

MORNINGSTAR CHRONICLE

Good News About Changing Lives

EASTER 2021

"I Was in Shambles"

Your compassion helped Robert find recovery and a new start

Robert had a good job as a heavy equipment operator. He had his own home. He drank frequently, but didn't think it was a serious problem, calling himself "a functioning alcoholic."

He liked to keep to himself and wasn't very good at interacting with people. And when he tried, it didn't always go well.

*"God has a plan for me.
And MorningStar is helping
me discover it."*

But something happened one day that forced him to reach out to others.

"I wasn't feeling well," he remembers. "I thought I had the flu. But something came loose. I was shaking all over. I thought I was having a nervous breakdown. I was physically and emotionally in shambles."

He ended up in the hospital, and the numbers told the story. His blood sugar level was over 1,000. Robert was a diabetic . . . and didn't even know it.

He quickly realized that he needed to not only get his diabetes under control, but his entire life. His drinking. His antisocial tendencies. He needed help.



Thank you for helping
people like Robert experience
the new life of Easter!

Someone at the hospital gave him the phone number for MorningStar Mission. He called, and came right over.

"I didn't know I was signing up for a recovery program," he jokes today.

And thanks to the kindness of friends like you, Robert's recovery has been remarkable. He's a new man today, experiencing new life and an Easter-like

Continues on page 3

What's Inside:

"It Feels Good to Help Others" Page 2
Baskets of Love Page 3



A Note From Sandi

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!"*

— 2 Cor. 5:17

Dear Friend,

One of the great joys of working at a rescue mission is that you get to experience a taste of Easter all year round . . . and I'm not talking about chocolate bunnies and jelly beans! I'm talking about resurrection and new life . . . like the stories of Robert and Dawn in this edition of the *Chronicle*.

They're just two examples of the stories we see all the time here at MorningStar, stories of lives changed, of finding God, of emerging from darkness into life. Like Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth, "the new creation has come!"

These new creation stories wouldn't be possible without your support. Thank you, and happy Easter to you and your loved ones.

In His service,

Sandi Perzee
Executive Director



Gayle (left) and Janis join you in their passion for helping

"It Feels Good to Help Others"

Meet two of our most valuable volunteers

When Gayle became disabled, she didn't want to just sit at home with little to do. She was already volunteering for local animal shelters, fostering cats at home. But she wanted a connection a bit more human than feline.

In her drives around town, Gayle kept riding past MorningStar Mission. And she started to wonder . . .

"So I just stopped by and asked if they needed any help," she says. Sure enough, the Mission needed volunteers, so she signed up.

That was about three years ago. At about the same time, Janis was also seeking a place to volunteer. She dropped by MorningStar and was put to work almost immediately — for 6 a.m. breakfast duty the following Monday.

"I had thought I'd never want to set an alarm clock again, but I couldn't say no," Janis says. "And I've been doing Monday morning breakfast ever since."

Gayle and Janis didn't know each other when they both started volunteering at the Mission, but they've worked together so much over the last few years that they've become friends.

They're often joining forces to fold letters and stuff envelopes, oversee registration for special programs — including our Easter basket program (page 3) — and "anything else they need to be done," says Janis.

Both women find satisfaction in volunteering at the Mission — and, like you, are passionate about helping struggling neighbors turn their lives around.

"It feels good to help others," Janis says. "I was brought up on giving back."

"It's nice to be able to help those who need it," adds Gayle. "There was a point in my life where I needed help, and luckily there were people to help me. But that's not always the case with some people. People come to the Mission because they need help."

No one appreciates that help more than MorningStar COO Eloise Crabb.

"Their service means the world," says Crabb. "These two ladies, no matter what we ask, they will come and do it. I wish we had 4,000 more like them."

"And they've been great through this pandemic. They're here elbow to elbow with us almost every single day we're here. I can't say enough about them."

Thank you for serving on the same team as Gayle and Janis. We can't say enough about you either!

Baskets of Love

Your support helps to fill Easter baskets for local children

Because of the generosity of friends like you, hundreds of local children will soon receive festive Easter baskets filled with treats.

It's one small way to bless girls and boys whose families are struggling through a difficult time in life — and to ensure they're not left out of the fun.

We anticipate giving away hundreds of baskets again this year, helping to bring the joy of the holiday to children and their families.

Thank you for blessing children in this special way, filling their baskets with goodies and, especially, with a little extra love this holiday!

Please consider participating in the Easter basket giveaway this year, and help bring the joy of Easter to local children. Learn more at morningstarmission.org or by calling 815-722-5780. Thank you!



Hundreds of children will go home with smiles . . . and baskets of goodies and love!

Continued from page 1

"I Was in Shambles"

resurrection of his mind and soul.

Robert says that early in his recovery he embraced God's message in Jeremiah 29:11. "That verse says God has a plan for me," he says. "And MorningStar is helping me discover that plan."

Through counseling, Robert has started overcoming an old habit of bottling things up when dealing with life's challenges. He's learning the importance of fellowship and community . . . and that keeping to oneself can be unhealthy.

"I'm talking more," he says. "I'm not isolating as much as I used to. I'm reaching out to people, and I'm responding to people. I'm becoming more compassionate, patient and tolerant."

Robert has also learned the importance of surrounding himself with the right people — those who will encourage and uplift, and not those who might cause him to stumble or make bad decisions.

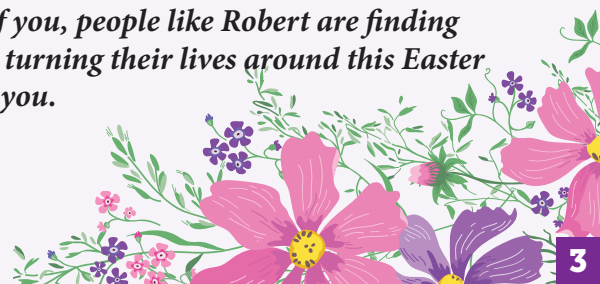
"I've taken an inventory of my life, including my friends," he says. "I've gone over the contacts in my



phone and accepted the fact that some of these numbers need to be deleted."

Robert is grateful for the kindness that you and others show by donating to MorningStar. "It's a blessing," he says. "Thank you!"

Because of you, people like Robert are finding God's love and turning their lives around this Easter season. Thank you.





"I Felt Like I Was Drowning"

You lifted Dawn up when she hit rock bottom

Dawn's life was falling apart, and she didn't see even a glimmer of hope ahead.

She had met a man online who seemed like a good guy at first, but turned out to be a manipulative abuser. He threatened to kill Dawn if she didn't send him money — and lots of it.

Feeling trapped and afraid, Dawn, who didn't earn much as a teacher's aide, made a really poor choice: She ended up stealing funds from her school district's employees union.

"It was really stupid," she says. "I ended up losing my job and going to jail."

Upon her release, she moved in with a friend . . . and into another abusive situation.

"She was hitting me and being mentally and verbally abusive," Dawn says. "I had to leave. At that moment, I was feeling very hopeless and helpless."

Jobless, broke and with no place to go, she spent that night in her car. The next morning, she walked through our doors at MorningStar.

"I was nervous, because of my background," she says. "I wondered if they'd even let me in."

We more than let her in. We embraced her with grace and made her feel at home. Since then, Dawn has begun to find her footing and turn things around. She's beginning to believe in second chances after all.

"I felt like I was drowning because I was so desperate," she says. "But I'm above water now. I'm not drowning anymore. I'm getting my feet on the ground and trying to move ahead. All thanks to MorningStar."

And thanks to you, of course! People like Dawn are grateful for your love and support!



"I'm not drowning anymore. I'm getting my feet on the ground, thanks to MorningStar."



✝ IN HONOR OF ✝

Bill Gunnoe — Ryan Hudek
Sang Han — Kristin Lee
Tom Hounihan — John Hounihan
Shirley Lambert — Thomas Lambert
Tony & Rebecca Martin — Cynthia Heath
Len Wettergren — Jon Wettergren
For the least of these — Bernard McGrath

✝ IN MEMORY OF ✝

Carol Brown — Rammie Spivey
Mary Caise — Janet Caise
Ron Cassineri — Christina Torres
Eleanor Coner — Andrew Humme
Patricia Davis-Oglesby — Karen Nebe
Rosemary Diamond — Mark & Maribeth Diamond
Hiro Failauga — Mark Failauga
Joan Flatt — Michael & Nancy Kelly
Pamela Horton — Bruce Horton
Violet Kavich — James Kavich
Eugene Klainsek — Georgette Vota
Grace Lai — Edward Lai
Genaro Morales — Alma Klein
George, Lucy & Joe Schmidberger — Georgette Vota
Mary Ann Sekura — Joe Sekura
Kathleen Szepelek — Carolyn Shaw
Kathleen Szepelek — Janet Yi
Kathleen Szepelek — Rosalind Bergman
Kathleen Szepelek — Douglas & Susan Olomon
Kathleen Szepelek — David Stelman
Kathleen Szepelek — Sharon Delgado
Kathleen Szepelek — Mr. & Mrs. Charles Fox
Gloria Walsh — Eileen Rico
Homer Warren — Susan Munguia
Carol Yunker — Mary Kay Maatman
Johnny — Charlene Kocik

I WANT TO TRANSFORM LIVES THIS EASTER SEASON



Yes! I want to bring help and hope to neighbors in need this Easter and all year long.

Enclosed is my heartfelt gift of:

- ☐ \$19.84 to provide 8 meals and other assistance.
☐ \$32.24 to provide 13 meals and other assistance.
☐ \$64.48 to provide 26 meals and other assistance.
☐ \$_____ to provide as much care as possible.

Please mail this completed form and return it with your generous donation.
Please make your check payable to MorningStar Mission.
To donate online, visit MorningStarMission.org.
Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.

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