JAMES ISN'T RUNNING ON EMPTY ANYMORE

“I haven’t had hope in a long time.”
"I’VE ALWAYS HAD A HEART OF SERVICE AND I’D BEEN LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES," says Angie. That’s why she felt compelled to double back when she passed Bread of Life Mission while walking in Pioneer Square one day.

Angie signed on as our women’s clothing distribution supervisor and soon discovered that the role had a very personal aspect. “Sometimes they’re very closed off and don’t want to talk,” Angie says of her clientele. “Sometimes they’re very forthcoming and excited to see you and chat.” While the women’s stories may be difficult to hear, Angie takes it in stride as part of her job.

FOR THE WOMEN SHE CONSIDERS HER “REGULARS,” Angie tells us, “This is a place that’s always there for them. They know they can come once a week and that it’s a judgment-free zone. It’s a safe space for guests to just relax a little and feel normal as they’re shopping.”

Angie explains how the “shopping” works. “If it’s a woman’s first time coming in and she’s starting from nothing, there’s some leeway to give her a bit of a wardrobe. For our regulars who come each week, we have a two-item limit per type of clothing. Two jackets, two sweaters, two pairs of pants, et cetera.” Hygiene products, bras and underwear are also much in demand.

VOLUNTEERING AT BREAD OF LIFE ISN’T ANGIE’S ONLY CONTRIBUTION TO OUR COMMUNITY. She works as a surgical tech at University of Washington Medical Center and serves in the United States Army Reserves as a surgical tech and operating room specialist. “I’m passionate about service,” Angie says, and we’re very grateful for her passion!

A U.S. Army Reservist, Angie says, “I was already an emergency medical technician and I wanted to do more.”
When James arrived in Seattle, he had $400 in his pocket, nowhere to stay and a lifetime of loss and disappointment behind him.

Since college, James admits, “I was drunk all the time.” Alcohol had helped to numb the pain of losing family members, especially his mother, but it also cost him his career, his marriage and finally, his home. James had roamed from state to state, working whenever he could, until he threw a dart at a map and hit Seattle.

At first, that random choice seemed very promising. James found a job and moved into an apartment. In time, however, he found that he couldn’t pay his rent and the cycle of homelessness began again.

“I was living in my car,” James recalls. “I was in such a mess, I couldn’t even face going in and doing day labor. I didn’t want anybody to see me. I had no money, no food to speak of. I hadn’t taken a shower in probably four or five days. The last shower I had was a gallon jug of water over my head. That’s no way to live.”

His gas gauge on empty, James abandoned his car and made his way to Bread of Life Mission. “This is the first time in my life, probably since I’ve been a teenager, that I don’t think about drinking at all,” he tells us.

“God will find a place for me.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

—Romans 15:13

James’s very best days are still ahead of him.

AFTER EIGHT MONTHS AS A RESIDENT IN OUR LIFECHANGE PROGRAM, James says, “God will find a place for me. I’m very intent on getting back to work.” With experience in landscaping, agriculture, mail handling, food prep and more, that shouldn’t be difficult.

The hardest thing James deals with now is “accepting being happy. I still have my issues, but my worst days here are better than my best days before this.” Thanks to you, James’s very best days are still ahead of him!
We have a few spots left. This is one of our favorite days of the year!

Join us and help serve 650 BBQ meals! This is our 11th Memorial Day BBQ, and our largest Pioneer Square community celebration. The event opens with prayer and gratitude. Together with volunteers, staff, residents and our homeless community we take time to thank our Veterans for their service.

MAKE THIS MEMORIAL DAY ONE TO REMEMBER

Monday, May 27, 2019, 12:00 p.m.

With your support, our homeless community will have hope, healing and a chance to connect with life-changing services.

✓ $52  Provides 25 hot meals
✓ $150  Provides meals and overnight shelter for one week
✓ $490  Provides one week of LifeChange Recovery Counseling

Please donate by mail, or online at breadoflifemission.org.

Thank you!