I remember when I was a small boy watching my dad working on various projects around the home. He was a police officer by profession, but multi-gifted at fixing just about everything. More often than not, my curiosity got the best of me and I found myself right in the middle of whatever he was working on, asking the same question, “Daddy whatcha doin’?” ...
I was all ears as he generously took time to explain the intricate parts of a lawnmower repair, why the doghouse he was building needed three layers of insulation instead of just one, or how deep one must dig a hole to plant the new tulip bulbs that we wouldn’t see come out of the ground for a year. Inevitably the next question that came from my mouth was, “Daddy, can I help?” Looking back, I’m certain I was more of a hindrance than I was a help, but that didn’t stop my daddy from inviting me to join him.

Decades later, and after nearly 31 years as executive director of the Topeka Rescue Mission, I have witnessed over 40,000 different people sheltered, millions of meals served and been blessed to see many broken hearts mended. One very important lesson I have learned during this time is that none of this has been about Barry. Instead it has been about an incredible Heavenly Father, a Daddy who is intimately at work bringing help and hope to a broken and cursed world one person at a time; and He uses people just like you and me.

Somewhere a very long time ago, I used to think God was just casually interested in our problems. After all, He could just “fix it” if He really wanted to, right? Sure He could, He is God! Then I began to realize, He is fixing this broken and cursed world with all of its complexities. He’s just not doing it in the way I might. As Isaiah 55:8 says, “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,’ says the LORD. ‘And My ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.’”

Instead of a “snap of the fingers,” “God fix,” and now it’s “all better,” God has chosen a more intimate way of addressing our condition. When I began to look for Him - I mean, really look for Him - I began to see my Heavenly Daddy working on some really incredible projects and in ways I would have easily overlooked. I began to see Him in the eyes of a homeless alcoholic or drug addicted individual desperate for pain relief and a forgotten mother suffering from clinical depression due to her unbearable loneliness. I began to see Him in the eyes of a small child who had never known an earthly father, but hungered for someone to love them like a dad. I began to see God in a different way, a deeper way, a caring and more intimate way. I began to better understand the love of a Father and a Son He sent long ago, acquainted with our sorrows, familiar with our suffering and willing to reveal His deep love, one unique person at a time. What was equally amazing is when I discovered that our Heavenly Daddy is thrilled when we ask the question, “Daddy, can I help?” No, He is never troubled with this!
THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 11th Annual Miracle on Kansas Avenue Rescue Run! Race results and photos can be found at topekarescuerun.org.

This Christmas season and throughout the new year to come, I would invite you to join me and others in looking for and earnestly seeking what God is doing right in front of us and in the simple spirit of a child ask Him, “Daddy, whatcha doin?” Whether it’s in the eyes of a homeless man living under a bridge, a frightened family who has just walked into the Hope Center in need of shelter, the many who can barely hang on in one of our impoverished neighborhoods, or those who are hungry and looking for something to eat. Or maybe in the face of a seemingly hopeless woman attempting to escape the bonds of sexual slavery or some really, really excited little faces of our homeless children looking forward to that day when they soon get to go into a Children’s Palace made especially for them to play and learn about their value to God and us. How can our little lives partner with our Daddy in what He is doing?

Yes, our Heavenly Father and Daddy has emphatically demonstrated His love for us and our value to Him when He sent His precious Son, Jesus, that first Christmas. The most important “project” He ever designed in all eternity happens to be US!

May you and your loved ones experience your Heavenly Daddy’s love and your amazing value to Him and us this Christmas season. And as we see the suffering of this broken world all around us may we find ourselves asking the questions, “Daddy, whatcha doin?” “Daddy, can I help?” And watch our Heavenly Daddy say, “Come My child, let’s work on this together!”

Thank you my friends for answering the call to bring help and hope to those who suffer. Thank you for joining with us this Christmas season as we discover what our Daddy is doing! ♦
CHRISTMAS NEEDS LIST

Thank you to all the volunteers that have helped turn the TRM warehouse into a winter wonderland for gift distribution. Last year, we helped 4,331 individuals – including 2,084 children! Numerous volunteer opportunities still exist throughout the season. To get involved, go to trmonline.org – Volunteer Opportunities – Christmas 2016.

We are still in the process of receiving donations of new items for this year’s Christmas season. Below is a list of what we currently need for both our guest and community Christmas distributions.

**WOMEN/TEEN GIRLS:** Jeans, shirts or hoodies (Jr. 0 – 17, Misses 2 – 18, Plus 2 - 5x), briefs (especially sizes 5 – 8) and socks

**MEN/TEEN BOYS:** Jeans (size 30 -50 and especially sizes 30-38), shirts, hoodies, socks, boxers, men’s underwear (sizes 30-36), stocking caps and gloves, plus size clothing (2 – 5X) and sports team logo items

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Educational gifts, jeans, shirts, hoodies (5 – 20), boxers

**INFANT AND TODDLER:** Shirts, tops, jeans, winter clothing (Newborn – 4), onesies and diapers sizes 3 - 6, pull-ups all sizes

**MISCELLANEOUS GIFT ITEMS NEEDED:** Bath gift sets, cologne gift sets, twin XL blankets, F, Q & K sheet sets, pots and pans, small appliances, coffee makers, toasters, 4-5 qt. crock pots, small adult gifts, bath towels, cooking utensils, tool sets, wallets, shaving bags, teen gifts, men’s gifts, hair brushes, mini flashlights, chapstick, sports team logo items (Hats, duffle bags, etc.), art sets, sports balls, nice razors, any teen gifts, gift certificates for local stores, make-up items, assorted gift baskets

We start gift distribution on Dec. 9th and will continue through Dec. 25th. It would be helpful to receive Christmas gift donations by December 8th. This allows time for us to get the gift area set-up. However, we will gladly receive donations beyond this date as well. We ask that, for Christmas, gifts be new items and unwrapped. Our signup for the Christmas Shop has ended but if you know someone in need that is not getting any help from another organization you can have them call our Distribution Center at 785-357-4285 and we will be glad to talk with them about their situation and assist as possible.

**Please bring donations to:** Distribution Center, 401 NW Norris: Monday – Friday 8:00AM – 3:30PM, Saturday 8:00AM – Noon

**Questions?** Please call 785-357-4285.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION!
The playgrounds are built and we are nearing the finish line for Palace opening! Please continue to join us in prayer for God’s timing and all last minute pieces to come together. Stay tuned for information about a ribbon cutting and open house in the near future. We’d love you to join us in celebrating as we prepare to open the Palace doors!

Thanks to all those who volunteered at the Playground Build at the Children’s Palace. Each one of you helped write another chapter of God’s story at the Topeka Rescue Mission! Your time, energy, and endless enthusiasm in making this playground a reality for the children is greatly appreciated and we could NOT have done it without you! In total, we had over 400 volunteers come out and assist with the build over 7 days. Thank you again for your support!