

March 2025

TARGET
DAYTON
MINISTRIES



PLEASE PRAY for the thousands of people bound in the chains of addiction in our city to find Christ and be set free!

CHAIN-BREAKING MISSION

Dear Friend,

For more than twenty-five years now, we've been on a mission to help homeless people break free of the chains of addiction and reclaim their lives through faith in Christ.

Mike Allen (pictured above) is one of the people we have helped to break free. Mike came into our ministry for the first time in 2004. At that time, he was homeless and addicted to crack cocaine. Today, he is my dearly loved friend, brother in Christ and a vital partner with me in this ministry!

Mike's story deeply touches my heart and reminds me of the life-changing importance of the ministry we do. It also helps me to feel real compassion for the hundreds of "Mikes" who come through our doors every day.

Before he became addicted to crack, Mike was a happily married man, with a nice house, a good job and a pretty normal life in the suburbs of Dayton. No one, including himself, would have ever imagined he would someday be a homeless drug addict.

But after he and his wife were introduced to crack cocaine, real demons of addiction took hold of him and... *continued >*





began to destroy his whole life. Over a period of several years, crack cocaine and it's demons robbed Mike of his wife, his home, his job and everything he owned!

Crack cocaine stripped him down and made him it's slave. It drove him to living on the streets of Dayton, suffering the inconceivable despairs and indignities of a homeless drug addict.

Mike lived in a tent or sometimes the homeless shelter for five long years, shivering through the nights, alone, hungry, hurting and struggling in vain to get free from his addiction.

Every time he used crack cocaine, he would hate himself and vow to never touch it again. But as soon as he got a few dollars from the plasma center or from some part-time work, he would go right back out and use again.

Mike found himself chained in the demonic cycle of addiction that so many homeless people suffer in every day! No matter how hard he tried, he could not go free from the powerful spiritual forces of evil that had taken him captive and had made him their slave! Can you imagine what that was like for him week after week, month after month, year after year *for five years of utter discouragement and defeat?*

But thank God, Mike finally rode one of our shuttle buses to Target Dayton for a free hot meal. Mike says, "I probably never would have stepped foot in a church. But I was hungry and I heard the food was pretty good!"



He usually chuckles when he says that. And while I chuckle with him, it reminds me of how important it is for us to serve "good food" and help people with their physical needs. Serving people good food is about so much more than relieving their hunger. It's about connecting with people, like Mike, so we can lead them to Christ and they can be saved and set free from their chains.

That hot meal we served Mike twenty years ago very really saved his life, because it brought him to a place he never would have come... where he met people he never would have otherwise met... where he found Jesus, whom he probably never would have otherwise found... and where Jesus broke his chains of addiction and set Him free!

I think maybe Jesus had people like Mike in mind when He said, "*I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me...*" (Matthew 25:35-36)

This morning, Mike and I met like we usually do during the week. We sang one of my favorite hymns and read a chapter in our Bibles. We shared our hearts with each other about what we read and we prayed together. And we both did some crying like we usually do.



Mike Allen was a homeless crack addict when he stepped through the doors of Target Dayton. He has been clean now for 18 years, and he drives a Target Dayton bus to bring other men to Christ.

And as we often do, we talked about how thankful we both are, with tears in our eyes, that Jesus broke our chains and set us free. It has been 18 years now since Mike surrendered his heart and life to Jesus, and Jesus broke his chains and set him free from his addiction.

We talked about how good it is to really know Christ's love in our hearts and have His Spirit dwelling in us to fill us with His love and joy and peace... and to be empowered by His Spirit to live in victory!



We talked about how amazing it is that Mike is a full-time staff member at Target Dayton! Every morning, in the rain, snow, or freezing temperatures, he faithfully drives our big red school bus across town to the men's homeless shelter to pick the men up and bring them to Target Dayton.

Mike talked about how hard he tries to have patience with the men when one of them behaves badly on the bus. And he feels badly when he loses his patience. He knows what they are going through.

I encouraged him, as I often do, that I see how patient and kind he is with the men. I told him, with tears in my eyes, how much I appreciate him and the vitally important ministry he does every day bringing men from the shelter to Target Dayton so they can find Jesus.



When I prayed at the end, I gave thanks to Jesus for changing Mike's life and for changing my life. And I asked God to strengthen Mike with His Spirit and use him to help people find Jesus today. And when Mike prayed, he asked God to help me write this newsletter in a way that would touch your heart. And then he prayed in such a heartfelt way for the people he brings to Target Dayton to be saved. And when we finished praying, he had tears in his eyes.

After Mike left my office, I sat and wept over the beauty of it all. *continued >*



Mike was a broken, homeless, drug addicted man on his way to hell when he stepped through our doors twenty years ago. Today, he is wonderfully saved and set free, and his heart bears the likeness of Christ's love.

What greater joy and reward for our mission can there be than to see people's lives changed like Mike's? And what greater witness can there be for the truth of the gospel and power of Christ than lives changed like Mike's?

Thank you for helping to make it possible!

Thousands of dear people, like Mike, are still bound in the demonic chains of addiction in our city! If you are not already a monthly supporter will you please pray about becoming one? Your monthly gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or even more will make it possible for us to continue our chain-breaking, life-changing ministry for the poor and homeless in our city.

It's easy to sign up to start giving today! Visit our website, scan the QR code, or simply use the enclosed donation form to donate by mail. Thank you for your heart to share the gospel with people who are bound in the chains of addiction so they can be set free!

Remember, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth. Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me!" (Matthew 25:40) Let's do more for Jesus in 2025!

Pastor Mark & Cindi ❤️

YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE!

Through your service & monthly support...

YOU BRING THE POOR: You give them a ride to get the help they need...

YOU FEED THE POOR: You feed them with free hot breakfast or dinner...

YOU CLOTHE THE POOR: You clothe them with shirts, socks, shoes, hats, gloves & coats...

YOU SAVE THE POOR: You preach the good news to them & they are saved...

YOU DISCIPLE THE POOR: You disciple them & give them a place to serve Christ...

OUR GIFT TO YOU! Receive a free Target Dayton T-shirt with John 3:7 emblazoned across the back when we hear from you this month! Show your support of Target Dayton and share Christ's word everywhere you go!

Did you know that you can make a secure gift online at TARGETDAYTON.COM or by scanning this code?



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P.O. Box 4636, Dayton, OH 45401
TARGETDAYTON.COM 937-223-3783