

# h REFUGE *of* HOPE MINISTRIES

Two years ago our December newsletter featured a story about Jeraiya Dingane, a young man for whom Christmas didn't have much appeal and for a good reason.

## ***This is how that story began...***

***"I spent 19 Christmas mornings in foster care," said Jeraiya Dingane. "I spent those holidays with many different foster families, but for the last 6 years I have been alone at Christmas. Somehow the loneliness seems to hurt more during the holidays."***

Jeraiya's story is one of many sad stories we hear about the holidays this time of year. Not only from the men who reside in our shelter but also our dinner guests. So, we make every effort to have a Christmas celebration that is both a fun and memorable experience.

Volunteers arrive early Christmas morning to cook a special breakfast for the men. After breakfast each man is given a gift, which has his name on the package. His name is important on that gift because that signifies it was selected especially for him. As presents are opened and wrapping paper is flying everywhere, smiles begin to appear, and then laughter rings throughout the room.



Are these homeless men actually happy? Shouldn't they be depressed and sad? The answer is simple dear friends, while their past situations may have been sad, homeless men have found hope in a homeless shelter. They have found a home at Refuge of Hope. They feel loved and cared for and that allows them to see there is a chance for a better life.

Jeraiya said it well, "This place, Refuge of Hope, is full of love and we are family here. From the staff to all the volunteers, these people really care about us at Christmas and all year long. People helping people!"

Because Of You, each man who stays with us, and each family who shares a meal with us, is offered that same hope for a brighter future. This Christmas will begin new memories for them to hold onto throughout the year.

## ***And now the rest of the story...***

***Jeraiya is still living in his own apartment after moving out of Refuge of Hope 2 years ago. But where is he on Christmas morning? You guessed it! He is right back at Refuge of Hope to spend the day with the men and volunteers, his Refuge of Hope family.***

## From the Desk of Duane Wykoff, CEO

### THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL...

Ah Christmas ... the shopping season, searching for that "perfect" gift. Fighting the crowds, standing in long lines, jockeying for parking spaces, being inundated with advertising 24 hours a day...shop 'til we drop.

Want an alternative? How about the greatest gift of all, one that is hassle free to obtain, and truly lasts an eternity?



The gift is salvation, accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and it's yours for the asking.

This gift has several major selling points. The cost is right because it's free!! You can share it with family, friends, and even strangers. In fact, this is strongly encouraged! Sins - large, small, or the you'll never believe what I did variety...it doesn't matter - forgiven! And, the greatest selling point of all - complete assurance and peace of mind knowing where you will spend eternity.

Lee Strobel earned a law degree from Yale University and was an award-winning legal editor for the Chicago Tribune. He was also an atheist. When his wife confessed her belief in Jesus Christ, Strobel wanted to know why. After several years of research and study, Strobel concluded a person must have stronger faith NOT to believe in Jesus as the Son of God than to believe. His resultant book, *THE CASE FOR CHRIST*, would be a wonderful Christmas gift for that non-believer family member or friend.

If you want the greatest gift of all, it's yours by praying: Dear Lord, I admit I am a sinner and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins on the cross and rose from the dead. I desire to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. In Your name I ask and pray. Amen

Jesus is truly the reason for the season. Wishing you and yours a most blessed Christmas or Hanukkah as well as a safe and happy 2017.

#### REFLECTION

FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN,  
TO US A SON IS GIVEN; AND THE  
GOVERNMENT SHALL BE ON  
HIS SHOULDERS AND HIS NAME  
SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL  
COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD,  
EVERLASTING FATHER,  
PRINCE OF PEACE  
- ISAIAH 9:6



A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.



REFUGE of HOPE  
MINISTRIES

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[www.refugeofhope.org](http://www.refugeofhope.org)

# Our heartfelt thanks to the generous sponsors of the 7th Refuge of Hope Holiday Gala!

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**Yes! I want to help struggling people during this Christmas Season by providing hot meals, safe shelter, and HOPE for a better life! Your gift today will make a difference to hurting men, women, and children in Stark County!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### How you can contribute to Refuge of Hope Ministries

\$50.00     \$100.00     \$150.00     Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card:     Visa     MasterCard     Exp.: \_\_\_\_\_     CVV# \_\_\_\_\_

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*Thank you on behalf of those who benefit from the work of Refuge of Hope Ministries made possible through your generous gift. Tax deductible information will be mailed with your donation receipt.*



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For your convenience, on-line donations are accepted on our website:  
[www.refugeofhope.org](http://www.refugeofhope.org)

# Refuge of Hope Giving Tree



You can be the blessing for some much needed items in the Men's Shelter and Meal Ministry. All you have to do is call us at 330-453-1785 to select an ornament and purchase the item on the back. We will mail you the ornament as a keepsake for your special gift to help the men, women, and children we serve at Refuge of Hope. Here are a few examples:



- A twin mattress for \$125 – over 12,000 bedded nights have been provided to homeless men in our community this year. To date 118 men have moved into their own housing this year from our shelter. Our mattresses are well used and need replaced.



- 5 cots for \$450 in our overflow shelter – our shelter has been over capacity for the last 5 years, like the mattresses these cots are well used and need replaced to provide a warm, comfortable night of lodging for a homeless man.



- A month's supply of coffee for \$250 – hope can begin with a hot meal and cup of coffee. Our coffee pots run from 6 am until after dinner each day. Hundreds of cups filled with hot, steaming coffee are served daily. During the colder weather it warms the heart when served by a smiling volunteer or staff member.