

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2021

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

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NEVER GIVE UP





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When Emily and David first met, he was 19 and employed at a local restaurant; she was 17 and hoped to begin a career in nursing after high school. They had both grown up in challenged homes and had watched their caregivers struggle to survive for many years. David's father worked during the day but spent his nights at local bars, often either disappearing entirely or coming home angry and abusive. Due to her mother fleeing an abuser, Emily had been placed in the foster care system and had bounced from house to house for as long as she could remember, having experiences with strangers that left her incapable of trusting anyone.

When David and Emily met, they believed they had found the cure for the years of pain, loneliness and uncertainty they had experienced in childhood. They believed they had found the love, family, and security that had always been missing from their lives. When Emily became pregnant with their first child she dropped out of high school and they moved into a home of their own.

At first, panicked at becoming a father, David poured all his energy into becoming the kind of father he never had and providing a safe, healthy environment to raise his children. He took a second job, working 70 hour weeks so Emily could stay home with the new baby.

By the time they had their second child, Emily was facing

the exhaustion of being a young mother with limited support and David had turned back to alcohol to cope with the stresses of working two jobs and raising two small children; an addiction that had plagued him ever since his father taught him how to “drink like a man” when he was 15 years old. Those times of drinking with his father were the only times he remembered his father wanting to spend time with him, or seeming at peace.

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programs for children with her challenges.

Now with mountains of medical debt, the final blow came when the mobile home park they lived in was sold and the new owner raised rents. Within six months David, Emily and their two children

were evicted for failure to pay.

For the next few years they stayed in spare bedrooms, RVs and tents on the property of friends and family, working jobs around other people's houses in exchange for a roof over their heads. David's drinking worsened until he finally lost his jobs, and the health of Emily and their two children deteriorated from the stress of constantly moving, struggling, and fighting just to survive. Eventually they exhausted their resources and became homeless, living in a tent in a wooded area by the Kansas river.

At the lowest moment of his life, David stood outside Walmart on one of the hottest days of summer and asked strangers to buy food and medicine for his family. Having left Emily and the children in the shade by the river, he had walked into town and asked everyone he passed if they had a spare room he could stay in. Now dripping with sweat and dirt, he tried to explain to strangers that he was able to cook, clean and do work around the house if they would just take a chance on him.

No one took him up on his offer, but a woman asked if he had heard of the Topeka Rescue Mission. She called from her cell phone and made sure TRM had space for him and his family. David resisted, believing TRM would take away his children if they found out he had lost everything and was "just another addict". He declined her offer, fearful she might follow him back to his family and call the police.

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Before long David was drinking in between jobs to relax, progressing to drinking on the job just to be able to get through the day. He felt like he was barely hanging on. To help him with his workload, Emily began taking odd jobs as a nanny, dog walker and house cleaner, taking whatever jobs allowed her to bring two small children along. But even with multiple jobs between them, it seemed the responsibilities never stopped piling up and they always remained a few dollars away from losing their home.

Their hopes and dreams for their new life came crashing down around them when their first child, a little girl named Molly, began having developmental challenges. At five years old she still didn't talk and had trouble with walking and movement. Sometimes it seemed like she wasn't even aware of the people around her. Occasionally she had outbursts that endangered her younger brother. After months of tests and experimental treatments, doctors decided she needed to stay out of school and enroll in expensive treatment



But the woman bought him a bag of groceries and gave him a phone number. She told him if he ever called, she would pay for a cab and ensure his family got to the mission safely. Her small act of kindness stuck with him, and a few weeks later, he called.

David and Emily came to TRM in June of 2011 with nothing but the clothes on their backs and a few broken possessions. They remained at TRM for almost a year while David received help for his addiction, Emily began nursing school, and they were connected with resources to help Molly's challenges.

David eventually began a work training program with TRM and graduated having discovered his purpose for his life.

Ten years later David and Emily are living healthy, vibrant lives with their children in their own home and are active members of their community. Molly now excels in high school while receiving the support she needs, and David works as a liaison between rehabilitation services and the unsheltered homeless. Emily is a full time nurse aid and recently reconnected with her birth mother, who now lives with them and is able to be a

“grandma” for the first time.

The work we do in the lives of people like David, Emily and their family would not be possible without people like you who care enough to stop, reach out, and offer help. Whether you help in the form of paying for a cab on a hot summer day, or you give your time, prayers or financial support, you are the reason we are able to offer hope and healing for thousands of people in their darkest moments. We could not do any of it without you. Thank you for being a significant part of the work we do to help people reclaim and restore their lives! †

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Gal. 6:9 NIV.

Thank you for not giving up on people like David and Emily!



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We strive to provide a safe, comfortable and hospitable shelter for individuals in transition from homelessness to permanent housing. People come to us from a variety of backgrounds and for a variety of reasons, but they all share one thing in common: they have no where else to go.

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Let's Chat!