

MEET ALAN



STORIES OF HOPE

FEBRUARY 2023



Pastor Michael L. Brown

President/CEO

Looking forward into 2023,

Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries will be giving more attention to the ministry of KDC (Kindness, Dignity, and Compassion) operation. It's been a while since KDC has had adequate attention paid to the facility. With KDC serving more people than ever before, we need to make sure they have everything they need to serve this community. For many in our region, the margin between maintaining the housing you have and securing food for your family, is very thin. This makes KDC's ministry to the people of Kalamazoo more vital than ever. We are hoping that reorganizing and possibly expanding the warehouse will make the entire operation more efficient. Serving the "working poor", KDC has become a valuable staple for the north-side of Kalamazoo.

At our main location, the Gospel Mission, we have experienced low temperatures over the last few weeks. This has prompted us to open a warming center to give our guests a place to be during the day. Although KGM is primarily an overnight shelter, we realize the need for people to have a place to be during the day when temperatures are below freezing. Opening the warming center has however, created the need for more volunteers. To ensure that the time people spend in our center during the day will be productive and fulfilling, we need volunteers to help with engaging activities. We have learned that it is more beneficial for our guests to have

positive interactive engagements, rather than just sitting in front of a television. Activities such as board games or card games that create relationships and make a person think. These are just a few ways that entertainment could be done, with the help of more volunteers. If you would like to volunteer or support the ministry of KGM in any way, please call

(269) 345-2974 and ask for **Matt Furrow**

(Volunteer Specialist). Matt can schedule both individuals and groups to serve in ways that are meaningful to you.

"For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'"

DEUTERONOMY 15:11 NKJV

Be on the lookout for some of our special events coming this year. In April, we will host our 2nd annual **Women's Fundraising Event, "Resilient."** This event was a huge success last year and we are expecting an even greater turnout this year so, make sure you register early. We are extremely grateful for all that you do to support this ministry as we serve the less fortunate of this community.

If someone was to ask me for one sentence to describe the purpose of KGM, I'd say that; **"We are in partnership with God to build His Kingdom."** Thank you for joining with us as we bring God's Kingdom to downtown Kalamazoo.

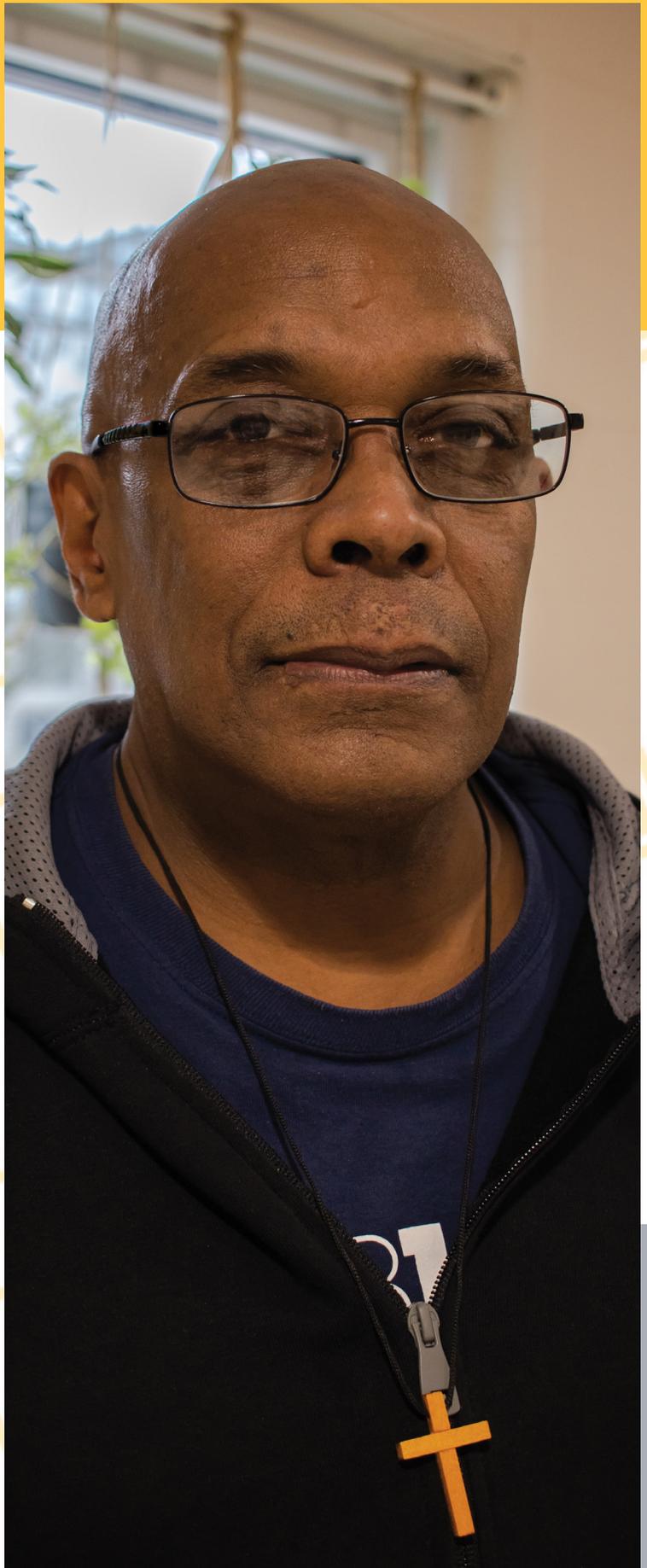
God Bless you and keep you in his care.

MEET ALAN

Humbly returning to the *long-term program*, Alan was focused on changing his life and had a different mindset about what he would learn. Worried about what people would think, he returned anyway, knowing that he needed to transform his life and desired for something different. His story starts where he grew up and the journey that led him to Kalamazoo.

Alan grew up in Richmond, Indiana with four siblings (one has sadly passed). A mission in Indiana is where he resided until he met a girl (their relationship was on and off) and he moved to a mission in Lansing, Michigan to be with her. He got in trouble and was given the option to relocate to Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries, but was troubled with the decision because he had a son and wanted to stay near him. Ultimately, Alan said he would give KGM a try. Coming to KGM for the first time, he was skeptical about what he could be taught that he didn't already know. Skepticism, and a bad influence from a roommate who led him astray with alcohol made his first time at Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries not as successful as it could have been.

His first time through the program, Alan admits he was cocky, didn't have a teachable attitude, and he didn't have the focus he needed. After graduating, he was on the street for four years and had a few jobs, but wasn't satisfied with his character and knew that if he returned to KGM with a different viewpoint he would have a better outcome attending the long-term program a second time. Staff member, John Simpson had a fundamental impact in Alan's life. When he came the first time, John encouraged him to stick





with it and allow God to do a work. This time, Alan had a different mindset and was more focused on changing. He asked the staff *“have you seen any growth in me?”* and the answer was yes and he has been encouraged by his progress over the past six months. Alan has set some goals and he is working so he can have a successful future. He aspires to move forward and rely on the Lord for job opportunities. Alan seeks comfort in *Jeremiah 29:11 (“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord”)*. As this is his second time, he encourages people hesitant of coming into the program with this statement *“You gotta do the program not let the program do you”* and *“just do it”* because he sees the reward that will come from completing the program and he continues to encourage others to join and start the journey of changing.

“You gotta do the program not let the program do you”
-Alan

Most needed Items during winter

- Sport Bras
- Underwear
- Undershirts
- Gloves/Mittens
- Socks

For more informations contact:

Lorenzo Herbert (lherbert@kzoogoepl.org) for mens shelter
Katrina Wood (kwood@kzoogospel.org) for women shelter



You provided these life changing services

9,489
Meals Served



8,112
Nights of Stay



214
Guests Served At KDC



13
Long Term Program Guests



KDC

Kalamazoo Deacons Conference was founded over 50 years ago by several deacons from separate churches in the community.

KDC's vision is to aid the "working poor", with needs such as clothing, food, toiletries, and household items. KDC also assists in obtaining personal documents such as social security cards, birth certificates, and county IDs, allowing guests to acquire jobs. KGM and KDC have become one ministry about 5 years ago, to further serve the Southwest Michigan community. The caring team at KDC has many servant hearted people with different roles to serve the guest who walk in the doors of KDC.

Meet Larry

Larry has grown up and lived in Kalamazoo all of his life. He retired in 2007 from a Marketing and Sales Manager position. His plan for retirement was to competitively cycle but a tragic accident happened when he was 63, leaving him with several broken bones. Larry was confused of what God's plan was for him in taking away the opportunity to compete. Matthew 25 was brought to his attention and he felt like God spoke to him and asked "**what have you done for the least of these?**" Larry knew God had a bigger plan for him and when a recovery appointment came, he just happened to run into the President of the Board for KDC and the man told Larry he had a place for him. From 2009-2017 Larry volunteered at KDC and then joined the staff in 2018. Larry oversees financial requests, recovers personal documents and leads the team who meets with guests.

Meet DRS's And Ted

Another part of KDC's staff are DRS's (Direct response servants) volunteer position. The DRS's are those who meet one on one with guests, take the time to listen to their stories, and develop a plan on how to get them back on their feet. While building relationships with



the guests, the DRS's also learn about their spiritual journey and assist them in the process of joining a local church community or share the gospel with those who don't know Jesus.

Ted is a part of the KDC as well. He is the Custodian and found his way to the Kalamazoo Deacons Conference through AARP. When asked about his position he said "**I feel anointed to be here**". Daily, he sees the broken spirits of people and feels called to care for the guest, by cleaning and being a smiling face.

Overall, the goal of KDC is getting their guests back on their feet, being compassionate to the guests situations, and helping them return to their spiritual journey's. KDC desires to see others find their identity in Christ and through assistance, allowing them the ability to obtain jobs and find their place in the community, with a foundation in Christ to strengthen them in their future endeavors.

Family: A Bond Like No Other

There's a special bond we share with our children or grandchildren that's unlike how we feel about any other kid.

A similar relationship can grow between ourselves and the organizations we believe in. When you resonate with the mission of a particular charity, you may choose to donate your money... and when you do, their mission becomes yours too.

Some people who share the mission of Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries have chosen to include a gift to our organization in their will. **Those individuals:**



1. Commit out loud. When someone notifies us of a planned, in-will gift to Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries they make a statement of their dedication to our mission and those we serve.

2. Create impact. Every dollar you give to a charity you care about is an investment that lasts. There may be tax savings and benefits associated with your gift, but even more than that, your investment ensures people's lives will be changed for good.

3. Build a legacy. Everyone wants to know their life counts for something. When you leave a charitable gift in your will, you design a legacy that will long outlive your life.

SAVE THE DATE

Resilient

APRIL 21
12:00PM
2023

Women Supporting Women Fundraising Event

For more information contact Tammy Clubb, at 269.345.2974 ext. 211 or email at tclubb@kzoogospel.org



KGM
269.345.2974
info@kzoogospel.org
448 N. Burdick St. Kalamazoo

KDC
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