



I imagine you're the type of person who'd have helped me out when I needed it most. I was a young man, fresh off a four-year stint in the Army. My service had given me a newfound sense of independence. I was ambitious and ready to take on the world. I packed everything I owned into my 1983 Chevy and moved to New York City.

I knew nobody and had nothing beyond the possessions in my car. It didn't matter, though. I was all-in with my pursuit of a music career. If I could just make it to the Apollo Theater stage, I would show the city what I could do.

### Inside Your Newsletter:

- Meet the New Director, Mr. Everett Jones
- A Blessing from Ohio
- Your Impact Stats
- ...and more!

Things went well at first. I got a job doing security for movie sets. I ran shifts and slept in my car nearby. It went this way for about six months. It was working, or at least I thought it was. Then it started to get cold.

When my car got towed, the reality of my situation dawned on me. My friends and family were states away. I had nowhere to go. On a rainy night, I slept in one of those tunnel slides at a park. I remember this vividly. I was so grateful just to have that space – any place away from the wind and rain.

If there were resources out there to help me, I didn't know about them. Fortunately, I ran into someone, a stranger, who helped me get situated. He didn't ask for anything in return. He was simply a good person who wanted to help. That man remains one of my best friends to this day.

Once I was on my feet, my music career started to take off. I did make it to the Apollo Theater, winning their talent show four times. I was blessed with the chance to tour as a singer for several years.

At this time, I started getting more involved with the community. I volunteered for some drug-rehabilitation programs. This would be a precursor to my future career path.

The real spark for me came some years later. I was working as a sales representative for a day-labor company. An older man, maybe fifty-five or sixty years old, walked into my office. He was in tears. He looked at me and said, *"For the first time in my life, I can afford my own apartment."*

That moment changed everything for me. I thought, *'That's what I want to do. More than just a job, I want to be impactful. I want to be able to give that feeling to others.'*

That set me on the path that has led me to Northlands Rescue Mission. I became a case manager and then program director at the Homeless Families Foundation in my home state of Ohio. I worked at Covenant House, a homeless shelter for teens. Most recently, I was the Director of Residential Services at the YMCA of Central New York.

I've done the tour of human services in my career, but homelessness has always been my sweet spot. It's an issue that has touched friends and family. I know that without a home, it's hard to make anything else happen in life.



A career in music was my first calling.

*story continued on next page...*

As far as my own experience, I think that was God's way of preparing me to be in this position and represent it from a place of empathy – to really understand what it feels like to be homeless.

I am excited to continue the good work that people like you have made possible at the Mission. Until now, I've never experienced a community that is so invested in helping their neighbors. Thank you for being a part of that. Thank you for welcoming me into the community and for trusting me to lead this organization. I can promise you that I am in this fight with my whole heart, body, and soul.

If I haven't met you yet, I hope to have that chance. I want to hear *your* story - why you love this community and what inspires you to help others. My door is always open, and I have faith that together, we *can* make a difference.

God Bless,

Everett C. Jones, Sr., Executive Director



I am blessed and humbled by the opportunity to serve alongside you.

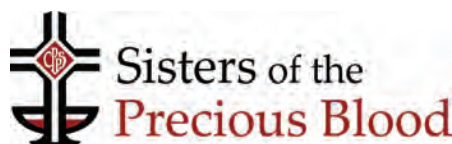
## A Blessing from Ohio

God's love has no boundaries. We are reminded of this weekly, when those of you outside Grand Forks open your hearts to the people we serve. Whether it is churches in Hatton organizing a luncheon fundraiser, students at Midway Public School in Inkster gathering food and clothing for clients, or Mr. & Mrs. West sending checks from Virginia: we appreciate each and every one of you. You are a huge part of this Mission and the lives that are changed here.

We want to recognize one very special group who helps from afar: the CPPS Heritage Mission Fund in Ohio. They are funded by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, a congregation of nuns who have ministered in the US (and beyond) for more than 180 years. From the very beginning, the Sisters have reached out to help the poor and needy, just as Jesus preached.



The CPPS Heritage Mission Fund has responded to our requests for help, not just once but often. They've helped fund the Backpack Program, in-house addiction support, the community food pantry, housing/employment support for clients, and more.



Our sincere gratitude goes out to the CPPS Heritage Mission Fund, Sisters of the Precious Blood, and all of you who do God's work without borders or boundaries.



The Sisters of the Precious Blood traveled to Ohio from Switzerland in 1844 to minister to immigrants.

*What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? [James 2:14]*

# Community Kindness



## Plank You Very Much!

Eagle Scout Patrick Humble led his troop on a service project at the Mission. They painted two dorm rooms, then installed some beautiful wood flooring in a room that really needed it. When they ran out of flooring, they went out and purchased some more to finish the job!

## Badges & Backpacks

Members of the Grand Forks Deputies Association geared up and spent a day filling bags of food for kids in the Backpack Program. These officers really put their hearts into giving back: they volunteer around the region to help kids and get them Christmas gifts through their "Shop with a Deputy" program.



## Paying It Forward

Med Park Credit Union is celebrating their 60th anniversary with 60 acts of kindness! We were blessed to receive a \$500 gift for the shelter. Other acts of kindness included bringing lunch to the GFPD, reading to elementary students, delivering Meals on Wheels, and much more!

## From Drayton with Love

The Drayton Christian Youth Ministry drove down to serve dinner at the Mission and spend time with our clients. They brought some much-needed items along, including toilet paper, deodorant, and spices for the kitchen. Blessings to all of you in the smaller towns who do BIG things for those in need!



*Your gifts bring relief and ignite hope. Here's what you've made possible this year...*

Your Impact in 2025



You and others prevented hunger for clients and community members with **31,250 hot meals** and **3400 food boxes!**



You provided **300 clients** with more than **10,000 nights of shelter!** That includes **shelter for 23 veterans.**



Thanks to your help creating a safe and supportive environment, **142 people have moved into their own homes!**



# The People Who Built Me

There are some places, and people, that we never forget. The Mission is that place for Greg Thompson. It's been more than 30 years since he stayed here, but he still thinks about it from time to time.

Greg came to the Mission in the 80s. He was a client first, then a long-term volunteer. He still remembers what the Mission used to look like: the stone church with a kitchen in the basement and beds upstairs, the dining area where he'd play penny poker with friends, and the old office where he'd hear, and share, stories of loss and redemption.

*"Seven nights a week I volunteered my time to care and watch over the men's hostel," says Greg. "I had the opportunity to meet some truly amazing people."*

Greg spoke to hundreds of people who came to the Mission over the years. Some of them stuck in his mind, like Crocket, the Korean War pilot who got overly excited while sharing stories of his time in the skies. There was Hause, a several-hundred-pound hulk of a man who supposedly once wrestled a bear during his time with the circus.

*"Each person came with their testimony," says Greg. "It seemed a simple ear to listen was what most needed."*

But as much as Greg provided a listening ear, he needed one for himself. Like Crocket, Hause, and so many others, a life of hardship and uncertainty brought Greg to the Mission. He needed guidance, and he found it at the hands of one very compassionate couple, Ray & Pat Kiner.

*"Both of these people were a true inspiration to my life," says Greg. "Ray was a good mentor and someone who never turned me away. He was keen on the Bible. The conversations we had [about God] still remain a part of me. I would talk with [Ray and Pat] sometimes for hours. They were like family to me."*

*"The time I spent here was, in so many ways, a learning experience which taught me how to grow while surrounded by a dark world," says Greg. "To be honest, I think about this place quite often and hold on to the goodness and what it taught me."*

The next time you think of the Mission, I hope you think of Greg too. Because here's the thing: **the life-changing experience Greg had is something you are now giving to others.** Your support means someone else has the chance to share their story, connect with others, and grow. Maybe 30 years from now, they'll think back to the Mission and say, *"that place, those people - made me who I am today."*



Ray & Pat Kiner were great mentors to Greg and many others.

## MOTORCYCLE POKER RUN

### SATURDAY, SEPT. 13TH AT THE MISSION



LUNCH @ 11:30 AM  
RIDE STARTS @ NOON

BEST HAND WINS A FULL  
MOTORCYCLE SERVICING  
(\$350 VALUE)

SPONSORED BY  
**THROTTLE  
ADDICTION**  
MOTORCYCLES

WALK-UP REGISTRATION: \$30 / RIDER, \$15 / PASSENGER