

THE MISSION Bell

"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF" - MATTHEW 22:39

Cheryl Koenig

RESIDENT TESTIMONY

I believed I had a typical childhood. I was raised by two loving parents who, for the most part, set good examples for me. They worked hard and instilled in me the values of responsibility and effort. Although they both smoked when I was little, life felt stable and ordinary.

School came easily to me, and for a while, everything seemed "normal." However, in high school, things began to change. I started noticing some of my classmates experimenting with alcohol and marijuana. They still managed to perform well academically, which caught my attention. This made it seem harmless, as if it were possible to dabble in these substances without disrupting one's life. That curiosity planted a seed in me that would eventually lead to a lot of pain in my life.

During my first year of college, my curiosity began to grow. I started experimenting with "speed," telling myself it was just to help me stay awake during long study sessions or to cram before exams. At first, it seemed to work. I convinced myself that I was still on track and in control, and no one could tell anything was wrong.

It would be several years before I found myself surrounded by others who used drugs and alcohol for reasons beyond mere recreation. I began to mimic their behaviors, gradually losing my footing without even realizing it. Sometimes, I would leave home for work and not return for days. The person I used to be was slowly slipping away.

By 1987, my drug and alcohol use, along with the company I kept, had taken a significant toll on me. I decided to run away. I left my home in Texas, where I had lived for most of my life, and moved to Orlando, Florida, hoping that a change of scenery would change my life. For a while, it seemed to work. I got a job at Disney and managed to stay off drugs for eight years. However, old habits have a way of finding you when your heart hasn't healed.

In 1995, I met a man and began seeing him, unaware that he was using "speed." Before long, I found myself pulled back into the darkness I thought I had escaped. Things felt worse than ever, and eventually, I grew sick and tired of being sick and tired. That's when I decided to

continued inside cover...





enter rehab in West Texas in 2000. It wasn't easy, but it became a turning point in my life.

Two years later, I gave birth to my son at the age of 40. For the first time in a long while, I felt a sense of purpose and hope. However, life has a way of testing even the strongest hearts. Six years after my son was born, his father passed away suddenly from a heart attack. Overnight, I became a single working mother, trying to handle everything on my own. The stress accumulated, and slowly, I began making poor choices again. I grew distant from my son, the very person I loved most.

One Thanksgiving, while my son was staying with my mother, he called me with words that pierced my heart: "Mom, you're not fun anymore, and I don't want to come home." This honestly broke me. Deep down, I knew he was right; I had not been the mother he needed. Conviction set in, and soon my mother took on the responsibility of raising him. It was a painful truth to face, but I knew God wasn't finished with my story.

My brother told me about the Rescue Mission of Middle Georgia. At first, I brushed it off and convinced myself I could fix things on my own. But two months later, when I reached the end of my rope, I called him and said, "I'm ready to go. I'll walk away from everything." On March 25, 2022, I entered the Women's Life Recovery Program at the Mission.

I will never forget my first night there. I was exhausted physically, emotionally, and spiritually, but I also felt a deep sense of relief. I knew I was finally where I needed to be. I had known Jesus before, but this time felt different. I could feel that He had me in His hands, and for the first time in years, I could finally rest.

"Since coming to the Mission, I have learned what it truly means to live for and in Jesus Christ."

Since coming to the Mission, I have learned what it truly means to live for and in Jesus Christ. I graduated from the Women's Life Recovery Program in April 2023, and the people there—both the staff and residents—have become my forever family. I felt loved from the moment I walked through the door. As mothers and sisters in Christ, we encourage one another and hold each other accountable. I still go to them often for godly advice and prayer.

Allowing Jesus to steer my life has led to blessings I never imagined possible. One of the greatest is the restoration of my relationship with my son. I was absent from his life for about 15 years, but now we are rebuilding our bond and growing closer every day. What was once broken is being healed—slowly, beautifully, by the grace of God.

Today, I work in the cafeteria of a high school in Warner Robins, Georgia. I have developed a great relationship with my coworkers, and I often find ways to share the gospel of Jesus Christ during our everyday conversations. My pace is slower now, steady and peaceful. When I was at the Mission, I was either "on" or "off," but now I'm learning to be still, to trust in the goodness of the Lord, and to rest in His timing.

I am also very active in my church community. I attend and serve in leadership at Southside's Celebrate Recovery, and I worship alongside my brother and his family on Sundays. Each morning, I spend time in prayer on my way to work because I know that constant communication with God is what keeps me grounded and at peace.

Looking back, I see how every step, even the painful ones, has led me closer to Jesus. What once felt like loss has become the foundation of a new life. I am no longer running or hiding; I am standing firm in faith, walking in the light of His grace. The Rescue Mission helped me rediscover not just who I am, but whose I am, and for that, I will be forever grateful.



Thrift Ministry

WE OFFER DONATION PICK-UPS

Did you know we pick up large to mid-size donations from your home or business at no charge? It's simple: Call the Rescue Mission at (478) 743-5445 ext. 314 to schedule a pickup or visit us online at <https://www.rescuemissionga.com/thrift-stores/#schedule>. We offer donation pickups from Monday to Saturday across Middle Georgia, including Warner Robins, Byron, Forsyth, Fort Valley, and more.



**Make
US your
MISSION**

DROP OFF DONATION BINS

Dropping off donations shouldn't be difficult. The Rescue Mission provides 18 drop-off locations across Macon, Warner Robins, Byron, Forsyth, and Fort Valley. To locate a site near you, visit our website at <https://www.rescuemissionga.com/thrift-stores/#schedule> and click the donation bins under our Thrift Ministry Tab. Thank you for making our MISSION your MISSION!



*Merry Christmas from the
Bargain Center & Barm Center
May God bless you this Holiday Season!*



Year-to-Date Statistics

**These statistics are year-to-date as of 10/31/2025*



103

Graduates
of our Life Recovery Program



167

**Professions
of Faith**



84

Baptisms



63,714

**Nights of Safe Housing
& Recovery Services**



Residents Meals Served

318,117



1,138

**Professional
Counseling Sessions**



Complete the enclosed reply
card or donate online at:

rescuemissionga.com/newsletter



Scan here!

Rescue Mission of Middle Georgia

6601 Zebulon Road, Macon, GA 31220

Monday - Saturday | 8:30 am - 6:00 pm

(478) 743-5445 | info@rescuemissionga.com

rescuemissionga.com

📷 [rescuemissionmiddlega](https://www.instagram.com/rescuemissionmiddlega)

📘 [maconrescuemission](https://www.facebook.com/maconrescuemission)

Schedule a Free Donation Pickup

Steve Floyd | (478) 743-5445. ext. 314

donate@rescuemissionga.com

Bargain Center Thrift Store

3375 Napier Avenue, Macon, GA 31204

Monday - Saturday | 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

(478) 743-5445. ext. 317 | niger@rescuemissionga.com

📘 [MissionBargainCenter](https://www.facebook.com/MissionBargainCenter)

Barn Center Thrift Store

6601 Zebulon Road, Macon, GA 31220

Monday - Saturday | 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

(478) 743-5445. ext. 406 | kyle@rescuemissionga.com

📘 [MissionBarnCenter](https://www.facebook.com/MissionBarnCenter)



GIVE YEAR-ROUND Consider becoming a monthly giver and have a lasting impact throughout the year! Find out how at rescuemissionga.com/monthly



Proud "Certified Excellent" member of City Gate, accredited by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and recognized as a "Four Star Charity" by Charity Navigator.