



TESTIMONY AT THE DOWNTOWN HOPE CENTER

Against All Odds - There are those who apply to the Feed Me Hope program who never really intend to complete it, but they have good intentions. For many, it is the attempt to complete just one thing in their life. A woman by the name of Janie was a guest in the Hope Center Women's Shelter on numerous occasions over the years. When not living in the shelter, she was usually with her sweetheart of 20 years surviving on Anchorage streets. She and "her honey" have been together, on and off, as a couple from 2002. Janie's "honey's" name is Ignatius. Janie has loved God and wanted a deeper relationship with Him but the years of life on the street held her captive in drug and alcohol addiction. Janie and Ignatius had enrolled in the Feed Me Hope Culinary program, multiple times, only to drop out. The desire was present to have a successful life but the ability to make it happen was not.

Being a Life Skills Coach and having other duty assignments, including security during the lunchtime meal service, has put me in close proximity to both Ignatius and Janie for the past few years. I have had a close-up view of the ups and downs of this couple as have many others on the Hope Center staff. I have vivid recall of many conversations with both Ignatius and Janie reaching out for help in their daily struggles. The grief and shame of failing over and over would send them into a place of hiding, places where only others who were experiencing the same pain would understand.

On July 16th everything changed! The Hope Center, Executive Director, Sherrie Laurie was on her way to the Sean Feucht outdoor worship concert at Cuddy Park. Sherrie saw Ignatius and Janie on the street as she was leaving to go to the concert. Feeling prompted by the Holy Spirit, she invited the two of them to ride with her to the worship event, praying for a miracle to take place. It certainly did that night. In the midst of loud praise music, an invitation was given for anyone wanting a relationship with Jesus Christ to move towards the platform to receive prayer. There was a bold declaration, by the speaker, to those coming forward to get rid of anything representing addictions on the floor of the stage. With tears running down their faces and abandonment in their hearts, they responded to the invitation for a transformed life. They left the only life they knew at the park altar that day. They walked away with a hope not explainable and in awe of what just happened. The power they longed for in their life was now present to heal and change them. This was the first day of their life transformation.

Here we are, now four weeks later... Ignatius and Janie are officially husband and wife. Both are clean and sober with no residual effect of their lifelong addiction lifestyle. They have a lovely home to live in while going through the sixteen-week culinary program. Ignatius has become the class leader. Every morning he spontaneously shares his devotional with the class and preaches to the other students what he is learning from his Bible Studies and what God is speaking to him. Several days a week he and Janie are on the front steps of the Hope Center sharing their transformation story to all gathered to line up for shower and clean clothes.



Ignatius and Janie feel very called and committed to impact the homeless population with the Good News of Jesus Christ. This story is the fruit of all those who tirelessly give of their time, talent and treasure at the Downtown Hope Center. "Hope Restored, Hearts Renewed and Lives Transformed." This is the reason we are here!



WELCOME TO THE TEAM

OPPORTUNITY TO PARTNER

Downtown Hope Center has developed close relationships with many of our guests and has had the honor of listening to and caring for the women while they share their stories of abuse and the difficulties of breaking free from their abusers. It has impacted their ability to feel comfortable in the traditional paths to housing utilized by the city. Oftentimes they find themselves back in shelter after they had been placed in housing. We have found it is an important transition that takes time and healing in a safe environment, with people they trust who offer good counsel as they reintegrate into society. With this in mind, and the need of housing for our homeless guests, DHC has the opportunity to purchase a nearby hotel at a very reasonable rate. This would afford our guests and students safe housing while they participate in job skill training and receive recovery & trauma counseling services. Residents would be eligible to maintain this secure housing for one year while they walk out their life transformation.

The vision is to purchase the Uptown Suites, located on 2nd Ave, between Barrow and Cordova Streets. Uptown Suites is an 18-unit complex of nicely furnished units. We plan to convert the hotel into double occupancy units providing housing for 36 women. Each unit will house women who are former guests of DHC, who are enrolled in, or graduates of, our 'Feed Me Hope' Culinary program. Residents must attend trauma counseling and maintain their sobriety.

For these plans to become reality will require approximately \$1.6 million (50% of market value). The 2018 assessed value was \$2,726,900.00. Downtown Hope Center already has a commitment from a foundation to fund two years of operating expenses plus a case manager for the project.

We have offered a letter of intent to purchase and are now in the process of seeking partners willing to join Downtown Hope Center in investing in an opportunity to offer our students, and women who have suffered so greatly, a safe place to rest as their Hope is restored, their Hearts are Renewed and their lives have the opportunity for Transformation. Thank you for your consideration, we appreciate your participation and investment in the community of Anchorage.

FEED ME HOPE FOOD TRUCK

This year our Feed Me Hope Food Truck has been making it's appearance at the Farmers Market off of 15th and Cordova every Saturday at 9 AM. Our students in our bakery program bake homemade cookies and pastries and when their not in the kitchen baking they are selling their yummy baked goods at events like Spenard Bike Week hosted at House of Harley. Having this Food Truck teaches our students business skills and customer service training; all proceeds are put back into the program that enables young women to gain confidence and skill before they enter the working world again. Follow our Food Truck on Facebook @feedmehopetruck



Farmers Market



Bike Week at House of Harley

COACHES CORNER


The pictures of Class 26 hang on the second floor, Wall of Fame, at the Downtown Hope Center. Sixteen weeks just zip by. This class represents over 160 graduates of the Feed Me Hope program. How honored we all feel to be part of these precious student's lives.



Each class is distinctly different in every way. This class with Katrina (Kat,) Kay and Ellie Mae will always stand out as the example of what true teamwork looks like. Every day in class there was laughter and tears. Tears from a broken heart and from the deep workings of the Holy Spirit. The loving nudges with laughter towards each others testimony to a deeply committed relationship they hold with each other. These women have made a very deliberate effort to pay attention to the welfare of their bakery comrades. They excelled in producing yummy pastries, all of which needed to be tasted before being distributed to customers around our city or being part of the dinner menu for the Women's Shelter. Thank you Chef Tia and Daja for your excellent knowledge and training!

All of our staff feel so humbled to hear of their life stories and to observe these ladies make choices that will catapult them into the abundance of Gods favor in the days and years to come. Two of the three women remain in our first Tier 3. They continue to create tantalizing treats for the Food Truck that rolls out to the Street Markets on weekends. They continue in the Life Skills class, eager to grow in their faith and allow God to continue renewing and renovating their hearts. Their class name and motto is, "Three Bakateers | Spiritually driven to succeed in life" Succeeding they are...Hope Restored, Hearts Renewed, LIVES TRANSFORMED!

Richard Irwin | Feed Me Hope Director



COLD WEATHER DRIVE

DROP OFF M-F | 9AM-4PM
WE NEED WINTER CLOTHES
TO GIVE TO OUR GUESTS



Donation drop off is off of Cordova in our gravel parking-lot. Please do not donate as we serve lunch between 12-1:30PM.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD MEMBER

Thank you for your support! Because of your time, donations and prayers, the Downtown Hope Center continues to hand out food and clothing to anyone in need and provide shelter for women experiencing homelessness and trauma - and showing the love of Christ through it all!

Because of your support we need not rely on government funding which means we can freely share the gospel of Jesus Christ to all those we serve. And did we serve! In July 2021, we handed out over 12,000 soups and sandwiches, gave clothing, showers and laundry service to over 600 people and provided shelter, food, showers and laundry service to 50+ women every night.

This is how together we joyfully obey the command of Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:35-36 "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you took me in, I was naked and you gave me clothing." Thank you and God Bless You!

Kathy Braun | Board Treasurer

downtown soup kitchen



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