

# Paul's Ponderings

Deep Roots, Lasting Fruit

Every plant begins with roots. Long before anything breaks the surface, something unseen is already at work underground. When a seed is planted, roots grow quietly, interacting with microbes, fungi, and organic matter in what scientists call the soil microbiome. This hidden network determines whether a plant merely survives or truly flourishes. Strong roots provide resilience through drought, disease, floods, and difficult conditions.



For eighty years, City Rescue Mission has lived out this same truth.

Since 1946, CRM has never closed its doors. Millions of meals served, and millions of nights of safe shelter provided. What is visible today is the result of deep roots formed patiently, prayerfully, and faithfully over generations.

Just as plants rely on what grows unseen beneath the soil, people and communities are sustained by foundations that are often invisible: stability, structure, relationships, purpose, and care. Growth that exists only on the surface, quick wins or visible results, rarely endures. True transformation begins below the surface.

At CRM, we know that homelessness and recovery are not resolved by a single outcome, such as housing alone. Lasting change requires comprehensive care. Meals and shelter, yes, but also transformational recovery programs, medical and dental care, mental health services, transitional housing, aftercare, and community. These are the roots that make restoration possible, even after long seasons of hardship.

Scripture reminds us of this truth: "Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord... he shall be like a tree planted by the waters" (Jeremiah 17:7-8). "He shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season" (Psalm 1:3).

Roots are faith beneath the surface. Healthy roots produce lasting fruit.

## 3 WAYS TO GIVE

Phone



(904)-421-5161

Mail



426 McDuff Ave. S  
Jacksonville, FL 32254

Online



## THE GENEROSITY YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD AFFORD



It's never easy being the new kid. And when you're a "military brat," you're the new kid every couple of years. In the 1980s, one of those kids found solace in the pages of \$1 comic books he purchased on base. Recently, just six books from his carefully preserved collection were valued at approximately \$20,000, with the potential to increase even further. Research shows that about 90% of wealth is held in valuables like these, known as appreciated assets. Did you know you can turn them into a legacy of changed lives? First, let's define our terms. What are appreciated assets? Appreciated assets, sometimes called non-cash assets, are any items of increasing value. This includes personal property, such as artwork, collectibles, cryptocurrency, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and real estate. What's the benefit of giving appreciated assets? Donating items of value to a ministry you love can help you reduce or eliminate capital gains tax when you transfer part or all the assets to the organization before the sale. The ministry can then sell the assets without any tax consequences. You may also receive a tax deduction, essentially increasing the amount you're able to give. How can my appreciated assets make a difference?

Monica Baker at (904) 421-5147 or mbaker@crmjax.org - Visit [crmjax.legacywill.org](http://crmjax.legacywill.org) to bless your family with an up-to-date will.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

City Rescue Mission is in need of the following:

- » Clothing, shoes, and accessories for men, women, and children for the Thrift Store
- » Twin sized blankets (400)
- » Twin sized white sheet sets (400)
- » Twin sized blankets (400) Twin sized white sheet sets (400)
- » Bus Passes: Weekly - \$20 each, Monthly - \$65 each
- » White towels (1,000) and white wash clothes (2,000)

Contact: Sherrie Mack | [shmack@crmjax.org](mailto:shmack@crmjax.org) | (904) 387-4357 ext. 224

Thank you to everyone who supported The Women and Children's Garden. This project is now fully funded. Pictures to come soon!

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## Sheila 40 Years in the Wilderness

For decades, Sheila lived in what she now calls "the wilderness" – a life marked by heartbreak, destructive habits and homelessness. But God reached out to her in that dark and lonely place... and He led her to City Rescue Mission. Here, she discovered grace, restoration and a renewed sense of purpose. Read her inspiring story inside and see how your gifts made her transformation possible. Your partnership is truly a blessing.

SHEILA'S STORY & GOLF SAVE THE DATE

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80TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER RECAP

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PAUL'S PONDERINGS MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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	<b>Board of Directors</b>	Craig Henderson, <i>Chair</i> Chad Perce, <i>Vice-Chair</i> Kendall Spencer, <i>Finance</i> Doug Milne, <i>Secretary/Parliamentarian</i>		
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# SHEILA'S STORY

40 Years in the Wilderness

Sheila grew up in a home marked by divorce and insecurity. "That really damaged my heart," she says. Throughout her childhood, she longed for a stable family – one that gathered around the table, laughed together, shared stories, and encouraged one another. Instead, she wandered down a dark and lonely path.

Although separated by divorce, Sheila's parents did their best to provide for their children. They worked multiple jobs – at all hours of the day – to make ends meet. Sheila's older brother took her under his wing, making sure she was fed and combing her hair for school. He even taught her to iron.

But her brother's care was no substitute for her parents' guidance and attention. Without them, Sheila stumbled into habits that she didn't intend or understand.

By age 12, she was sneaking alcohol and cigarettes from her mother's dresser. What started as curiosity became a dangerous mechanism for coping with her loneliness and sense of abandonment. While Sheila's brother eventually became a pastor, her path took a very different turn. Sheila began living off the land as she struggled with substance abuse and homelessness. "I was out in the wilderness for nearly 40 years," she says. She encountered situations that could have ended her life, but she always felt God watching over her. "Somehow I left God, but He never left me." Her turning point came when she learned her mother had passed away. Sheila felt she'd lost the last fragile connection to the idea of home and family she'd longed for all her life.

Alone and lost – in a dark place physically, spiritually and emotionally – she felt God reaching out to her. "With my earthly parents gone," she says, "I turned back to my Heavenly Father."

With God's guidance, she made the decision to come to the Mission. Like many who make their way to our door, she arrived anxious and uncertain about what lay ahead.

"I'm not going to be able to do this," she thought at first. "This isn't for me." The structure and requirements seemed overwhelming. But through prayer and the loving guidance of staff, her heart slowly opened and her confidence grew in this stable, supportive environment.

As Sheila committed to our LifeBuilders Program, she felt the process – grounded in faith – was restoring what substance abuse and instability had taken from her. Through Bible study, Christian counseling, adult education and workforce development, she began rebuilding not just her future, but her sense of who she was meant to be.

"It taught me how to live as a woman again – to be diligent, wise and prepared. It taught me how to become the person God created me to be." Today, Sheila is clean, restored and filled with hope for the future. While she carries the ache of the family she never had, she no longer feels alone. Through her faith, she discovered a new kind of family in those who walked with her at the Mission.

Her prayer is that others still wandering in the wilderness will hear her story and realize there is a way out – a loving God who is ready to meet them there.

"City Rescue Mission helped give me back my life.

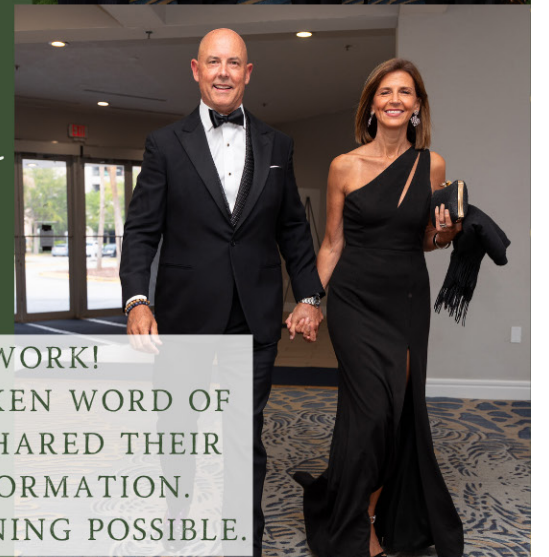
If it weren't for them – and God – I don't know where I'd be."



TO VIEW SHEILA'S STORY IN VIDEO, PLEASE USE THE QR CODE



80TH Anniversary Dinner



CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF MISSION WORK!  
THE EVENT FEATURED A TESTIMONIAL SPOKEN WORD OF CRM'S DRAMA TROUPE AND CHOIR. THEY SHARED THEIR REAL STORIES OF HARDSHIP AND TRANSFORMATION. THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS SPECIAL EVENING POSSIBLE.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS...

**TPC Sawgrass Ponte Vedra Beach** **Register Now** **August 31st, 2026** **Shotgun start at 11am**

Contact: Kelly Hight at (904) 421-5141

- David & Karen Eure
- Craig & Mellanie Henderson
- Michael & Elizabeth Overstreet
- Doug & Nora Milne
- Steve & Melanie DeSorbo
- Dr. & Mrs. Travis Smith
- Drs. Dennis & Karen McCarthy
- Mark Anderson
- Henry & Sue Turner
- Brian & Angel Andrew

426 McDuff Ave. S., Jacksonville, FL 32254 Phone (904) 387-HELP (4357) www.CRMJAX.org

PROVIDING HOPE, HEALING AND CHANGE SINCE 1946

CRM exists to transform the lives of those experiencing homelessness, hardships and addiction through the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.