

★ ★
“I’m not going backwards”

Melvin traded homelessness and addiction for a clear mind and lasting stability—thanks to YOU!

“When you’re homeless, there is no Christmas.”

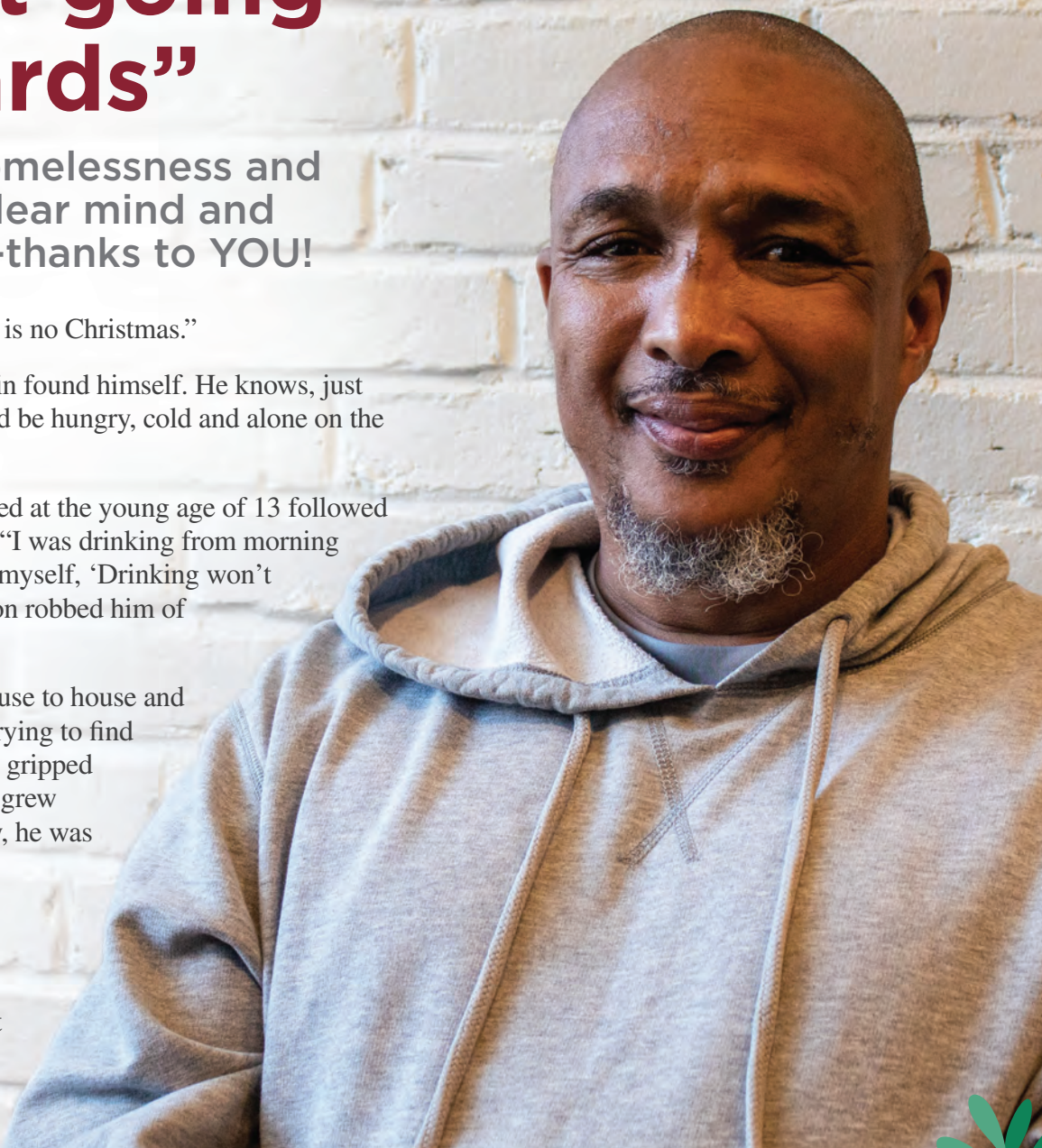
But that’s exactly where Melvin found himself. He knows, just as we all do, that no one should be hungry, cold and alone on the streets during the holidays.

An alcohol addiction that started at the young age of 13 followed him throughout his entire life. “I was drinking from morning to night,” says Melvin. “I told myself, ‘Drinking won’t be my downfall.’” But addiction robbed him of everything.

Melvin was bouncing from house to house and couch to couch, all the while trying to find consistent work. But addiction gripped his life, and his circumstances grew increasingly worse. Eventually, he was out on the streets.

“I would sleep on the steps of an apartment building,” says Melvin. “It was hurting me to sleep outside, but I didn’t want to be a burden to people.”

Continued inside ▶



Help someone find new life this Christmas, starting with



**Just
\$3.21**
will provide a meal
and vital care this
Christmas!



Melvin's story . . . (Continued from pg. 1)

Melvin remembers sitting outside of a 7-Eleven, hungry and defeated, hoping someone would give him some breakfast. He had no money, no job and no hope. Melvin realized things would grow only harder if he didn't find real help and lasting solutions.

When Melvin arrived at the Mission, he knew if he wanted to find stability he would have to lay down alcohol. The Restoration and Transformation Program was the first step toward his victory over addiction.

"My mindset and emotions are completely different," he says. "I'm making better decisions and picking the right people to be around. I'm not going backwards."

Melvin found a community of people who treated him with dignity and showed him that in Christ, you

always have the chance to start new. "At the Mission, I'm treated with respect. I keep a smile on my face. I don't have anything to worry about anymore. God has done that for me."

"When you're on the streets, Christmas is the same as every other day."

— Melvin

At the Mission, your giving makes Christ-centered, wrap-around care possible for others like Melvin. And Melvin will tell you that during the holidays, your compassion is exactly what so many people need. He says, "When you're on the streets, Christmas is the same as every other day."

Won't you open the door to stability for more men, women and children who are facing the nightmare of homelessness? Christmas is a wonderful opportunity to restore lives, just like you did for Melvin!



Your compassion changes lives.

Restore someone's hope this Christmas!



Christmas is a time of peace, joy and comfort. But for a family or individual facing poverty, they instead feel hopelessness, failure and fear.

Through your generosity, you can restore hope this holiday for hurting men, women and children. It starts with throwing a festive celebration here at the Mission—and we don't cut corners when it comes to showering each guest with care.

An elegant dinner, new clothing, entertainment, gifts for children facing poverty (last year, you helped provide toys for 1,100 children!) and more make this holiday outreach a blessing for those anticipating a Christmas of struggle. And as they celebrate with us, they'll hear about the life-changing programs you make possible at the Mission and receive an invitation to take steps toward lasting stability.

Silently suffering from hunger or homelessness is no way to spend Christmas. Together, we can give people in deepest need a holiday full of hope and joy!



Christmas comfort



JOE METTIMANO
President & CEO

Nothing about Jesus' entrance into the world was fitting for a King.

Far from home with no place to go, Mary and

Joseph sheltered in a stable and made do with what they had. Many of the families who come through our doors can relate.

They too are facing uncertainty and relying on very little this Christmas. Like the newborn King, some even have no proper shelter or bed to sleep in.

But you help share this message of hope with every guest who walks through our doors—that Jesus came for them, struggled for them and now offers them everlasting life. It all happens as we meet their basic needs.

How comforting to know that "we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses . . ."

Hebrews 4:15

You can help share the promise of hope and rebirth this Christmas with families who feel there is little to cling to. Christ's hope—and a way forward out of homelessness—are the greatest Christmas gifts you could give a struggling family!





What's your story to tell?



The Christmas gift families in need are asking for

What we want for Christmas looks very different from what people in deep need are asking for . . . food on the table, warm winter clothes, a safe bed to sleep in, lasting stability.

Ultimately, they're asking for hope—hope for a way forward after crisis, grief, wrong choices or broken relationships.

You can be someone's Christmas miracle—starting with a \$3.21 home-cooked meal served with love at our table.

Won't you give the gift of hope and vital care this holiday to families and individuals across the D.C. metro area? It costs so little to provide one person with the chance to make a fresh start, so please consider giving generously to help many!



We all have a God-given story to tell. Christmas is a good time to share yours. Here are three ways you can pass yours down:

1. TALK ABOUT TRADITIONS

You'll preserve memories, remember God's goodness and bring deeper meaning to routines.

2. INTERVIEW YOURSELF

You don't need to wait for someone to talk to you—do it yourself! Create a list of questions or find some online and share your answers with family and friends.

3. IMPACT OTHERS

Including a gift in your will to the Central Union Mission is a beautiful opportunity to continue your story beyond your lifetime.

Your faithful support makes you a significant part of our story!

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of "4 Ways to Share Your Story this Christmas" by contacting Megan Schmoll at (202) 745-7118 ext. 219 or mschmoll@missiondc.org OR bless your family today with a God-honoring will at christianwill.org/missiondc.

3 EASY STEPS to transform someone's life this Christmas

1 CHOOSE one or more of the Meal Tickets to send with your gift.

2 WRITE out your check for that amount.

3 RETURN your Meal Ticket(s), reply form and check in the envelope provided.



To help now, scan this QR code with your mobile device. Or visit **missiondc.org/ChristmasMeals**