Ministry with Community

rebuilding lives

November 2015

A new man in the mirror

Lizark behind the wheel at work.

"People won't change your problems for you. You change them on your own. It starts with the man in the mirror."

Lizark grew up in a small, rural town in Missouri where segregation and racism were still prevalent. "Growing up was difficult. I was from a big family. We were very poor. Most of our food came out of the Mississippi river which ran by our house."

It was September 17th, 1987 when a newly 18 year old Lizark came to Kalamazoo. "My stepfather was trying to assault my sister and my mom was afraid I would kill him so she sent me to live with my dad in Kalamazoo, Michigan."

The first time Lizark met his father was the day he moved into his house. The meeting didn't go well and within two weeks, he was kicked out and living on the streets. Still in high school, in a new town with no family, Lizark was homeless. That's when he first found Ministry with Community and became one of the original members of the Men's Group.

Despite all of the barriers in his way, Lizark graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School and held down an internship at Upjohn. He even started taking classes to become a truck driver but homelessness and lack of family support took a toll.

The next 22 years were filled with the kind of struggles that addiction and homelessness create but eventually Lizark got tired. The man in the mirror was not yet who he wanted to be but he was ready to change his life. "When you're tired and ready to change you'll do it. I got tired and I did it."

He started attending Men's Group again and meeting regularly with MwC's Recovery Support Specialist, Gwen Lanier. Lizark also credits MwC Social Worker Phil Boothroyd, and Volunteer Coordinator, Sylvia Angelidis, as well as former Executive Directors Judy Markusse Paget, and Ken Sarkozy, for helping him change. "They always helped in any way possible. If you needed counseling they would help you find it. If you needed to get off the street and into treatment or refill your medication they would do whatever it took to help you." Soon he was accepted into a treatment program at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission and spent two years working on his recovery. "I've been sober since April 9th, 2011."

Since that crucial day, Lizark has seen a new man in the mirror. He obtained financial aid and went back to truck driving school. He graduated and now drives almost every day of the week, even training others to drive. He's seen more of the country than many well-traveled Americans and he's able to support himself and be someone his kids can depend on. "I have a big, fully furnished apartment in Kalamazoo now and I'm working on getting custody of my 16 year old daughter. When that happens I'll be driving truck closer to home so I can be there for her."

When asked what it takes to rebuild your life Lizark responds without a pause, "Attitude, integrity, self-discipline and knowledge. That's the biggest difference between now and then. The best part is just being a responsible person without using drugs or alcohol."

(L to R) Lizark stands with MwC Social Worker, Phil Boothroyd.

"I went from having a Bridge Card to having a paycheck. Now I've seen 48 states in the last 60 days."

- Lizark

Thank You to the Nazareth Association!

The Nazareth Association recently awarded MwC with their Special Needs Community Grant. The grant exists to fund needs in the community that don't otherwise have funding, and it allowed us to purchase scrub-style pants and shirts for members. Many of the people we serve only have the outfit they are wearing which can make laundry and emergencies complicated.

"Our ability to offer those who have an immediate need for a clean set of well-fitting clothing allows us to help bring a sense of dignity and respect to the members we are serving," says Alison Strasser, Member Services Coordinator. "Clean clothing is not only a way to provide self-esteem and dignity to our members but also provides positive health effects and comfort to them and those interacting with them throughout the community."

We are truly grateful to the Nazareth Association for understanding this unique need and awarding MwC this grant. With it, MwC purchased 112 pairs of pants and 48 shirts.

Member Services Coordinator Alison Strasser, with the new scrubs for members.

Brenda helping out at the front desk at MwC.

A Place of Her Own

Brenda moved into her new apartment recently! She worked through the difficult application process for several months before the day she had been waiting for finally arrived. If you've been into MwC lately you will recognize Brenda as a front desk volunteer. She has volunteered hundreds of hours of her time over the last three months to help others sign up for showers, laundry, social work appointments and more while she waited for housing. Now that she is in her new place she is still a regular volunteer and continues to give back. Brenda, congratulations on your new home!

Save the Date:

2016 Chefs against HUNGER COMPETITION

Tuesday, March 22, 2016
Cityscape Events Center
125 S. Kalamazoo Mall
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Contact Development Director, Gretta Terrentine, for further information at 269.343.6073 x19 or at gterrentine@ministrywithcommunity.org

In Memory Of:

Margaret Ambs
Louise Whiffin
Don Andree
George F. and Gladys M. Manley
Sherry Babcock
Jessie and Benjamin C. Bierlein
Sr. Mary Bader, CSJ
Joyce B. DeNooyer
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Dale Dratt
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Judy LaDuke
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Joan Everts
John Everts
Char Ferraro
Paul and Anne Pancella
Herman, Rose, Jack and Marian Fisher
Kent M. Fisher
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Phil R. and Joan M. Carey
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Morgan Jusick
Howard and Hildy Kerney
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Lennon, Miller, O'Connor &
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Karen Gernant
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Sistina J. Grenke
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In Honor Of:

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Peter and Elizabeth Seaver
Mary Brown
Lin and Alice Foote
Dolores Cekola
Imperial Beverage
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Lenore J. Lorion
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Jayne Clement
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Stu Eddy
Jan Berghorst and Tami Hodges
Marilyn Ewert
Jean Bourner
Morgan Harvey
David and Linda Holzwarth
Jennifer Harvey
David and Linda Holzwarth
Pastor Kenneth Johnson
The Members of Trinity
Evangelical Lutheran Church
The Members at Ministry with Community
Kaye Bennett
M.K. and S.K.
Anonymous
Gail Kasdorf
Shirley Palmer
Jane Kuiper
Bill and Joyce Truscott
John and Linda Mason
Joyce and John Petro
Prudence McCabe
Arthur Roberts and
Betty Lujan-Roberts
Marty and Jerry Meinzinger
Housing Resources Inc.
John W. and Rosemary Brown
Marian Nelson
Arthur Roberts and
Betty Lujan-Roberts
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David G. and Ann M. Martin
Martha Parfet and her Family
Robert and
Stephanie Brinkerhoff
Denita Perry
Prudence McCabe
Jan Scott
Barbara Albanese
The Volunteers
Barbara Albanese
Charles and Lynn Zhang
Rick L. and Mary S. Halpert

In Celebration Of:

Sidney Brush's Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Celebration of Father's Day
Helene Karpiel
Rita Culver's 89th Birthday
Lois A. Plantefaber and
Mary Patricia Maher
Kay Davis' Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Victoria Elkins' Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Tim Hardy's Birthday
Kaye Bennett
Laurel Hazel's Birthday
The Tuesday Group
Marlena Kirton on Mother's Day
Amy Louise Anderson
Pam Hjelmquist and Jordan and
Jakob Hjelmquist
Pat Lewman Kline's Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Suzanne Lepley's Birthday
Roger and Kristy A. Lepley
Donna Oudersluys' Birthday
A. Dean and
Kathleen S. Miedema
Michele Serbenski's Birthday
Sue Reinoehl
Karmena Smith's Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Gloria Terpstra's Birthday
Susan Kavanaugh
Tim Terrentine's Birthday
Marcia and Tre Fellings
Ken Miller
Larry Tolbert
Philip and Billee Ward
Jim and Joanne Willson's 50th Wedding Anniversary
Richard Arlen and Eleanor Miller

Please note: Memorials and Honorees listed here were received July 28, 2015 through October 5, 2015.

Memorial and Honorees received after October 5, 2015 will appear in the next newsletter.

To correct any errors, please contact
Laura Perron at 269.343.6073 x23
or
office@ministrywithcommunity.org.

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MINISTRY WITH COMMUNITY
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16th Annual UNDERWEAR OPEN HOUSE

to benefit the homeless of Kalamazoo

www.ministrywithcommunity.org

16th Annual Underwear Open House

Anyone who has lived through a Michigan Winter knows the importance of a good pair of mittens, a warm hat and a well-insulated jacket, not to mention other necessary items. Most of us wouldn't brave the elements without proper clothing but many of our members (those we serve) find themselves in exactly that position each day during the colder months.

We've called it the Underwear Open House for 16 years now but it's about so much more than underwear. The event is our chance to gather new, warm items for our adult members to receive on Christmas Day. Gloves, hats, scarves, socks, long underwear and sweatshirts are precious gifts to receive if you are going to experience a Michigan Winter.

The 16th Annual Underwear Open House, presented by Cliff Mulder of Raymond James, will be held on Monday, December 7th from 5:00 - 7:00pm at the Lawrence Education Center on the Borgess Medical Campus – 1521 Gull Rd., Kalamazoo, MI 49048. This event is free and open to everyone who wants to make the winter a little warmer for those we serve. As always, there will be live music, drinks and light hors d'oeuvres, a wonderful gift basket raffle and great company.

If you are unable to attend the event, we will also be gathering donated items at various locations throughout the community leading up to the event.

Check our website or Facebook page for locations!

So, mark your calendars and tell all of your friends to join us on December 7th with donations of new, adult sized:

- Gloves
- Hats
- Scarves
- Coats
- Thermal pants & shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Undershirts
- Tall/thick Socks
- Blankets
- Underwear
- Chapstick

Businesses, groups, and families: Partner with us in spreading the warmth to our neighbors by sponsoring this event! Become a #WinterWishList Partner for a $500 donation or join the Spread the Warmth Club for a $150 donation. All sponsors will be listed on our website and at the event.

For more information or to become a sponsor, contact Gretta Terrentine, Development Director, at 269.343.6073 x19 or gterrentine@ministrywithcommunity.org

Sponsor-a-Meal

July 30: The Notre Dame Club

August 6: PNC Bank

August 27: Special Friends of Ministry with Community

September 2: Cody Allkins Jeannot in memory of Janet Allkins

September 16: Zhang Financial

September 24: Varnum Law

September 30: JB Printing

October 8: PNC Bank

October 21: Ministry with Community Board of Directors

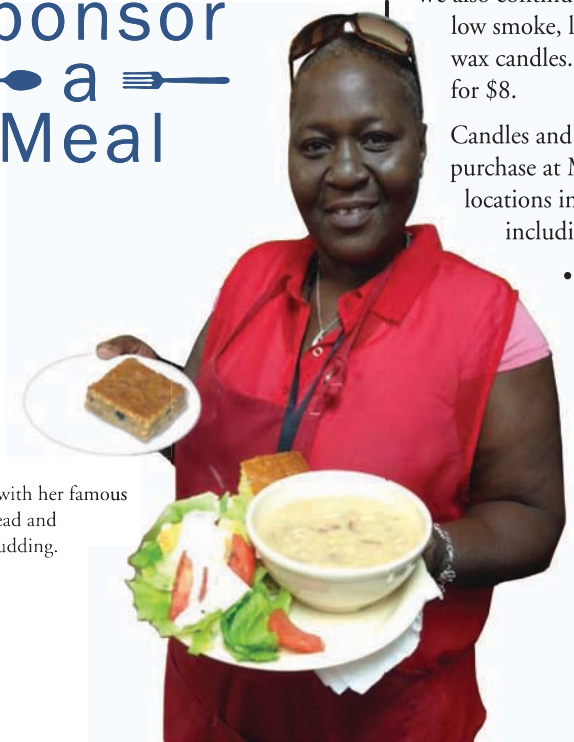
October 25: Zhang Financial

October 28: Sue Beadling in honor of Ken Beadling's Birthday

October 30: Don and Irma Schull

Thank you to everyone who has participated in our Sponsor-a-Meal program! If you're looking for a way to thank someone, celebrate a holiday or milestone or remember a loved one, consider sponsoring a meal at Ministry with Community. A gift of $250 provides a 3 course lunch for 200 - 250 people. On the day the meal is served you and your honoree will be recognized on Facebook, Twitter and by mail. Please contact Janet Karpus, Kitchen Manager, at 269.343.6073 x28 or via email at jkarpus@ministrywithcommunity.org to Sponsor-a-Meal!

Sponsor a Meal



Denita with her famous corn bread and bread pudding.

Crochet Club

If you follow us on Facebook you may have noticed yarn and crochet hooks on our #WishlistWednesday posts in the recent past. That's because a group of members came together to form a crochet group. Led by member, Jessica - our on-site expert, the group now meets weekly to sharpen their creative skills and learn new techniques together.

We are grateful to Meijer, Field's Fabrics and a number of individuals who donated supplies to get the group started.

If you're interested in contributing donations of yarn, crochet hooks or other supplies to the group, please contact Alison Strasser, Member Services Coordinator, at 269-343-6073 x33 or astrasser@ministrywithcommunity.org.

Members of the crochet club at their first meeting.

Gifts That Give Back!

Looking for great holiday gifts that also give back to your community? Let Ministry with Community be your one stop shop! This year we are offering Soap for Hope in several fabulous scents. Bars of Lavender & Lemongrass, Peppermint & Rosemary, Lavender with Oat & Honey and Lime Coconut sell for $5 each or 5 for $20.

We also continue to Light Up a Life with our low smoke, low drip, hand-rolled bee's wax candles. One box (2 candles) sells for $8.

Candles and soap are available for purchase at MwC and many retail locations in the Kalamazoo area including:

- Ample pantry
- Bloomers
- Bookbug
- Don's Card Hut
- Gale's True Value Hardware
- Harding's Marketplace (W. Main)
- Kalamazoo College Bookstore - Hick's Center
- Kazoo Books
- Nature Connection
- Sawall Health Foods
- VanderSalm's Flower Shop
- Mustard Seed Market
- Season's Gift Shop - Borgess

Call ahead as quantities are limited at some locations. For more information on candles and soap please contact Ali Kole, Volunteer and Development Coordinator, at 269.343.6073 x15 or via email at akole@ministrywithcommunity.org.

Wish List

Can you help us by donating these much needed supplies?

Hats/Scarves/Gloves
New adult sized socks
Travel sized lotion
Travel sized deodorant
Travel sized body wash
Jelly/Jam
Lunch napkins (paper)
Sugar (bulk)
6" paper plates
Ranch dressing
Old-Fashioned oatmeal

For a list of other general needs, please visit our website at www.ministrywithcommunity.org.

LEAVE A LEGACY®

Plan ahead, make a difference for others

Leaving a legacy has never been easier. It would be our privilege to help you include MwC in your estate plans.

Please contact Rob Oakleaf at 269.343.6073 x11 and he will connect you with a trusted attorney in the community.

Remember: when you leave a legacy, you make a difference for future generations in our community.

Welcome online readers!

MwC's Newsletter is now available via email! Welcome to those of you reading this online for the first time.

If you'd like to join the online community and help us further reduce costs, please email office@ministrywithcommunity.org or call 269.343.6073 x23 and Laura will be happy to add you to our newsletter email list.

We never sell, rent or share your personal information.

Design and layout are generously provided by Bev Kirk.

Have we made any mistakes in our database?

Please let us know if:

- You have moved or are planning to move
- You have a seasonal address you'd like us to use
- The name(s) on your newsletter need an update
- We are sending you duplicates of any mailings
- You would like to be removed from our mailing list

Contact Laura Perron at 269.343.6073 x23 or at office@ministrywithcommunity.org to have your record updated or corrected. Thank you for helping us maintain a correct and efficient database!

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440 N. Church St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007-3326

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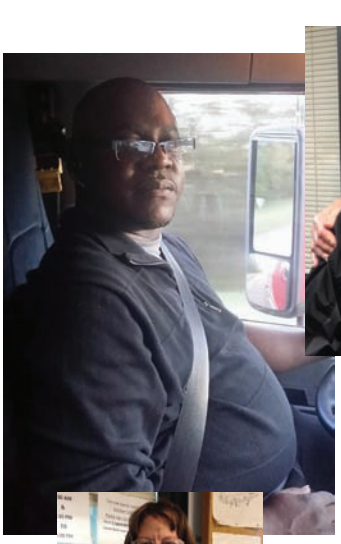

LIVE UNITED
United Way

United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region

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