



# GOOD NEIGHBORS

Restoring Lives Together in Western New York



**“WHERE I’M MEANT TO BE”**

Yvonne says moving into a homeless shelter wasn’t rock bottom, but a place to bounce back. See how your kindness helped her turn things around.

**Buffalo City Mission**  
Restoring Lives Since 1917

**HOLIDAY 2025**

**A Season of New Beginnings:  
Meet Our New CEO**

For more information: (716) 854-8181, ext. 429 • BuffaloCityMission.org

A Message from  
Mark R. Jentsch

## Excited & Humbled

I am excited and humbled to step into the role of CEO at the Buffalo City Mission, and I look forward to getting to know many of you in the years ahead.

Marilyn Forcucci has stewarded the CEO position on an interim basis very well and I am grateful. I look forward to working side by side with Marilyn in her new role as Executive Director. (Learn more on page 4.)

Side by side. That's a good way to describe our relationship with you. We couldn't do our work without you coming alongside us with your compassionate support.

You bring life to Buffalo's slogan as the City of Good Neighbors. Because of you, that's more than a mere motto. You breathe life into our community, and show justice and mercy to the most vulnerable among us ... like Yvonne, who found hope and healing under our roof after a very traumatic past.

**Those stories don't happen without you. I want you to know that you are central to what we're doing at the Mission, and I am very grateful. Thank you!**



Mark Jentsch  
Chief Executive Officer

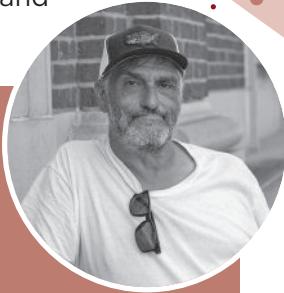
***"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."***

***- Micah 6:8***

## Season of Thanks Messages from the Mission

Thanks to your generosity, guests experienced warmth, nourishment, and hope this holiday season.

Chuck was incredibly grateful for compassionate donors like you who provided three meals a day, safe shelter, and Christian-based programming to help him get back on his feet with renewed hope.



***"It's a blessing to be here," he says. "They help people here. They've helped me turn things around. I've been reborn, and I'm very thankful."***



Through your generosity during the holiday season, you brought lasting change to women on their journey of recovery and renewal — just like Montanna, who found new life and rock-solid hope for her future.

***"Here, they gave me a list of God's promises and gifts. This is a path I can go on. I've reconnected with God and with the community here, and it's just amazing. They're so supportive here, and I feel so safe. I can't put into words the hope that this place has given me."***

Your kindness also gave neighbors like Ranko, a refugee from war-torn Croatia, a chance to heal after serious health challenges and financial hardship. Following months in the hospital and depleted savings, Ranko found comfort and care at Buffalo City Mission's Recuperative Care Unit — thanks to donors like you.



***"I can't believe this place exists. It's unbelievable. Thank you!"***



## Exactly Where I'm Meant to Be!

***“Nothing but good things have happened since I’ve been here.”***

**- Yvonne**

Growing up in an abusive home, Yvonne got out as soon as she was old enough to date. But as it often happens, she ended up in one toxic relationship after another.

*“Being abused was all I knew,” she says. “It was my comfort zone. I just didn’t care enough about myself. It was rough.”*

She had six children by multiple partners, but none of the relationships lasted. So Yvonne, essentially a single mom, was just trying to hang on and make life work.

But it wasn’t working. *“I was a very angry person,”* she says. She attempted suicide several times.

Unbelievably, her life would take an even darker turn. Her 11-year-old daughter was killed in a car accident in 2004. It devastated Yvonne, who turned to drugs to cope.

About a year later, alone in a hotel room, high on cocaine, and penniless, Yvonne felt a nudge. She called a friend and said, *“I need help. I’ve got to get out of this life.”*

Yvonne turned things around and started following Jesus. She raised her kids and was doing well for years. Until last fall ...

### Not Rock Bottom

In November 2024, Yvonne had a full hysterectomy to remove a cancerous tumor. Complicated family dynamics left her with no place to go and recover, and she ended up at Buffalo City Mission.

She says it’s the best thing that ever happened.

*“People think going to a homeless shelter is hitting rock bottom,”* she says. *“I don’t consider it that way. I consider being here bouncing back. Nothing but good things have happened since I’ve been here.”*

At the top of that list: Complete healing from the hysterectomy and a cancer-free diagnosis.

Yvonne says the Mission’s compassionate staff has helped her to work through past trauma, and she’s grown stronger in her faith. She’s in our transitional housing program and attending online seminary classes. She wants to minister to others.

*“I don’t feel homeless,”* Yvonne says. *“I feel like I’m exactly where I’m meant to be.”*

*“Before the Mission, I was a lonely, pain-filled person who wasn’t living, just existing. God took that and turned it into something beautiful. Now I can look in the mirror with love and respect.”*

**Thanks to you, neighbors like Yvonne can discover their God-given worth!**



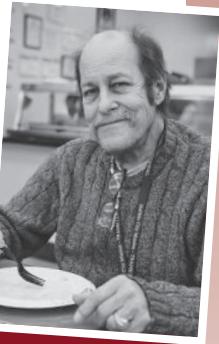
# Hambone Express

You can help deliver  
Christmas meals & cheer!

Buffalo City Mission needs you for this year's Hambone Express!

Each year, we distribute more than 3,500 meals on Christmas morning to hungry neighbors and struggling families throughout our community, and we need volunteers!

Please sign up today at [BuffaloCityMission.org](http://BuffaloCityMission.org).



## Contact us today to see how you can help!

**Call:** Volunteer Department  
(716) 854-8181 ext. 419  
**Visit:** [BuffaloCityMission.org/Volunteer](http://BuffaloCityMission.org/Volunteer)

## An Inspiring Leadership Duo

You met our new CEO, Mark Jentsch, on page 2. And you already know our "new" Executive Director, Marilyn Forcucci, who had been serving dual roles of Chief Operating Officer and interim CEO during our search for a new CEO. Marilyn has been with the Mission since 2017 in several leadership roles.



With the recent changes, we have split the CEO and Executive Director roles into two distinct positions — Mark as the former and Marilyn as the latter. We are grateful that Marilyn held down the fort as interim CEO, and she is excited about working with Mark to make Buffalo City Mission an even brighter light in our City of Good Neighbors.

Dr. Grace Huff, President of the Mission Board of Directors, calls this *"a defining moment"* in the Mission's history. She says the duo of Mark and Marilyn form *"a team that will inspire our staff, volunteers, and donors — and ensure we continue to meet the urgent needs of Buffalo's most vulnerable neighbors."*

## We Want to Talk ...



Would your organization, church, or community group like to have a speaker from Buffalo City Mission address your next meeting? We'll share how the Mission is serving the homeless and hurting in our region, and how you can be involved in this critical work.

Please visit **[BuffaloCityMission.org/Speaker-Bureau](http://BuffaloCityMission.org/Speaker-Bureau)** to learn more and schedule a BCM representative to attend your next staff meeting, church ministry gathering, or employee giving seminar. You can be an extension of hope to people in need right here in Buffalo.



## Mark, here's my Holiday gift to help our struggling neighbors:

\$100     \$150     \$176     \$201  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help as many people as possible.

**Donate online now! [BuffaloCityMission.org](http://BuffaloCityMission.org)**

Name

Address

City, State Zip

25IDNU

Return this form with your gift in the envelope provided.

**CHECK ENCLOSED**     **BILL MY CREDIT CARD**

CREDIT CARD #

EXP. DATE

CIV/SEC #

PHONE #

Email



100 E. Tupper St.  
Buffalo, NY 14203