

FEBRUARY 2026

# GATEWAY

## RESCUE MISSION



A CHANGED LIFE!!

**OUR MISSION** *To offer life changing hope through the Gospel of Jesus Christ to men, women, and children through programs to deliver food, shelter, counseling and discipleship*



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

"Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell."

- C.T. Studd



REX BAKER

I was recently headed somewhere in an awful hurry to do something very important when a guy peeled into our parking lot, rolled down his window, and yelled "Mr. Baker, I need to talk to you!" Just as I was about to apologetically inform the gentleman that I had more important fish to fry, I recognized his face and hollered "hey Cornbread!" and gave him a big hug.

Cornbread went through our New Life Program about 15 years ago. He kicked a bad drug habit and worked at our thrift store for a while. And folks, you've never seen a harder worker than Cornbread. His real name is Richard, but for a reason I never bothered to ask, everybody calls him Cornbread.

Like many Gateway alumni, Cornbread asked to see "Pastor Sweet." Michael Sweet is our Director of Ministries and his parishioners over the years include many guys like Cornbread. I couldn't resist the urge to snap a picture of the two, shown on our front cover. Cornbread is shown on the right.

Cornbread has dealt with some health struggles, but today is married, clean, and sober. He lives in the Jackson Metro area and has a daughter at Jackson State University who wants to become a pharmacist. Other than a few more gray hairs on his head, he looks and sounds like the same friendly and smiling Cornbread we knew when he was in our program.

Pastor Sweet smiled and reminded Cornbread of a time when he was in our program and wanted to leave before graduation and go back home. That happens a good bit in our world. "I said if you're going to leave, just pack your stuff and go and don't come back," said Pastor Sweet as he laughed. "I remember you saying that," recalled Cornbread.

Cornbread stayed in our program, graduated, and turned his life around. Today he is a different man than when he first showed up at Gateway Rescue Mission all those years ago. He's a husband, a father, and a grandfather.

Gerald Snell, our big-hearted shelter manager, recently told me about two schizophrenics who were standing near each other in our shelter one night. Both were simultaneously having conversations with the voices in their heads. When we see sights like that, it's possible to question whether we are doing any good.

Then God gives us a wink by sending Cornbread to remind us that our Heavenly Father still delivers, heals, and transforms lives. Cornbread told us "Gateway saved my life." Theologically, I know that it was God who saved Cornbread, not us. However, sometimes we need to remember that we fight the good fight because God wants to use us to be a change agent in someone else's life. He could wave His magic wand and cure a drug addict in an instant. But He chose to bring Richard to Gateway Rescue Mission, to have him sweat out the withdrawals from crack cocaine, and spend some long months at a place he really wanted to leave.

In Revelation 2:17, Jesus said of those who overcome, "I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it." Richard's new name in heaven probably won't be Cornbread. But for those of you who support God's work at Gateway Rescue Mission, know that on that great day when God gives Richard his new name, your support helped him or others like him overcome.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex M. Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Rex Baker**  
Executive Director  
Gateway Rescue Mission

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Some various and sundry pictures taken recently at Gateway Rescue Mission:

- During the recent cold snap, a guest sat outside our shelter reading a pocket-sized New Testament. Homeless people are often quite spiritual.
- A group of honor students from Jackson State University dropped by one day to serve lunch in our kitchen.
- A member of our kitchen crew serves a plate of tuna-fish and mac-and-cheese for Thursday dinner.



Here are some of the major issues we deal with these days at Gateway Rescue Mission:

- Mental illness is rampant. We see many cases of schizophrenia.
- Most of our clientele struggling with addiction are poly-drug addicted. Meaning, they use a variety of drugs rather than having one drug of choice. Some years ago, most of our New Life Program residents were addicted to crack cocaine. Very few did “ice”, which was considered a biker drug. Today, ice is better known as crystal-methamphetamine.
- We are currently studying ways to deal with opiate addicts. Many opiate addicts don’t want to enter rehab at a shelter because they get dope-sick when the opiates wear off. This produces fever, shakes, cramps, etc. As one former opiate addict told us “it feels like every bone and muscle in your body is hurting at the same time.”
- We are working to encourage the chronically homeless folks who have drug issues to get help. It’s literally one person at a time.



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We'd like to give a Gateway Shout Out to Century Club Charities. Century Club President Durr Boyles and Executive Director Steve Jent recently presented a donation to Gateway Rescue Mission's Restore Life to Jackson campaign. Gateway board members and staff showed up for the occasion.

Not to be outdone, the Madison Middle School's 6th Grade Beta Club donated a truckload of coats, blankets, and clothes. Club sponsor Amelia Blalock and Gateway staffer Eli Saucier joined in with this sharp group of sixth graders for a picture.



Thank you all for your support of our ministry at Gateway Rescue Mission!

## CURRENT NEEDS

- **Let's lay it on the line. We need donations of used furniture and good household items for our thrift store.** Thrift store sales go directly to help fund our ministry to the homeless, hungry, and addicted. You can take donations to our store or call our dispatch office to schedule a pickup for larger items. The number is 601.932.1668.
- **We need customers to shop our thrift store at 2850 Highway 80 East in Pearl to buy merchandise.** The closing down of flea markets in Pearl and Flowood negatively impacted our sales over the last year.
- **We continue to need donations of bottled water.**
- **We also need non-perishable or canned foods.** Large, #10 sized cans work great.

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