

# Paul's Ponderings

It's a word our culture uses often, usually to urge people to adjust to shifting trends or "new realities." But Scripture calls believers to a very different kind of adaptation. Romans 12:2 reminds us that transformation begins not with outward conformity but with an inner renewal shaped by God's Spirit. The world pressures us to fit its mold, but God reshapes us into the likeness of Christ.



Paul Stasi  
Executive Director

Paul echoes this in 1 Corinthians 10:33, where he explains that he adapts, not for personal gain, but to remove barriers that keep people from experiencing the Gospel. True spiritual adaptability always serves others. It lowers walls. It opens doors.

## ADAPT

And nowhere do we see this more clearly than in Jesus Himself. Philippians 2:7-8 tells us that Christ left the glory of heaven, took on human flesh, embraced humility, and endured the cross. His willingness to adapt, not for comfort, but for our redemption, becomes the pattern for all Christian living.

At City Rescue Mission, we see this holy transformation every day. Men and women battling homelessness and addiction face enormous changes: new routines, new disciplines, new ways of thinking. Yet as their minds and hearts renew through God's Spirit, genuine adaptability springs up. Lives once broken by chaos begin to reflect clarity, hope, and purpose. Christlikeness takes root. Restoration begins.

Life's transitions are not interruptions to God's plan; they are the very places He forms us into who we were meant to be.

Thank you for making this work possible. Your generosity allows individuals in crisis to encounter the transforming power of Christ. Because of you, countless people are finding hope, healing, and the strength to truly adapt—God's way.



## 3 WAYS TO GIVE

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(904)-421-5161 426 McDuff Ave. S  
Jacksonville, FL 32254

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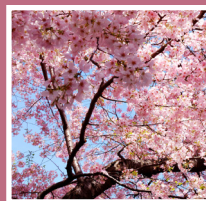


Online



### A LEGACY THAT BLOOMS

Every spring, millions of people attend the National Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C. There's a rich history behind this event with the trees at its center, marked by values that span generations.



As you read, consider your story and the legacy you'd like to leave behind. We've included reflection questions to inspire your thoughts.

This story begins with Generosity. In 1912, Tokyo donated 3,020 trees to Washington, D.C., as a gesture of goodwill to honor the growing relationship between the United States and Japan. That generosity had its roots in a small group of people who worked to generate interest in Japanese cherry trees by raising money, giving away saplings, and advocating with government officials. What causes are important to you?

Relationships are central to this history. Friendship between Japan and the U.S. motivated the original donation, as well as our government's thank-you gift of flowering dogwood trees to the people of Japan in 1915. Over the years, the cherry trees have continued to be symbols of goodwill, including Japan's gift of 250 new trees in honor of America's 250th birthday. What relationships have shaped who you are?

With relationships often comes the need for Reconciliation. After World War II, the National Park Service sent budwood from the original trees to restore trees in Tokyo that had fallen into decline during the war. In turn, Japan gave the U.S. a stone lantern as a rededication of friendship. The National Cherry Blossom Festival opens each year with the lighting of that lantern. How has the reconciliation you have through Christ changed your life?

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "The Gift That Keeps on Blooming" by contacting Monica Baker at (904) 421-5147 or mbaker@crmjax.org

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

City Rescue Mission is in need of the following:

- Women and Children Garden:
  - » Pavilion - \$8,000
  - » Two-Bay Post Swing Set - \$5,500
  - » (1) Pavilion table - \$1,250
  - » (12) Pavilion chairs - \$1,500
  - » (3) Pavilion side tables - \$750 social
  - » Fence - \$2,500
  - » Arbor - \$500
- Twin sized blankets (400)
- Twin sized white sheet sets (400)
- Bus Passes: Weekly - \$20 each, Monthly - \$65 each
- Clothing, shoes, and accessories for men, women, and children for the Thrift Store
- White towels (1,000) and white wash cloths (2,000)

FOLLOW US ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA



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



## Linda BEAUTY IN BROKENNESS

Linda spent years carrying unspoken pain, unanswered questions and a sense of abandonment. Addiction and homelessness followed. Then God turned her brokenness into beauty – here at City Rescue Mission. Through His love, Linda found grace, healing and peace she never thought possible. Today, she feels renewed and hopeful for her future. Inside, read more about how your gifts made her story possible.

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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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# LINDA'S STORY

## BEAUTY IN BROKENNESS

For much of her life, Linda carried deep wounds beneath a strong exterior. Family pain and unaddressed emotional trauma from childhood pushed her toward addiction and dangerous choices. But when she came to City Rescue Mission, Linda discovered something she had never fully known before – that brokenness isn't the end of her story.

Linda's childhood was shaped by both closeness and confusion. She grew up alongside siblings and cousins, yet she struggled with feelings of rejection. "My grandma hated me," she says plainly. Other relatives were cruel. Though she never understood why, she learned to keep painful questions to herself. Family matters were not discussed. Emotions were never explored. The only support she ever felt was from her mother.

When Linda was 12, her parents divorced. Her mother began struggling with substance abuse, and Linda watched as the woman who once cared for her slowly unraveled. "It felt like she just gave up." As Linda grew older and became a parent herself, she began to understand the weight her mother had carried. She found herself supporting her own family members – emotionally, physically and financially – while neglecting her own needs. Overwhelmed by responsibility and unprocessed emotions, she adopted her mother's destructive habits. While from the outside it appeared she was managing, on the inside she was falling apart. Her behavior placed her in increasingly dangerous situations, including homelessness. Then she faced a terrifying encounter where she feared for her life. "That was my rock bottom. I knew then, this is not me. I've got to get out." The hardest part was admitting the truth to her family. "They didn't see me as a mom or a sister anymore – just an addict. But I was still the same person. I was just sick. I didn't love myself."

Though Linda had always known God, fear and shame had kept her from fully surrendering her life to Him. But in her darkest moment, she cried out – and He answered. Through a connection with her church, Linda found her way to City Rescue Mission in Jacksonville. Linda arrived hurting, broken and full of unanswered questions. But she was ready to examine the pain she had buried for decades.

Like all guests in our LifeBuilders Program, Linda received Christ-centered counseling and case management. She took part in Bible study, adult education, life-skills and workforce development. Through our comprehensive ministry, she discovered the roots of her addiction and self-loathing. "It taught me to ask why – why I was hurting, what I was running from and where my wounds came from."

In our care, Linda found peace, healing and beauty in her brokenness – not because the past was erased, but because it led her to God. That grace has changed how Linda sees herself and others. While some relationships remain complicated, she's learning to live with acceptance and forgiveness.

Looking ahead, Linda plans to continue her education in nursing, become a licensed practical nurse (LPN) and build a future grounded in faith and purpose. And as she shares her story with others, she's no longer ashamed of her brokenness but strengthened by it.



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



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BREAKFAST

Our Volunteer Breakfast was a wonderful time celebrating the incredible people who give so generously of their time and heart. We are so grateful for our volunteers and the impact they make every day. Our mission wouldn't be the same without them.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?  
CONTACT OUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR AT  
(904) 387.4357 OR SHMACK@CRMJAX.ORG



# Easter Public Meal

A MEANINGFUL TIME OF SERVING AND CONNECTION, AS WE SHARED A WARM MEAL WITH THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY. THANKS TO GENEROUS SUPPORT, WE WERE ALSO ABLE TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL ITEMS LIKE HYGIENE SUPPLIES, CLOTHING, SOCKS, BIBLES, AND MORE.



# City Rescue Mission's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

May 07, 2026 | 6:00 pm  
Southbank Hotel Jacksonville Riverwalk  
1515 Prudential Dr  
Jacksonville, FL 32207

For inquires contact [crmdevelopment@crmjax.org](mailto:crmdevelopment@crmjax.org)