

streetsmart



Your twice-a-month e-newsletter from AGRM

Useful news and information for association members

Volume 11 Number 24 | December 15, 2017 | www.agrm.org

[Printer-friendly](#) [Feedback](#)

ourstreet News from AGRM and our members

membershipstop Highlights of AGRM member benefits

mainstreet Reports from North America's downtowns

divisionstreet Vital statistics from industry experts

marketstreet Employment and product ads

streetlight Words to brighten your passage

This issue of *Street Smart* is sponsored by:

Not just any insurance...

Rescue Mission Insurance

Property / Liability / Auto / Residents
Volunteers / Directors & Officers
Workers Compensation / Health & Benefits

THE
MERRIAM
AGENCY INSURANCE SINCE 1895
CHARLES W. MERRIAM & SON, INC.
1 (877) MERRIAM (637-7426)

RescueMissionInsurance.com



ourstreet
News from AGRM and our members

2018 Convention Early-Bird Rate Ends TODAY!

If you haven't taken advantage of the best price for AGRM's Annual Convention next June, stop what you're doing and handle it now. Join the many who have already taken advantage of the cost savings, and more importantly, who understand the great value of connecting with others who do what they do all across North America.

This big event will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 12–15, 2018.

Visit www.agrm.org/convention for all the details, or go straight to our [online registration page](#) to get yourself and your staff signed up. Early-bird registration can only be done online.

Another Reason to Make Sure You Register Right Away!

From all the missions that register before the early-bird rate ends, we will be drawing for a \$200 gift certificate to Pier 106. Within walking distance of our convention hotel, located right on Milwaukee's RiverWalk, Pier 106 includes dining on a riverside patio.

This offers a chance for one mission's staff to enjoy a delicious meal in a relaxing setting—without having to foot the entire bill—and discuss what you are experiencing at the event. So [register now](#).

Justin Boles Will Start 2018 with a New Title

For almost six years, Justin Boles has served as the Director of Member Services for AGRM, handling AGRM's education programs, coordinating partnership programs with resource providers, and being our members' primary go-to for specific questions and emergency help. Starting in January, he will add Vice President to his business card.

As Vice President and Director of Member Services, Justin will officially serve as the staff member in charge when President John Ashmen is on the road representing the association and exploring new initiatives. Justin will be hitting the trail from time to time, as well, leading certain events and speaking on behalf of the association. About the promotion, John says, "We are blessed at AGRM to have team members who do their work thoroughly and accurately, and Justin certainly is such a person. I trust him on every level and know the interactions he has with members and the general public in the days ahead will be perfectly aligned with our values and vision for the future."

Two New Part-Time Positions Will Soon Be Open at AGRM

As the association moves forward with its refocusing and rebranding—to be unveiled at the Annual Convention in Milwaukee in June—it will be hiring one person to do aggressive membership recruitment from across the spectrum of rescue missions, city missions, gospel missions, and like organizations doing personal transformation ministry with those who have fallen through the cracks in society. AGRM will also be hiring a member services associate to handle assignments in the area of education (e.g., event programming, webinars, and such). Both positions will be up to 30 hours per week. If you have family or friends in Colorado Springs who might be interested in one of these positions, have them contact Director of Operations Stacie Hughes at shughes@agrm.org.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

We will likely say it again, but we trust you will have a blessed Christmas holiday season. In the midst of this crazy time of year for many missions—with both events and a significant fundraising focus—we hope that you can take some time away to enjoy your family and friends and celebrate the amazing truth of a Savior's birth, death, and resurrection in order to bring salvation to those who accept God's free gift.

Our elves at AGRM will also be taking some time away. Officially, our offices will be closed December 25–26 for the Christmas holiday, and again January 1 for the New Year's holiday. Additionally, there will not be a January 2 edition of *Street Smart* (but rest assured that we will be in touch if we need to communicate any breaking news to our members).

It's Not Too Soon to Register for AGRM's DC Forum

As we announced in the last issue of *Street Smart*, registration is open for AGRM's 2018 DC Forum. More than ever before, it's important to have a voice in Washington, D.C. Please consider having someone on your staff join us in the U.S. Capitol March 12–14, 2018, for an opportunity to demonstrate to government leaders the importance of religious liberty and the value that rescue missions bring to our cities. We will have several prominent Washington figures briefing us.

The price of \$389 for the event program includes all AGRM-led sessions on Capitol Hill, materials, and designated meals and food breaks. Hotel reservations must be made separately; please visit the [event registration page](#) for hotel information. We've locked in to two hotels close to Capitol Hill

with good rates (by D.C. standards).

You can find all the details and online registration at www.agrm.org/DCForum.

Coming Soon!

Be sure these dates for AGRM's events are on your calendar. For additional details, visit www.agrm.org, click on the Events tab in the top blue menu bar, and select the event you are interested in attending.

January 11–12 Ripple Effect (Board Acceleration program), Portland, Oregon
January 25–26 Ripple Effect, Birmingham, Alabama
March 12–14 DC Forum (see details above)
April 12–13 Ripple Effect (Board Acceleration program), Portland, Oregon
April 26–27 Ripple Effect, Birmingham, Alabama
June 12–15 AGRM's 2018 Annual Convention
August 28–30 AGRM's CEO Summit

Looking Down the Street...

- **Souls Harbour Rescue Mission** (Halifax, Nova Scotia) recently won \$100,000 from the Aviva Community Fund to build a LIFE Recovery Shelter. Co-founders Ken and Michelle Porter say, "Thank you for your votes, shares, and prayers all leading up to the best Christmas present we could ever receive!"
- Welcome to Jim Flower, new executive director at **Agape House of Prescott** (Prescott, Arizona). Jim had previously served as the mission's board president.
- *People* magazine online edition recently [profiled](#) Alex Fischer, a 7-year-old girl who raised more than \$1,500 to help feed homeless people at Thanksgiving through **Charlotte Rescue Mission** (Charlotte, North Carolina).
- It is with profound sadness that AGRM announces the passing of Marilyn Farmer, long-time CEO of **Morning Star Mission Ministries** (Joliet, Illinois). Marilyn was a former AGRM board member and served on several committees and task forces over the years, and served as a mentor and champion for many of the women in ministry leadership. She will be missed.



AGRM Member Benefit: *2 the Point*

Near the end of October, we "changed horses" in how AGRM President John Ashmen communicates with rescue mission CEOs. As John put it then: "With so many outlets sending you things to read and review these days, we've decided to put our longer Executive Session in the barn and bridle up a new, easy-to-read-and-respond resource. *2 the Point* will be directed to CEOs and can easily be forwarded to other staff members. It will come out monthly (or whenever there are

important matters to present).”

The two brief items in each emailed issue typically include links to sources where readers can find additional information, as well as an Action Step to take for each item.



Michigan Doctors Prescribe Fewer Opioids

It may not be rocket science, but a group of surgeons at the University of Michigan has devised an approach to help curb the nation's opioid epidemic—starting at their own hospital.

According to a [report](#) by NPR, to lower the risk, there's a simple remedy: Surgeons should give patients fewer pills after surgery—the time when many people are first introduced to what can be highly addictive painkillers. They should also talk to patients about the proper use of opioids and the associated risks.

This seemingly small intervention could lead to significant changes in how opioids are prescribed and make inroads against the current epidemic, the doctors say. Their findings were published in the journal *JAMA Surgery*, and used to create new hospital guidelines that cut back on the standard opioid prescription for surgeries.

The report also included "common sense" talking points for doctors and nurses to use with patients. They include:

1. Encouraging patients to use lower-strength, non-addictive painkillers first.
2. Warning them about the risks of addiction.
3. Reminding them that even a sufficient opioid prescription would leave them feeling some pain.

The talking points also offer tips for patients on safely storing and disposing of extra pills.

Charleston's Drug Unit Focus Turns to Recovery

Police officers in the Charleston drug unit have ended their routine of arresting every drug user who shoplifts and steals weed whackers off porches to pay for their drug habit. Instead, they're referring some of them to treatment, leaving more time to pursue major drug arrests.

According to an [article](#) by the *Huffington Post*, the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program seems to be working. In the last three years, more than 170 low-level drug offenders have decided to sign up for addiction treatment instead of being taken into custody, and more than 70 percent of them have turned their lives around.

Ten other cities and counties in Maine, Maryland, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington state, and West Virginia have launched similar programs. And five more LEAD programs are slated to launch next year in Atlanta, San Francisco, Los Angeles, King County, and Waynesville, North Carolina. At least 49 other locations are considering LEAD or similar diversion programs.

Health in America Declines

Despite years of efforts to even out health disparities across the United States, some states are dramatically healthier than others.

According to a [report](#) by CNN, Massachusetts, Hawaii, Vermont, Utah, and Connecticut rank as the five healthiest states, while West Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi rank the least healthy in America's Health Rankings, according to the report by the United Health Foundation.

The rankings take into account a variety of health factors, such as rates of infectious diseases, obesity, physical inactivity, smoking, and infant mortality, as well as air pollution levels and the availability of health care providers.

This latest report shows that the nation's health overall is getting worse, leaving the United States ranking 27th in terms of life expectancy in a comparison of 35 countries.



Parents Struggle with High Cost of Child Care

American parents are struggling with raising children, and the biggest cause for it is the high cost of child care.

According to an [article](#) from Carbonate.TV, 32 percent of the nation's parents say they spent 20 percent of their annual household income on child care, which includes fees for care centers and wages for a nanny, sitter, or au pair.

Four in 10 parents said the astronomical cost was causing strain in their familial relationships. Part of the tension comes from their entire budget being swept away for their children. At least 70 percent of parents went over budget by \$100 monthly for child care.

In fact, 20 percent of those surveyed are opting to have fewer kids (even though they want more) because care is too expensive for them. The majority of these people also delayed in starting a family.

Survey Explores Difference Between Belief and Self-identification

About one out of four Americans say they are Evangelical Christians. Most of them are white, live in the South, and identify as Republican. Many go to church every week. But they're not always sure what they believe.

In a [report](#) by LifeWay, researchers surveyed the intersection of belief and belonging in the Evangelical movement, using a set of four questions about the Bible, Jesus, salvation, and evangelism. Those questions were developed in partnership with the National Association of Evangelicals. Those who strongly agree with all four are considered to be evangelicals by belief.

Fifteen percent of Americans are Evangelicals by belief, while 24 percent of Americans self-identify

as Evangelicals. Researchers found some significant differences between the two groups.

Evangelicals by belief are more diverse than self-identified Evangelicals: 58 percent are white, 23 percent are African-American, 14 percent are Hispanic, and 5 percent claim another ethnicity. Seven out of 10 of self-identified Evangelicals are white, 14 percent are African-Americans, 12 percent are Hispanic, and 4 percent claim another ethnicity.

West Coast Homeless Crisis Increases National Average

The nation's homeless population increased this year for the first time since 2010, driven by a surge in the number of people living on the streets in Los Angeles and other West Coast cities.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released its annual Point in Time count, a report that showed nearly 554,000 homeless people across the country during local tallies conducted in January. According to a [report](#) from the *Orange County Register*, that figure is up nearly 1 percent from 2016.

Of that total, 193,000 people had no access to nightly shelter and instead were staying in vehicles, tents, the streets, and other places considered uninhabitable. The unsheltered figure is up by more than 9 percent compared to two years ago.

Increases are higher in several West Coast cities, where the explosion in homelessness has prompted at least 10 city and county governments to declare states of emergency since 2015. City officials, homeless advocates, and those living on the streets point to a main culprit: the region's booming economy.

The numbers in the report back up what many people in California, Oregon, and Washington have been experiencing in their communities: Encampments sprouting along freeways and rivers; local governments struggling to come up with money for long-term solutions; and conflicts over whether to crack down on street camping and feeding those who are homeless.



marketstreet
Employment and product ads

ACTS Workshop

The Association of Christian Thrift Stores (ACTS) will hold their Annual Workshop January 14–17, 2018 in Durham, NC. Participants will be staying at the Hilton Durham near Duke University. You can register online and get the hotel reservation information at actswebsite.com.

Cost of the Workshop and membership is \$315.00 per person. The room rates for 2 double beds is \$99.00 per night.

The Workshop cost includes eight training sessions, six meals, a tour of the Durham Rescue Mission's Thrift Store Operations, and a dessert reception with our vendors. We hope to see you there if you have a thrift store or are considering opening a store to help fund your ministry.

--

The following job positions are currently open at AGRM member missions. Please visit www.agrm.org/careers to view full descriptions and to apply. Click [here](#) for instructions on using AGRM's Recruiting Center to post open positions for your mission.

[Care Support Specialist](#): Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

[Case Manager, Men's Shelter](#): Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Cook](#): Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

[Development Associate](#): The Path of Citrus County, Beverly Hills, FL

[Development Director](#): Home of Grace, Vancleave, MS

[Development Director](#): Waterfront Rescue Mission, Inc, Pensacola, FL

[Development Officer](#): Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

[Director of Development](#): Rockford Rescue Mission Ministries, Inc., Rockford, IL

[Director of Development & Community Relations](#): Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

[Director of Justin's Place Women's Program](#): St. Matthew's House, Naples, FL

[Director of Major Gifts](#): Waterfront Rescue Mission, Inc., Pensacola, FL

[Director, Lighthouse for Women & Children](#): Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

[Domestic Violence Advocate](#): Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Executive Director](#): **Outreach Gospel Mission**, Brookings, OR

[Executive Director](#): The Rescue Mission, Tacoma, WA

[Faith Community Nurse - Guest Services](#): Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

[Finance Director](#): Open Door Mission, Rochester, NY

[Food and Beverage Driver](#): San Francisco City Impact, San Francisco, CA

[Guest Services Assistant - Women's Shelter](#): Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

[Health and Wellness Center Manager](#): San Francisco City Impact, San Francisco, CA

[Kitchen Supervisor at Women's Recovery Center](#): Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA

[Major Donor Representative](#): **Union Rescue Mission**, Los Angeles, CA

[Major Gifts Officer](#): Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY

[Overnight Supervisor](#): Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI

[Recovery Program Coordinator](#): Westminster Rescue Mission, Westminster, MD

[Resident Advisors](#): Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI

[Resident Assistant, Center for Women & Children](#): Bay Area Rescue Mission, Richmond, CA

[Residential Coordinator_Cornerstone Manor Facility](#): Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY

[Salesforce Data Analyst](#): Atlanta Mission, Atlanta, GA

Sous Chef: **Open Door Mission**, Glens Falls, NY

STAR Counseling Supervisor: Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO

Transportation Specialist: Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA

Women's Growth Leader: Portland Rescue Mission - Shepherd's Door, Portland, OR

Women's Recovery Counselor: Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA

Women's New Life Recovery Program Case Manager: Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

Women's Recovery Manager: Portland Rescue Mission - Shepherd's Door, Portland, OR



Why Shepherds?

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told (Luke 2:15–20).

Whenever we read the story of Jesus' birth or attend a church Christmas play, we expect the shepherds to play a prominent role. Every nativity scene includes a cute little angel and gentle shepherds. They're just part of the package.

We might easily embrace shepherds as key characters in the story, but a Jewish person 2,000 years ago would have found this incredulous. For the birth of the Messiah, surely God would invite kings or political influencers, priests or religious insiders, but never shepherds.

Shepherds were social outcasts. They were poor, uneducated, uncultured, and uncouth. They were rough characters in small towns on the fringes of society, so much so that their testimony was not even admissible in court. If you were with your family, walking through town, you would likely go to the other side of the street to avoid them.

Shepherds were religious outsiders. Because the work of caring for the sheep made them ceremonially unclean, they were not allowed into the temple courts or to be an active part of synagogue worship. When it came to religion, they were always on the outside looking in.

Yet God invited a group of guys who had been labeled as outcasts and outsiders by everyone, and placed them at the top of the invite list for the most important birthday in history.

This is a theme we see continue throughout the story of Jesus' life:

- Jesus hangs out with religious outsiders, social outcasts, and “sinners” so much that He is accused of being a glutton and a drunkard.
- Jesus heals a man with leprosy—considered contagious and religiously unclean—by touching him. Most people would have avoided lepers altogether.
- Jesus chooses an inner circle of followers that includes uneducated fishermen, a former tax collector who has sold out countrymen, a zealot who wants to kill the Romans, and even a former prostitute.
- Jesus consistently seeks out those who are considered social outcasts and religious outsiders and invites them to be at the center of His ministry.

Those who have been relegated to the outside are not only the focus of His mission—they become its leaders. The shepherds had nothing to offer Jesus. They were not religiously trained or socially polished. Unlike the wise men who would arrive later, they did not have exquisite gifts. These guys lived under the stars with only the clothes on their backs, a staff to guide the sheep, and a rod for protection. They had nothing of value to bring to Jesus except for themselves. That’s exactly what He wanted, and what He still wants today.

Used with permission from Daily Devotionals, www.shortdailydevotions.com.

To contribute: If you would like to write a devotional thought for StreetLight, please make it about 200 words and include at least one Bible verse or passage, and submit via [email](mailto:).

AGRM is a nonprofit organization committed to furthering rescue missions. AGRM provides limited space in "Market Street" for advertising opportunities, services, and products to advance the cause of rescue missions. AGRM is not responsible for the claims made by its advertisers and reserves the right to select or reject any advertising, in the sole discretion of AGRM, for any or no reason.

PRIVACY: Protecting your privacy is very important to us at AGRM. We will not rent, sell, or exchange your e-mail address with a third party for any purpose.

All Scripture quotations taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, unless otherwise noted. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Street Smart is sent to you as a member service of AGRM, and is published on the 1st and 15th of each month (unless those dates fall on a weekend or holiday). The content does not necessarily represent the views of or imply endorsement by AGRM. To submit items for publication, e-mail editor@agrm.org. To unsubscribe, email unsubscribe@agrm.org.