

A close-up portrait of a Black woman with dark, curly hair pulled back. She is looking slightly to the left with a calm expression. She is wearing large hoop earrings and a light-colored, textured sweater. A large, thick, yellow curved line starts from the left edge and sweeps across the bottom of the image. The background is softly blurred, showing vertical lines of light and shadow.

MEET ONNA



STORIES OF HOPE

December 2025



Pastor Michael L. Brown
President/CEO

As we approach the holiday season, we are reminded of the power of generosity, compassion, and community. **At Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries,** December is a special time to reflect on the blessings we've received and to extend our hands to those in need. **We invite you to join us in making this season truly meaningful for everyone we serve.**

There are a number of opportunities to give during the holiday season. As you know, the gift of giving is the heart of the support of this ministry. **Each year, your monetary gifts help us provide warm meals, clothing, and shelter to those experiencing homelessness or hardship during the cold winter months.** This year, thankfully, more of our guests have made the decision to commit to our long-term programs and for that we are eternally grateful. **We ask that you continue to pray for their success as they dedicate their time and attention to our life-changing programs.**

We also want to remind you that your support of our thrift stores is a vital resource for both the community and our programs. Donating gently used clothing, furniture, and household items not only supports our ministry but also helps families in need find affordable options.

During this season, our Christmas Shop run by KGM's children's program is the perfect opportunity to provide resources, ensuring every child experiences the joy of the season. **Every donation, every act of kindness, and every shared moment reinforces our collective commitment to compassion.** Whether it's a financial contribution, volunteering your time, or simply sharing the message of our ministry with your circle of influence, **your involvement is essential to the success of this ministry.**

As we come to the end of another year, **this also marks my last year as CEO of Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries.** Serving at KGM has been the most rewarding thing I have ever done. I have learned through experience that the most important thing you will ever do, other than accepting Christ, is to invest in the lives of other people. **In doing so, you not only have a positive impact on those you help but also on generations to come.**

I want to thank you all for the love and support you have all shown and the friendships I've gained over these last 28 years. **God has truly shown Himself faithful, and I am confident He will continue to bless KGM and this community under the leadership of Pastor John Simpson going forward.**

From the bottom of my heart and from all of us at Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries, **we wish you a joyful, blessed Christmas season.** May your hearts be full, and may you find joy in giving and receiving the love of Christ this season.

Thank you for standing with us—today and always.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael L. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

A portrait of Onna, a Black woman with her hair in a high bun, wearing a white and black patterned cardigan over a dark top. She is looking slightly to the side with a calm expression.

MEET ONNA

"I was determined to make my kids feel safe, and KGM gave me that safe haven."

When Onna first came to the mission, she was relieved to find help but still uneasy about the environment, having fled a violent situation. **"I was determined to make my kids feel safe, and KGM gave me that safe haven."** But once she started building relationships with the staff, she began to settle in and feel like she was in the right place.

Onna was born in Grand Rapids but moved around the country often because her mother worked for the military. When Onna was 9, her parents got divorced, which made her rebellious, led her to make some bad choices, and to run with the wrong crowd. Fast forward to the present day, those choices still followed her, and it weighed on her mentally, and eventually, Onna found herself fleeing to the mission due to the violence happening in her life. She first came to the mission 6 years ago but was able to get back on her feet. **Last December, however, she found herself at KGM again because she couldn't afford housing on her own.** When she arrived for the second time, she heard others talking about the **New Life | New Hope program**, and she wanted to, "give it a shot."

Initially, she planned to be in the program while trying to find housing as soon as possible so that she could be back on her own again. Many staff members encouraged her to focus on finishing the program, and when she redirected her focus,

YOU PROVIDED THESE LIFE CHANGING SERVICES IN OCTOBER 2025



8,362
Nights of Stay



13,987
Meals Served



18
Long Term
Program Guests

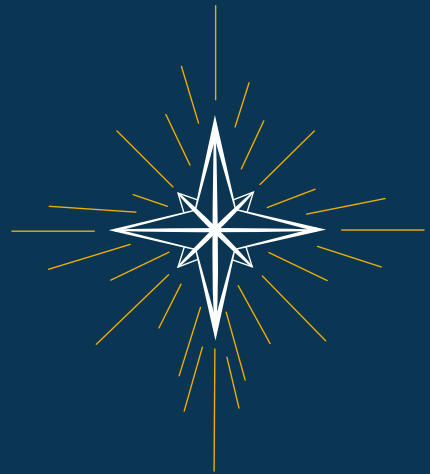


225
Guests Served
at KDC

she realized it was for the better. **"I needed the 9 months to become mentally strong and more structured."** Onna has now graduated from the program and looks to the future with excitement and desires to help others through her testimony by either going into social work or peer support. She is looking into classes at Liberty University so her dream of a career in social work can become a reality.

Many people like Onna come to KGM seeking refuge or help when they can't make ends meet. But once they enter programming, they learn the tools and skills needed to be successful and receive emotional support from staff along the way. **YOU can make a difference in a guest's life and be a part of the transformation like Onna experienced.**

To learn how to get involved, visit the link below.
www.kzoogospel.org



MERRY CHRISTMAS

— From Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries —



MAXIMIZING IMPACT: THROUGH NEW DONATION GUIDELINES

Simple Treasures and Rescued Treasures are a part of the ministry and are two incredible thrift stores that help support Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries. **Every dollar generated goes directly toward meeting the needs of the guests who enter KGM's doors seeking refuge, turning shopping into a powerful act of compassion.**

Both thrift stores rely on donations to keep their shelves stocked with quality clothes, housewares, furniture, and more. **Your donation is a meaningful gift that breathes life into the shelves and offers hope to those in need.**

The dedicated staff carefully curates these treasures, ensuring they become opportunities for change and renewal. **To optimize the donations that Simple Treasures and Rescued Treasures receives, the staff have worked hard to create a list of items that can and cannot be accepted.** Many of the items that can't be used are **due to safety concerns or are**

legally prohibited for sale under government regulations. But not to worry, the stores have made a list of places where your donation that we can't accept would be used to its full potential.

When will this donation update take effect? KGM's thrift stores aim to implement the new regulations in **2026**, and once the new year begins, you will be able to find the list of items that cannot be accepted on our website and at both thrift stores. So be on the lookout, and if you have any questions in the meantime, reach out to either store.

Simple Treasures: (269) 345-2974 ext. 100
Rescued Treasures: (269) 383-1044

The funds that come through our thrift stores are crucial to the care we provide to KGM guests. **We appreciate your continued support, whether it's by donations or thrifting!**



UPDATE FROM PASTOR JOHN SIMPSON: LIVES ARE CHANGING

In October, Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries implemented a few changes designed to strengthen safety, dignity, and quality of care for every guest. **Our goal was to create smaller staff-to-guest ratios, ensuring more personal attention and meaningful engagement.**

We are already seeing powerful results. Since the changes took effect, **34 single men, 33 single women, and 17 families—including 28 children**—have moved from emergency services into our Next Steps Program. These guests are now setting goals, meeting with case managers, and taking intentional steps toward stability and thriving.

The excitement on campus is tangible. In early November, when this article was written, **we still had open beds, allowing us to welcome walk-in guests needing emergency shelter.** With lower ratios, our staff can build deeper relationships and help each person discern their best path forward.

We're also seeing increased enrollment in our **one-year New Life | New Hope program**, which fosters lasting transformation. Please continue to pray with us—that hearts and minds remain open to change, and that every guest discovers the fullness of who they are in Christ. With the increase in program guests, the need for **New Life | New Hope mentors and teachers is greater.** Our goal is to have a mentor for every NL|NH program guest. To meet this goal, **we need YOUR help.**

If you are interested in volunteering as a teacher or mentor who impacts the lives of our guests, contact our **Volunteer Specialist Matt Furrow** at **(269) 345-2974 ext. 203** or **mfurrow@kzoogospel.org**.

Give *hope* this holiday season



Christmas Gifts
for Kids

[Learn More](#)



Christmas Gifts
for Adults

[Learn More](#)



Volunteer your
Time

[Learn More](#)



Cold Weather
Needs List

[Learn More](#)



Be a Prayer
Partner

[Learn More](#)

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