died in 1980. I was doing the devil's work, had diabetes but didn't take my insulin so I was in bad shape physically and decided to try cocaine one more time.

In 2015, I couldn't do it anymore and came to the mission. Christian Stringfellow became my advocate after Bill Ritchey retired and we didn't hit it off real well from the beginning. I could see there was a difference in his spirituality as opposed to mine. I had none - he had a lot of it. When I had to spend some time in jail for skipping my probation officer, Christian told me to read the Bible and he told me to start in Matthew, read through Revelation then start in the Old Testament and finish up. He said if you want to know





“We’ve got to be more in love with the person that gives the gift than the gift itself.”

– Carl Smith

about Jesus then you need to know about his birth. And if you want to know why Jesus was sent you read the Old Testament. Because I was obedient to what he told me to do the Lord used me in jail to lead a Bible study for other inmates. We started out with three guys and on my last week we had 17.

When I left jail, I reconciled with my daughter and went back into the Mission. That’s when I heard about the Center for Biblical Leadership Development program. I signed up and literally that’s what jump-started me to get on my way. I haven’t turned back since. That’s where I met my wife Coritha. We married just before I graduated in October 2017. God is in the restoration business – he

has restored marriage and my relationship with my kids. I learned from my wife that God is the father and mother of all of us. We receive our gifts from God and when you get a gift you take care of it the best way you can. We’ve got to be more in love with the person that gives the gift than the gift itself. I love my kids, Travis and Keisha dearly but they’re not mine, they’re God’s. God gave me the opportunity to raise them in the way they should go but in the end, they belong to God. I didn’t always steward my kids well because of my pain. If you experience loss, I encourage you to first of all grieve. Talk to somebody you know - tell them that you’re hurting. Don’t be afraid to share that you are in pain

and don’t try to block it off or blame somebody else. I blamed everybody and God even more. Don’t blame, just go through the feelings, you know, lean on somebody and talk it out, walk it out, or cry it out, but don’t let that build up inside of you.

For the past year and a half, I have been driving trucks for the Mission. Miss Nell called recently and offered me an opportunity to mentor the young men in the mission as they go through the Dare to Dream program. I would help them to set up goals in ten areas of life so they do not return back to the mission. I’ve been here for well over three years and I’ve seen a lot of guys coming and going. I said to myself I don’t ever want to do that. But I realized if I stay with God he would direct my path as it says in Proverbs 3:5, so I am grateful for the opportunity to work with other gentlemen to help them be a success. I don’t mean making money when I say success but being able to go from one situation to the other without making missteps or cutting that number down drastically. If I live my life the way that he is directing me in this new position as a mentor, then prayerfully and hopefully somebody might look at me, you know, like that Philippian jailer and say what do I have to do to be saved? I am truly grateful and blessed to be a part of the Topeka Rescue Mission and to be instrumental in helping somebody today. If that is God’s plan for me this day then I know I’ve had a good day - I don’t have to be excited - I just have to be willing to do it. That’s my story. †



THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Each year the Mission endeavors to provide as many kids as possible with a backpack filled with school supplies. For teachers like Heather Hempler, a 2nd grade teacher at Ross Elementary, this is critically important to helping her kids learn well. Schools in impoverished areas more often see kids who are struggling to learn because they are hungry and not well rested.

“It’s not unusual to walk into my room and see a student eating or sleeping because they just need that. Without that need being met, they can’t focus on learning. I guess the biggest reason I teach at Ross is because I know not everyone has the patience for the needs these kids have. I know I can help them in whatever way they need. Not every teacher or person has that understanding of the students needing their basic needs met before they can learn. I have truly found a passion for these students!”

As public schools receive fewer funds from the state, the list of supplies needed for classrooms grows and for schools in areas of higher poverty, providing supplies is a real challenge for families. The percentage of students that are unable to afford school supplies varies from year to year, but this year Heather reports having more students unable to bring school supplies than she did last year.

“I am always spending money on my classroom. This year I bought, with my own funds, about three times as much as the district/school provided. One of the most important supplies I use in my room is notebooks. I always have my students keep an interactive notebook for each subject and often times I am either purchasing my own notebooks for students who don’t have any or using our Community in Schools lady as a resource. She has some supplies, but with nearly 650 students the supply is very limited.”

Notebooks are important to Heather as she tries to engage students with various learning styles. Interactive notebooks add an extra layer of learning, as students are able to write and draw in response to what they are learning.

“It has become such a routine for me to help the students who have high needs such as being unable to

afford supplies, snacks, backpacks, etc. If I didn’t take the time to meet those needs, the students wouldn’t be on an equal playing field as the others who can afford those things.”

While helping families with school supplies is important, teachers also need assistance stocking their classrooms with snacks, sanitizing wipes, Kleenex, and for teachers like Heather, spiral notebooks!

“My biggest hope for my students is that they continue to believe in themselves the way that I believe in them. So many of these kids come to me at the beginning of the year feeling like a failure or like they are inadequate. I make it my goal, my purpose, every year to build a growth mindset in these kids. I really hope they can continue that growth mindset into the future.”

Donations of school supplies can be brought to the Distribution Center at 401 NW Norris, M-F 8a-4p and Sat 9a-1p. †

TRM
MINISTRIES

*Boutique on the
Boulevard*



Every \$25 you spend
at the Boutique or
Thrift Store helps
**shelter 3 people for
a night.**

Don't Miss This!

**Frequent Shopper
Punch Card**

*For every \$10 you spend, get a punch. Collect 5,
Get \$10 off your next purchase of \$10 or more.*



SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Backpacks | Colored Markers |
| Plain pocket folders (without brads) | Pointed & Blunt Scissors (Kid size) |
| Pencil Boxes | Scissors (Regular size) |
| Pencil Pouches | Hi-Lighters (yellow) |
| Big Pink Erasers | Dry Erase Markers (Black) |
| 3 Ring Binder (1 or 1&1/2 inch) NO ZIPPERS | Kleenex (Large Box) |
| Composition Notebooks | Antibacterial Wipes |
| Colored Pencils (12 ct. pkg.) | Hand Sanitizer |

Please bring all donations to the Topeka Rescue Mission Distribution Center, 401 NW Norris, between the hours of 8am-4pm Monday-Friday & 9am-1pm on Saturday.

Questions? Contact the Distribution Center at (785) 357-4285.