



Derick (Left) with mentor Keith Kautzman

Volunteers Steve and Kathy Ridley

CONNECTED FOR LIFE: A MENTOR FEATURE

Whole-person recovery isn't a single decision, a season of sobriety or even completion of a 16-month program; it's a lifestyle. UGM alumnus Keith Kautzman has chosen to live the recovery life by providing mentorship to men completing UGM LIFE Recovery and moving back into society. Keith has eight years sober, two years at a job he loves and has just purchased a house of his own. "I'm excited to be in a place where I can give back."

He met Derick this winter, and they connected easily. "We do have a lot in common," Keith told us. "I was in and out of jail my whole adult life, and he's done prison time. Not that our lives have been the exact same, but we do understand one another, and I'm able to show him what's possible, going forward. It's not about being perfect but staying in relationship with the people who care about you and with God."

Derick is completing UGM Men's Recovery and being honored in this month's Commencement celebration. We praise God he has a close friend in Keith and a community of supportive brothers and sisters at UGM. Launching a new life as a God-dependent, contributing member of society can be one of the more challenging parts of the recovery journey. That's why every UGM alum is connected to a mentor. We are not meant to face our challenges alone. ●

"As long as you maintain the support and stay connected, you'll be all right." - **KEITH KAUTZMAN**

CREATING SPACE FOR RECOVERY: A VOLUNTEER FEATURE

Steve and Kathy Ridley offer friendship to men who may not have even begun their journey toward recovery. As weekly meal servers at the Men's Shelter, this couple reaches into the lives of men from a wide variety of backgrounds. "Men come in, they look rough; their lives must be chaos," Kathy shared with us, "but you know exactly what's going to happen for them that evening: They're going to have a shower, they're going to put on some clean clothes, have a warm meal. **There is love, rules and routines, and that works wonders for their self-worth.**"

Recovery can only begin where there is safety and acceptance. Kathy and Steve have been through their own trials and understand the time, effort and grace needed for deep healing to take place. "It's not just us plopping food on their plates," said Kathy. Steve added, "We're getting to know them by name, forming a connection with them. I'm grateful for that."

It's the investment of community members like the Ridleys that makes the first steps to real change possible for men, women and children exiting homelessness. ●

Take Action

UNION GOSPEL MISSION LIFE RECOVERY Commencement

A community celebration

Valley Assembly
15681 E Broadway Ave., Spokane Valley
June 28, 2021; 6:30 p.m.

Come celebrate the men and women who have completed UGM LIFE Recovery and see the whole-person healing made possible through your support.

UGM CAMP

Sponsors Needed!

A gift of \$152 welcomes an at-risk child to UGM Camp. Give the gift of faith and fun.

Go to uniongospelmission.org/kids to sponsor a camper.



ONE CALL is all it takes.

Vehicles donated to UGM are reconditioned and sold to provide life-changing services to men, women and children experiencing homelessness.

Call to schedule a pickup: 509.327.HELP



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, June 28 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 10:30 a.m.; LIFE Recovery Commencement, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 12 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 6:00 p.m.; Men's Shelter, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 26 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 10:30 a.m.; Crisis Shelter, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 9 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 6:00 p.m.; Men's Shelter, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 23 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 10:30 a.m.; Anna Ogden Hall, 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 13 - Volunteer orientation, Coeur d'Alene, 6:00 p.m.; Men's Shelter, 6:00 p.m.

To register for a volunteer orientation, call our offices:
SPokane 509.535.8510 **COEUR D'ALENE** 208.665.4673



Mission News

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Steve Ellisen, **Director of Development**
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**MEET TERRY, JORDAN
AND TERI, walking different
pathways toward recovery.**

MOVING FORWARD

MOVING FORWARD



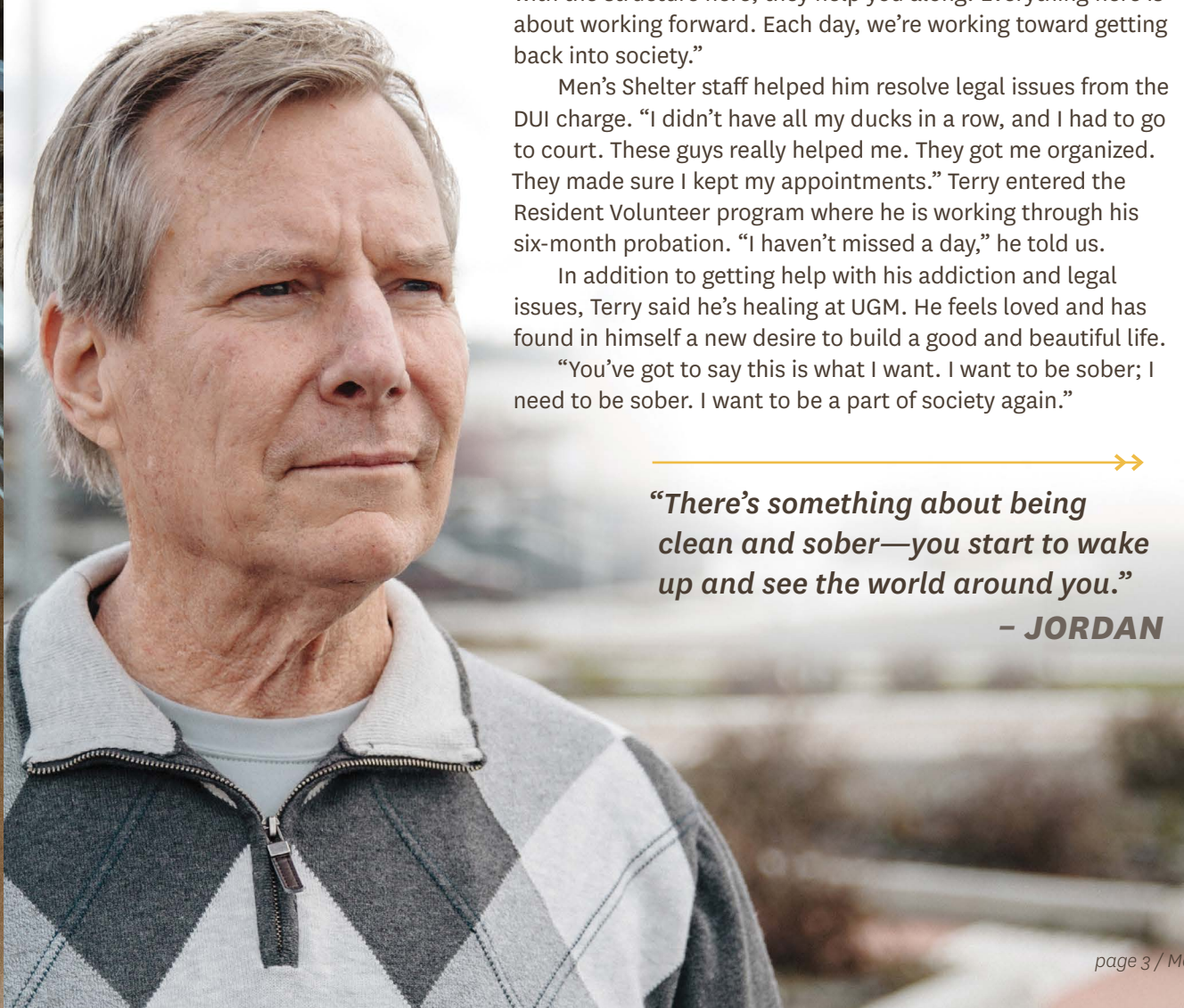
“By being here, and with the structure here, they help you along. Everything here is about working forward.”

— TERRY

EVERY RECOVERY STORY IS DIFFERENT.

At UGM, we don't have a one-size-fits-all approach. Men, women and children come to our doors from vastly different situations, with different wounds and different needs. One person may need to rest and heal physically; another, to have a community with whom to learn new skills; another, to pursue healing from trauma; and another, to learn a trade and get back into the workforce. Every person's journey toward a healthy, whole life looks as different as the journeys that brought them to our door.

Read how Terry, Jordan and Teri followed different paths to the same goal: to return to a state of health and start contributing to their community.



“There's something about being clean and sober—you start to wake up and see the world around you.”

— JORDAN

TERRY'S PATH >> Regaining Sobriety and Resolving Legal Issues

“I was homeless for two years, sleeping in my car.”

Terry's life took a hard turn in 2020. His mom passed away, followed by his stepdad. At the same time, his marriage fell apart, he broke his 17-year sobriety and he fell back into active addiction. “It happened so fast,” he told us. He moved into his car and lived on the streets of Coeur d'Alene.

Then, he was the victim of a hate crime. “I was going out to get a sandwich from a local restaurant, and there were a couple guys with swastika tattoos—and I'm Jewish—they asked me some political questions and I told them, ‘I don't talk politics in the parking lot.’ I turned around and they took a two-by-four to my head then broke seven ribs.” Terry spent two months in the hospital, where he had to relearn how to walk and how to speak. “The injuries made it hard to live in the homeless environment.” He tried drinking and living in his car again but was soon caught and charged with a DUI. “From there, what happened was, I knew I was in really bad trouble as far as alcohol. And then for some reason, I don't even know why, I drove here.”

Terry came to UGM ready to change. “By being here, and with the structure here, they help you along. Everything here is about working forward. Each day, we're working toward getting back into society.”

Men's Shelter staff helped him resolve legal issues from the DUI charge. “I didn't have all my ducks in a row, and I had to go to court. These guys really helped me. They got me organized. They made sure I kept my appointments.” Terry entered the Resident Volunteer program where he is working through his six-month probation. “I haven't missed a day,” he told us.

In addition to getting help with his addiction and legal issues, Terry said he's healing at UGM. He feels loved and has found in himself a new desire to build a good and beautiful life.

“You've got to say this is what I want. I want to be sober; I need to be sober. I want to be a part of society again.”

JORDAN'S PATH >> Medical Care and a Job

“I wasn't doing well, physically. There was that and the DUIs, jail time. I needed a bunch of help.”

Jordan first came to UGM after receiving his third DUI. He knew he was fortunate to only have received a misdemeanor for it and was determined to change his ways.

But getting sober wasn't all he needed. Exacerbated by the alcoholism, Jordan's health was failing. Atrial fibrillation and severe cataracts were making it difficult to function, let alone work. At UGM, he was welcomed into a safe, healing community that made all the difference. Between the free medical visits, three warm meals a day and the people who surrounded him with love and support, he was able to heal. UGM staff connected him with a cardiologist who got him on medication for his heart and prescribed a healthy diet and exercise.

Over time, Jordan started to heal emotionally as well, learning that he is a natural encourager who loves to brighten people's days. “There's something about being clean and sober—you start to wake up and see the world around you.”

While staying at the Mission, Jordan discovered he was still required to serve time in jail for the last DUI. Staff encouraged him to turn himself in to clear his record so he could return to work. He served five and a half months and returned in February 2022. Within a month, he was scheduled for cataract surgeries and immediately after was offered a job through AARP's SCSEP program for seniors.

Today, Jordan's making a living wage and will soon move into a place of his own. “I'm glad to be back to work, living a healthier life and giving back where I can. That's what it's about: community and connection. God did not make us to do it alone.”



TERI'S PATH >> Getting to the Root of Addiction

“I was physically on my deathbed before UGM. Spiritually broken, mentally, physically. Severe, severe addiction.”

After a lifetime spent abusing alcohol and drugs, Teri entered UGM Women's Recovery in early 2021. She'd seen her niece and nephew find healing through the program and was hopeful she'd be able to quit using. What she did not expect, however, was a whole heart and life transformation. “God was the part that I was missing in my recovery.”

Through applying herself to the rigorous, 16-month program, Teri started to see why she'd turned to substances in the first place. “I got to go back to my family of origin and learn why my parents and grandparents did what they did. It helped me lose resentment and understand why I did what I did. And into phase two, I got to change those behaviors that I had. It was lifechanging.”

Teri said from an early age, she'd embraced the lie that she was unlovable, and she'd learned to bury the pain with anything that would numb her mind. Opening up to her counselors and sisters in program was the key to revealing this and other misbeliefs. “It's quite an eye opener,” she told us, “I didn't know it was so vital to be transparent. God's forgiveness makes it possible. He gave me worth when I was in my ugliness. He said I was worthy and lovable.”

Today, Teri is in the final phase of the program and is being honored at this month's Commencement celebration. She has a job, a plan for housing, and is excited to return to society healthier than she's ever been.

“A lot of change has happened here. It's been monumental.”

The common factor in the recovery stories we get to witness at UGM is the need for a supportive community. It's true there are many different paths out of homelessness and addiction, but the journey is next to impossible without the love and investment of people like you. ●

“I didn't know it was so vital to be transparent. God's forgiveness makes it possible.”

— TERI



Phil Altmeyer
Executive Director

AN IRRESISTIBLE INVITATION

SOMETIMES I THINK OF THIS MINISTRY and all the resources you have provided like the great feast Jesus describes in the gospel of Luke. Because of your compassion and generosity, the resources at UGM go far beyond a meal and a bed. You've provided first-rate medical clinics, Voc-Ed centers complete with computers and educational materials, recovery programs with counselors, well-equipped dorm rooms, showers, three, hot, hearty meals a day, clothing, laundry services, workplace training, Bible study, parenting classes, workout rooms – everything a person needs to blaze a pathway out of homelessness. You have set out a veritable feast, all of it reflecting the great love and compassion of God for those who are hurting and broken.

Similar to the parable, however, we cannot make people come and partake of the feast you've prepared. After a board meeting a month or two ago, one of the board members commented, “If this is the food readily available here for dinner, why would anyone choose to go hungry or scavenge for food?” It seems incomprehensible to us, but look at the excuses given by the guests in Luke: *I bought some land, and I need to survey it. I bought some oxen, and I need to examine them. I just got married.* Our excuses are not always straightforward. They may be covering fear or shame or even a desire to persist in self-destructive behaviors.

Irrational choices are not, of course, limited to people experiencing homelessness. Way back in Deuteronomy, God says: “I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” Talk about obvious choices. Why would anyone choose death? And yet, every day, in small and larger ways, we do. We lie. We worry. We think we know better than God.

The remarkable part of the story, however, is that the host doesn't give up. He says to his servant, “Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame...Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.” (Luke 14:21-23)

UGM is in a season where we are asking ourselves, what does it look like to compel people to come in? We know we cannot force them. We cannot give them what we want to give them if they do not want it for themselves, but what does it mean to go out to the highways and hedges? Is there something we are not doing? Will you pray with us for the answers? So many people are hurting on the streets of Spokane. How do we compel them to come in? ●