



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

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**EVERY STORY  
MATTERS**

**INSIDE:** From the CEO • Stories from Our Ministries • What's Happening

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## FROM THE CEO

# EVERY STORY MATTERS

HAVE YOU EVER FORMED AN OPINION about someone without really knowing them? I know I have. For instance, it's tempting to think that every homeless or addicted person is the same ... irresponsible, lazy, basically headed nowhere good. But that kind of evaluation of a person is based on a snapshot in time with no regard for how they got there.

At our two shelters, Faith Mission and Faith Refuge, we live by the motto: "Every person has a story." We always

hope that no matter how bad our clients' pasts are, there is a story of redemption available to them. We can't rewrite their story or wish it away, but we can introduce them to a Savior who can write a brand new story on their hearts.

I believe that by listening to their stories, the good, the bad, and the ugly, we position ourselves in a better place to help them, to meet them where they are, and to share God's love with them.

Every person has a story, and every story matters to God. Do these stories matter to you?

Every Story Matters,

Steve Sparks  
CEO



## STACEY'S JOURNEY

AT FIVE, STACEY MOVED from being raised by her father to being raised by her mother. Her poor relationship with her father did not improve until later in life. This led her to seek acceptance from anybody that would give her attention.

Her drug addiction began when she was 19. After 10 years, she became sober and earned a nursing degree. She was raising three children and in a lot of pain from a previous surgery. She started taking pain pills to manage the pain and soon found herself addicted again. Her addiction, which continued to spiral out of control, now included gambling. She became homeless and

began stealing just to survive.

She reluctantly came to Faith Refuge after being introduced by a friend. She said, "I wore a coat of shame because of things I had done in my past. I believed there were just some things that could not be forgiven." In morning chapel, she heard a message from Steve Sparks about Peter and how Jesus forgave him even after he denied knowing Him. It changed her life. She could relate to Peter. She understood that she could also be forgiven.

By coming to Faith Refuge and entering the addiction recovery program, she has experienced a deep,

committed, full relationship with Jesus. She had to learn how to let people love her and get close to her. She stated, "At Faith Refuge, I have learned how to be free from addiction, how to let go of things, and be forgiven."

Stacey is attending college and getting a degree in Human Services. She hopes to work with people with mental health and addiction troubles. Currently, she works at Faith Refuge as the receptionist and shares her story with those coming through the door.

**"There is hope and freedom after addiction through the love of Jesus Christ."**

# STORIES YOU MADE POSSIBLE



Henry and his two brothers had a happy childhood. His parents were very active in his upbringing. He was in the Boy Scouts and graduated from The University of Texas.

His journey into addiction started when he was discharged from the military after 20 years of service. He lost a brother in Vietnam, and his parents and a brother were killed in a car accident. During that very low point in his life, he turned away from God.

In 2009, Henry found himself in the VA hospital, sick and alone. Because he had no connection with God, he was unable to cope. He turned

to alcohol to help fill the emptiness. When he received his fourth DWI, he knew he needed help.

Henry states that coming to Faith Mission was a blessing. He learned to rely on God and His strength to avoid temptation. His thoughts turned toward God's purpose for his life. He said, "I am surrounded with love, and I am getting the mentoring that I need." His day is busy with Bible study and homework.

"Every morning I pray, 'God please help me with whatever I'm going to face today. I cannot do this on my own.'"

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Henry feels that he has made great progress in the addiction recovery program and has plans for his future. He is involved in two prison ministries. Henry made a connection with his church and has been blessed to volunteer there. He gets a chance to participate and be involved. "That means a lot to me because that is what keeps me going."



## TODD'S STORY

Growing up, Todd was bullied, and that set a tone for the way he looked at the world throughout his teen years. He decided that he was going to change and not allow the bullying to happen anymore. He became a new person. Todd taught himself to play guitar and drums and wrote music. He even started playing in a Christian band.

But dabbling with alcohol led to marijuana and then cocaine. He struggled with his addictions. He tried recovery programs but felt he had lost himself.

Todd bounced around from one radio disc jockey job to another. He traveled a lot trying to find purpose. His backpack with all his papers was stolen in Atlanta, Georgia. He said, "Faith Mission is helping me get back

my I.D. so that I can get a job and a place to live."

Today, at 62, Todd is finding new meaning in life and starting to understand the person that God wants him to be. "Faith Mission has helped me realize what life is about and what my life could be. I don't know what the future will bring, but I am ready to undertake the process. God has reopened my eyes to a new life."

He said, "It's rough out there, but things are getting better for me, particularly since coming to Faith Mission. I felt like I lost who I was for a while."

Todd continued, "Faith Mission is helping me find who I am. They are helping me reestablish myself as a functional human being."

TODD WENT THROUGH A LONG JOURNEY getting to Faith Mission, physically by traveling through many states and emotionally through many life situations. Todd grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, in what he described as a normal family with both parents and a sister. Times were hard financially for his family, but his parents were hard workers and he learned from their work ethic.



# STORIES YOU MADE POSSIBLE

KELLY'S LIFE changed dramatically when her mother passed away. The rest of her family moved away, and they didn't communicate regularly. Her mom had been her best friend and without that closeness in her life, she started abusing drugs and alcohol. "I didn't want to feel anymore. I was like a paper sack floating in the wind, just going wherever it took me." Soon, she was taking meth.

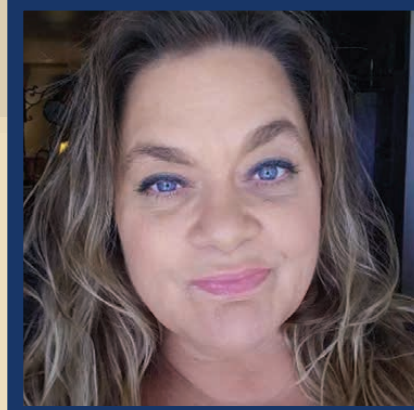
After 15 years of struggling with addiction, on her 47th birthday, she fell to her knees and begged God to help her. She woke up wanting to change. A week later, with the help of her aunt, she found herself at Faith Refuge.

In the addiction recovery program, she learned that someone cares for

her, someone is concerned about what happens to her, and that she matters. She said, "My favorite thing is the homework. By studying the Bible, God opened my eyes." She learned that she cannot do things without Him. He is showing her hope for restoration and hope for her relationship with her grown son.

Since being at Faith Refuge she has been able to gain employment in a job that she finds rewarding. She has been able to make connections with people that really care about her. She said, "I am surrounded by good people that are not out to harm me."

She continued, "There are so many Bible verses that swirl around



**"MY FAVORITE THING  
IS THE HOMEWORK. BY  
STUDYING THE BIBLE,  
GOD OPENED MY EYES."**

in my soul and spirit that come to me. I am so grateful for that opportunity, because the Word will pull you out of a slump faster than anything and set your mind right."

**FAITH REFUGE IS  
CELEBRATING ITS  
10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY.  
MAY 12, 2012,  
FAITH REFUGE OPENED  
ITS DOORS TO HELP  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN.**

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