



— WICHITA FALLS —  
**FAITH MISSION**  
EVERY STORY MATTERS

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

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FROM  
THE CEO

## CHANGE IS HARD

DID YOU EVER WONDER why we tend to use the term Fall instead of Autumn to describe this season we are in? There's an interesting history behind the two words and their usage, but for the sake of time and space, suffice it to say that America has adopted the term "Fall" as its own.

The interesting thing is that even though the leaves do fall at this time of the year, they don't do so willingly. The whole process of leaf drop is a form of self-protection for the tree. Most leaves lose their photosynthesis capability during winter temps, so they become useless to the tree. So, the tree actually starves the leaf by forming a layer of cells between the leaf stalk and the twig holding it on. The leaf is slowly cut from the tree without leaving an open wound.

Change can be hard. But it is sometimes necessary and many times it is for self-protection. Many of the men and women that come to our shelters say later something like, "If I hadn't changed when I did, I might not be alive today." It's true. Change is hard. But sometimes, staying the same is harder.

Our men's program director told a group of men the other day, "Addiction is hard; recovery is hard. Choose your hard."

Unlike the tree, change sometimes produces wounds. It can sometimes feel like an amputation because those areas that need to change have become a very real part of our being. But when Spring arrives and we start seeing the benefits of making that hard choice to change, then we find ourselves like the lady that said to me recently, "I can't believe I waited this long to change."

Every Story Matters,

Steve Sparks  
CEO

## FAITH RESALE DOWNTOWN

Faith Resale Downtown is in the final stages of being transformed into our new showroom.



LOOK FOR THE GRAND OPENING SOON!



# STORIES FROM FAITH MISSION

WILLIAM IS ONE OF SEVEN kids, five boys, two girls. He is originally from Colorado, but because his dad was in the military, the family tended to move a lot. His dad served in Vietnam and came home in 1972. Living on base, William was often left to roam as a kid. He remembers being brought home by the MP's more than once because he was some place he shouldn't have been.

William moved to Wichita Falls in 1985. He got a job in a fast-food restaurant, started playing in a band, and took other odd jobs to make ends meet.

One day a friend asked him for an estimate for some construction work. Because of William's experience in construction, he decided to walk over to his friend's house to help. As he was walking, he started to hear something behind him and when he turned

around, he saw a car sliding sideways, straight for him. His impact with the automobile knocked him 16 feet in the air, and he landed on electrical transformers. William doesn't remember a lot after the accident. The only thing that he remembers was being airlifted to the hospital.

The pain from the accident is still with him. He has limited use from his hands which are permanently clinched. The brain injury, from the electrocution and from concussions in his younger days, is a continuous battle. Taking over-the-counter pain medicine helped some, but it was the morphine he received in the hospital that worked.

Keeping a long-term job was a challenge for William. Finally, this

took its toll. For the last 10 years William was drinking steadily, using drugs, and was homeless.

It was William's friends who suggested that he come to Faith Mission. He graduated from the New Beginnings Program and is currently living in the transition house. He says, "Starting to venture out into society is like taking baby steps. You must build your confidence slowly." William currently has a job and is attending church regularly. He hopes to take all that God has taught him while at Faith Mission and use it for His glory.

"There's a purpose behind everything God is doing in our lives." William went on to say, "I want my life to count for something good."



## BENS' STORY

BEN CAME TO OUR FACILITY in April 2020 and joined the 13-month rehabilitation program. Ben graduated the entire program, obtained, and currently works two jobs, bought a vehicle all while

living at the Transitional Supportive House. Ben also is a Veteran! Recently he moved into his own apartment! Congratulations Ben on not only being a successful graduate of the program but applying it and obtaining self-sufficiency through HIS word!

## VOLUNTEER HELEN RITCHIE



I HAVE BEEN a Bible study leader in the Career Academy at Faith Refuge for about three years. Learning about and focusing on God's word alongside the ladies in the class are two of my favorite things. Being a volunteer has deepened my own faith in God as I get to observe how He is working and actively changing lives at Faith Refuge.

- Helen Ritchie



# STORIES FROM FAITH REFUGE

BILLIE CAME TO FAITH REFUGE earlier this year. It was her third time seeking help at the women's shelter. Her God-sister told her that this would be the last time that Faith Refuge would give her a chance. Unlike the first two, Billie was determined to leave a different person. She was completely broken and expecting her third child. After she arrived, she lost the pregnancy.

This wasn't Billie's first devastating loss. She lost her mother tragically at the age of 5. Her father was unable to care for her due to his addiction, so Billie then found herself being moved from relative to relative for the next twelve years until she graduated from high school. That achievement in the face of adversity speaks volumes about this young woman's tenacity.

"I just want to say Faith Refuge has

a lot of opportunities for women. It is a challenge to yourself to see how much you are committed to God and if you are willing to change. You must be willing and dedicated to change. You must push yourself to achieve the goals that the staff outlines for you, not only for the staff but for yourself."

Billie went on to say, "It just amazes me that they call me the 'overachieving warrior.' I can't believe how much I have changed and grown since being here in the New Beginnings Program. I can't wait to keep pushing forward and learning more. You must change something in your life, and that's what I did. I'm not the same old Billie anymore. I'm a whole new creation of God, and if it wasn't for Faith Refuge, I wouldn't be the woman I am today."



Billie currently has custody of her oldest son Christopher; however, he is living with his godmother, and they are working together in Christopher's best interest. Billie is also hoping to have a good relationship with the adoptive family of Xavier, the son she gave up.

Her goal is to become a Christian counselor with an emphasis on working with children.



## NEW EMPLOYEE / FAITH REFUGE WOMEN'S PROGRAM DIRECTOR

### MICHELLE STEVENS

MICHELLE WAS born in the Methodist Mission Home of Texas in San Antonio. It was a refuge for unwed mothers. She was adopted and grew up in Chillicothe, TX, where she was raised in the First Baptist Church playing the piano and where her mother worked as the church secretary. Her father was a truck driver.

Michelle withdrew from the church when she had an abortion at an early age. Later in life she experienced the struggles that came from living with an abusive husband in a home where drugs and alcohol were rampant. While going through this struggle, she was introduced to a community of believers and started to change.

After leaving her abusive relationship, Michelle started seeing things differently. She put her trust in God and would use her experiences for good. She started a nonprofit where she helped women in need that came from abusive relationships. For the past 20 years, Michelle has worked as a psychiatric nurse at Wichita Falls State Hospital and Red River Hospital.

When she comes to work, it is her goal to see God's presence in whatever she is doing. By watching how God is moving in people's lives, she can see people making decisions that only God could be directing.

"I see the impact on these women's lives. It's not just about their freedom from addiction, but it's about their freedom from being wounded and that their wounds have been set free. They are free from any guilt or shame they had. It's about their relationship with Jesus Christ, and they're going to take this relationship back to their family that's going to share it with their friends, and it's just going to multiply. It doesn't stop there, it doesn't live there, it just grows and grows and grows."

Michelle has three children, two young men and a female and three grandchildren, again two boys and a girl. Recently she married Clint, her best friend and together they help the recovery community in Wichita Falls.