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Your twice-a-month e-newsletter from AGRM

Useful news and information for association members

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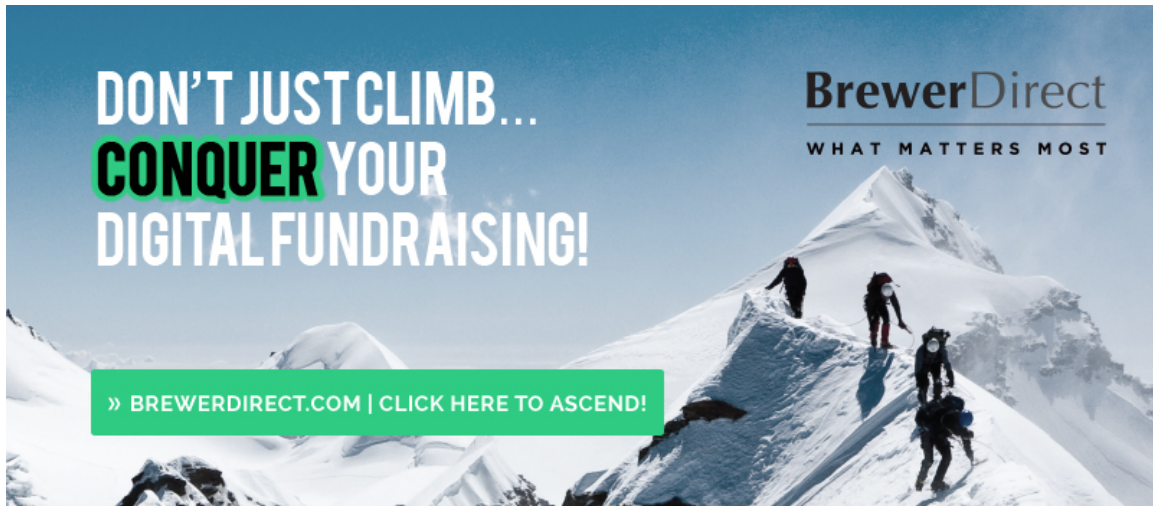
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**ourstreet**  
News from AGRM and our members

### 2017 Annual Convention Includes Unique Features

Don't miss out! Hundreds have already registered for AGRM's convention in Dallas, which will be held May 31–June 3. Make sure you take part in this most important event of the year for rescue ministry professionals!

#### Features:

- **New CEOs Immersion Course:** Those just starting out in their role as a rescue mission CEO (e.g., executive director, president, etc.)—or those needing a relevant refresher—can get the tools to be abundantly successful through this four-hour intensive workshop.
- **Interactive Prayer Room:** At various stations, Scripture will be brought to life using art, music, illustrations, and other elements.
- **TED-Talk Style Speakers at General Sessions:** Some of our general sessions will have two 20-minute, Bible-based presentations (rather than one 40-minute speaker) dealing with pertinent issues relevant to culture, current events, or rescue mission ministry.
- **Chaplain Homilies:** Brief video devotionals from a number of rescue mission chaplains focusing on the convention theme, Strong Tower.
- **Mission Tours:** Transportation and formal tours to four of our member facilities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

- **Worship Time:** One of our general sessions will concentrate almost entirely on worship, utilizing music, Bible readings, and testimonies to draw us closer together and closer to our heavenly Father.
- **Chisholm Trail Dinner:** Enjoy a cattle-drive style chuck-wagon dinner in our Exhibit Hall—a fun atmosphere with some great music and grub.

For all the details on these and other aspects of this important event and to register, head to [www.agrm.org/convention](http://www.agrm.org/convention).

### **Big Membership Announcement Coming May 1**

We're sure that all member rescue missions will give a big thumbs up to the news we will be disclosing on May Day. Whether your mission is small or large, it will benefit in a big way from the changes that will be coming in a few months. We'll share a bit more in the next issue of *Street Smart*.

### **Mark P. Fisher Makes a Role Shift**

Friday was the last day for Mark P. Fisher to serve as the association's contracted Strategic Initiative Architect. His departure date was actually set by AGRM six months ago.

Mark will continue to work as an independent consultant, based out of his home in Elkton, Maryland. Interestingly, one of his clients will be Pure Flix (a connection he made while with AGRM), and his primary assignment with Pure Flix will be to make it easy for AGRM member missions to engage with and get the most benefit from the movie *Same Kind of Different as Me* (opening in theaters October 20 of this year). In other words, Mark will still be connected to AGRM and its members for another seven months, at least. You will undoubtedly see Mark at AGRM's upcoming convention in Dallas.

### **2018 Ripple Effect Program to Expand Eastward**

Thanks to a first-time grant from a historic foundation, AGRM's nine-month Ripple Effect Board Acceleration Program will expand to the East Coast, along with another cohort continuing to meet in the Pacific Northwest.

Ideas where the program should expand? Interested in participating? Please contact Special Services Assistant Beth Hall at [bhall@agrm.org](mailto:bhall@agrm.org). Need additional information about Ripple Effect? Just visit [www.agrm.org/rippleeffect](http://www.agrm.org/rippleeffect).

### **Dates Set for All Fall District Conferences**

Locations and dates are in place for all of AGRM's fall district conferences. Watch for more information in coming weeks.

September 18–20: **Bluegrass District Conference**, Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, North Carolina

September 19–21: **Northern Lights District Conference**, Hilton Toronto Airport, Mississauga, Ontario

September 20–22: **Sierra District Conference**, DoubleTree Los Angeles, Commerce, California

September 26–28: **Deep South District Conference**, Camp Weed, Live Oak, Florida

September 26–28: **Heartland District Conference**, The Magnolia Hotel, Omaha, Nebraska

September 27–29: **Great Lakes District Conference**, Q Center, St. Charles, Illinois

October 2–4: **Liberty District Conference**, Spruce Lake, Canadensis, Pennsylvania

October 4–6: **Evergreen District Conference**, Union Gospel Mission (Spokane) - Center for Women and Children, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

October 10–12: **Rawhide District Conference**, Hampton Inn and Suites/Mesquite Convention Center, Mesquite, Texas

This is the earliest all of the dates and locations have been set, so make sure to get your district's event and dates on your calendar.

### **Pine Ridge Update: Nebraska Liquor Commission Meets Friday**

This Friday, April 7, the Nebraska Liquor Commission will hold a public hearing to hear from residents of Whiteclay, Nebraska, and local and national activists regarding why the commission should not renew the liquor licenses of four beer store owners; for decades, these four stores have sold more than 3 million cans of beer yearly to Pine Ridge residents. Attorneys for the beer store owners will also present their case for renewal of the licenses.

At the end of the hearing the Commission will make its decision to either renew the licenses or to deny the licenses and end the sale of beer in Whiteclay for the foreseeable future.

AGRM member mission Lakota Hope Ministries continues to lead the charge for the removal of the beer stores. Please pray with us for God's will to be done on April 7. For more information and to join in the fight to transform Whiteclay and Pine Ridge, please visit the website of the newly formed Whiteclay Redevelopment organization at [www.whiteclayredo.com](http://www.whiteclayredo.com).

### **Entry Deadline Approaches for Media Innovation Competition**

You can still enter AGRM's 2017 Media Innovation Competition, but the deadline is April 15. Please submit your mission's best work in the following categories: annual report, general brochure, newsletter/magazine, website, PSA/commercial, extended video, social media, logo, and photo. AGRM will honor winners at the 2017 annual convention in Dallas, Texas.

Independent professionals working in the fields of the award categories will again judge the competition. Start the entry process by visiting the competition's main page at [www.agrm.org/MIC](http://www.agrm.org/MIC).

## **Baylor Case Study on Homelessness Available Online and in Print**

AGRM has secured a limited number of bound copies of the case study of homeless services in 11 cities conducted by the Baylor Institute for the Studies of Religion. While you can download a PDF of the [full case study](#) from the ISR site, the bound copies of the 140-plus-page book might be more suitable for presenting to public officials or key donors. To order, contact Executive Assistant Christine Matos at [cmatos@agrm.org](mailto:cmatos@agrm.org). The cost is \$2.00 per book, plus shipping and handling.

AGRM member missions participated in the study in the 11 cities. You can also read some of the key findings by clicking [here](#).

## **Continue to Lift Up AGRM Convention in Prayer**

Please continue to be in prayer ahead of AGRM's 2017 Annual Convention in Dallas, May 31–June 3. As we draw closer to the event, we want to ask God to fortify our ministries, prepare our hearts, and undergird this gathering. You can join with others praying for the event by participating in 90 Days of Prayer. The [calendar page](#) on AGRM's website will guide you each day. The prayers focus on the convention theme, the ministry of AGRM's members in the Dallas area, the staff and board of AGRM, leaders and businesses in the city of Dallas, those on the frontlines of mission ministry across North America, and the people served by rescue missions, as well as the convention itself.

Just jump in on the current date, or double up on the requests until you catch up.

## **Petition HUD to Support Sobriety Programs for Homeless Individuals**

This is a reminder that the California organization, Solutions for Change, is behind a drive to communicate to Federal lawmakers the fact that sobriety is a critical step in getting homeless people going in the right direction. The goal is to stop penalizing programs, particularly those by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, that focus on sobriety.

Rescue missions still have opportunity to weigh in. If you would like to go on record saying that you believe breaking addictions is an important step in the journey to end homelessness, click here to sign the [online petition](#).

## **Looking Down the Street...**

- Please welcome into AGRM membership **Rockingham Rescue Mission** (Eden, North Carolina). [L. Torrey Easler](#) serves as executive director.
- Please also welcome into membership **Outreach Gospel Mission** (Brookings, Oregon), where [Craig Graber](#) serves as executive director.
- Carol Bernstein is serving as interim executive director at **Westminster Rescue Mission** (Westminster, Maryland).
- Jason Quintrell has been named the executive director at **Union Mission Ministries, Inc.** (Charleston, West Virginia) starting April 3. Current CEO Rex Whiteman will transition to "emeritus" status for one year while Jason takes over; Rex will also

continue to head up AGRM's Certification Program for another year.

- **Mel Trotter Ministries** (Grand Rapids, Michigan) has announced the opening of a supportive housing unit for young men, ages 18–24, who are experiencing homelessness. The Youth House will provide additional housing opportunities for the growing and vulnerable youth homeless population in the greater Grand Rapids area, with a supportive, community environment for young men to build the foundation for independent living. The Youth House officially opens to tenants today, April 3.
- Please welcome AGRM's newest business members: **TrueSense Marketing** (Freedom, Pennsylvania); **Jeff Nickel**, senior vice president of client development serves as AGRM's main contact. And **Sky Footwear** (Bloomington, Indiana); contact co-founder **Keaton Hendricks** for more information.



### **AGRM Member Benefit: Annual Convention**

With web pages, emails, printed brochures, special mailings, and announcements in *Street Smart*, you have probably heard that AGRM has an annual convention coming up! This event is an important member benefit, put together annually just for rescue ministry professionals.

Every year, AGRM's convention includes seminars and ongoing discussions about new regulations, new strategies, and new opportunities that help mission staff members refocus and redirect their efforts in ways that really pay off. At the convention, you will realize anew that you are part of a huge network of people who have similar motivations, goals, and struggles—and you'll feel a camaraderie that will catapult you forward. What's more, the messages, devotionals, worship, and prayer times with ministry peers bring the personal revival you need in order to keep going strong.

The 2017 Annual Convention is May 31–June 3; to learn more about this can't-miss event, visit [www.agrm.org/convention](http://www.agrm.org/convention).



### **“Deaths of Despair” on the Rise among White Americans**

In the U.S., death rates for middle-aged, white, working-class Americans are bucking a global trend. Instead of falling as treatments for killers like heart disease and cancer improve, death rates for white Americans without a college degree are on the rise, largely driven by increased rates of drug overdose, suicide, and alcohol use, [reports](#) NPR's *Business Insider*.

Death rates from drug overdose, suicide, and alcohol-related liver disease have risen for non-Hispanic white men and women without college degrees between the ages of 25 and 64.

But the alarming rise was not caused by an income issue, since the mortality rates of black and Hispanic Americans with similar income profiles are falling. Researchers suggest that one possible reason this cycle of despair has hit these white cohorts (and not Americans of color) is that life used to be easier for non-college educated white Americans—something that wasn't historically the case for black or Hispanic Americans. However, it's no longer possible for this demographic to improve their fortunes with a blue-collar job, and the disappearance of that steady employment has caused despair to rise over time.

The study authors note that because this problem has built up over time, there's no easy solution. However, they suggest that controlling the spread of opioid painkillers would make a big difference, as could building better social safety nets for mothers with children.

### **Kindergartner Feeds Homeless People for Her Birthday**

One Chicago kindergartner wanted to feed homeless folks instead of having a birthday party, [reports](#)ABC News.

Armani Crews, who turned 6 earlier this month, had been begging her parents to feed homeless people in her community, but her parents thought she was joking. Even when her father, Antoine, informed her that if she wanted to go through with this, she wouldn't get a birthday gift, the girl, whose birthday was March 5, persisted. So the Chicago family spent about \$300 buying food to deliver to homeless people in the city's East Garfield Park neighborhood. After Armani mentioned her plan at the family's local church, congregation members donated other items to create care packages. Each care package included a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, hand sanitizer, and a snack.

Armani's birthday party was a success, with the family feeding more than 125 people who gathered. Now the 6-year-old wants to host another community meal for homeless individuals. Her mother said the family plans to return to the park “within the next couple of weeks.”

### **New Painkiller Won't Get Users High**

A handful of companies are focused on creating an entirely new type of painkiller — one that won't get people hooked. One of those companies is currently studying a new drug candidate that enters the brain too slowly to cause the feelings of euphoria that many painkillers are known for, [reports](#)*Business Insider*.

While drugs like oxycodone are excellent at reducing pain, they can also produce powerful feel-good sensations that can be addictive. But the new painkiller, which is still in clinical trials, seems to not cause any such high.

And the new drug, called NKTR-181, apparently works. The results of a new study designed to look at how well the drug relieves chronic low-back pain had very positive findings. More than half of the patients who took it said their pain decreased.



## **Heroin Use and Addiction Increases Significantly**

Heroin use has risen five-fold in the past decade and dependence on the drug has more than tripled in the U.S., with the biggest jumps among whites and men with low incomes and little education, [reports](#) Fox News.

Whites aged 18 to 44 accounted for the biggest rise in heroin addiction, which has been fueled in part by the misuse of opioid prescription drugs. Heroin use, which includes those who have tried the drug but not become dependent on it, and addiction also rose more among unmarried adults. Although a jump was seen among women, it was not as prominent as for men. The researchers found no differences in heroin use or addiction among the major regions of the country.

The findings, published online in the journal *JAMA Psychiatry*, followed a statement from the American College of Physicians calling for drug addiction and substance abuse disorders to be treated as a chronic medical condition like diabetes or hypertension.

## **Does Work Make You Happy?**

In a recent chapter of the World Happiness Report. Researchers looked more closely at the relationship between work and happiness, [reports](#) the *Harvard Business Review*.

The study looked at 11 broad job types, including being a business owner, office worker, or manager, and working in farming, construction, mining, or transport.

People working blue-collar jobs reported lower levels of overall happiness. People who categorized themselves as managers, executives, officials, or professional workers evaluate the quality of their lives at 6 out of 10, whereas people working in farming, fishing, or forestry evaluate their lives around 4.5 out of 10 on average.

In most developed nations, researchers found that being self-employed was associated both with higher overall life evaluation but yet with more negative, daily emotions such as stress and worry.

One of the most robust findings in the economics of happiness is that unemployment is destructive to people's well being. Individuals who are unemployed also reported around 30 percent more negative emotional experiences in their day-to-day lives.

## **Americans Worry More About Hunger, Homelessness**

Over the past two years, an average of 67 percent of lower-income U.S. adults have worried "a great deal" about facing the problem of hunger and homelessness. That's up from 51 percent in 2010–2011, Concern has also increased among middle- and upper-income Americans, but they still worry far less than lower-income Americans do, [reports](#) *The Financial*.



Since 2001, worry has been highest among those residing in lower-income households, likely because those with limited financial resources are more at risk of going hungry or becoming homeless. A consistent majority of lower-income adults worried about the problem before 2012, but that has only increased in the past five years.

Overall, 47 percent of Americans (of every income level) now worry about hunger and homelessness "a great deal," according to the survey. This matches 2016 as the high in the trend. Previously, concern had been as low as 35 percent in 2004 and as high as 45 percent in 2001, the first year pollsters asked the question.



*The following job positions are currently open at AGRM member missions. Please visit [www.agrm.org/careers](http://www.agrm.org/careers) to view full descriptions and to apply. Click [here](#) for instructions on using AGRM's Recruiting Center to post open positions for your mission.*

**Accounting Assistant:** Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

**Assistant Director:** Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

**Care Support Specialist:** Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

**Case Manager, Men's Ministries:** Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

**Casework Services Supervisor:** The City Mission, Cleveland, OH

**Chief Financial Officer:** Yakima Union Gospel Mission, Yakima, WA

**Cook:** Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

**Counselor, Men's Ministries:** Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

**Development Associate:** The Path of Citrus County, Beverly Hills, FL

**Development Director:** Winston-Salem Rescue Mission, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC

**Director of Development:** Rockford Rescue Mission Ministries, Inc., Rockford, IL

**Director of Development:** Union Gospel Mission of Salem, Salem OR

**Director of Emergency Services:** Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO

**Driver, Food Pantry & Distribution Center:** Bay Area Rescue Mission, Richmond, CA

**Executive Director:** Union Gospel Mission of Missoula, Missoula, MT

**Health and Wellness Center Director:** San Francisco Rescue Mission, San Francisco, CA

**HR Manager:** Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

**Human Resources Manager:** Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

**Manager, Volunteer Services:** Union Rescue Mission, Los Angeles, CA  
**Ministry Director:** Campus of Hope Rescue Mission, Conroe, TX  
**Overnight Supervisor:** Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI  
**Program Director/Associate Director:** King's Gospel Mission, Hanford, CA  
**Recovery Program Coordinator:** Westminster Rescue Mission, Westminster, MD  
**Regional Representative:** The Merriam Agency, Schenectady, NY  
**Resident Advisors:** Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI  
**Resident Assistant, Center for Women & Children:** Bay Area Rescue Mission, Richmond, CA  
**Residential Coordinator\_Cornerstone Manor Facility:** Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY  
**Shelter Desk Manager:** Jericho Road Ministries, Inc., Brooksville, FL  
**Sous Chef:** Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE  
**Thrift Store Supervisor:** Central Coast Super Thrift, Santa Maria, CA  
**Transitional Programs Case Manager, Part-Time :** Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA  
**Vice President for People and Culture:** Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA  
**VP of Advancement :**Water Street Ministries, Lancaster, PA



## Walking in Faith

*But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:30–31).*

We have all dreamed of doing something great for God. Our dreams might involve some form of sacrifice or great leap of faith. We see others around us who have sold everything to follow Jesus as missionaries in some far corner of the world and view them as people of great faith. We might even aspire to be like them.

Consider this: If we had been sitting in that boat with Peter, we would have thought he was brimming with faith as he began to climb out of the boat and walk toward Jesus. But suddenly, something even stranger happened and Peter began to sink. That courage and faith he had in Jesus got smaller as he saw the wind and the waves get bigger.

A true measure of a person's faith, then, is not just the first step of their faith journey, but also the subsequent steps thereafter. We deal with this every time we get excited about something, starting any given project only to stop halfway through because it was much

more difficult than anticipated. The same thing happens when we believe Jesus would have us do something. We start doing it and it doesn't turn out like we thought it would, or the ministry isn't immediately growing, so we begin to sink, losing faith in and sight of Jesus. We need to realize that if Jesus has called us to make a first step, then He will provide a path for each step toward Him after that.

Where is Jesus calling you to walk in faith?

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To contribute: If you would like to write a devotional thought for StreetLight, please make it about 200 words and include at least one Bible verse or passage, and submit via [email](#).

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