



2017 Annual Report
Mel Trotter Ministries

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Mission

Mel Trotter Ministries exists to demonstrate the compassion of Jesus Christ, through rescue and restoration for anyone experiencing hunger and homelessness.

Vision

Through the power of Christ, bring an end to homelessness in West Michigan, one life at a time.



Dennis Van Kampen
congratulated Daphanie
upon graduating from
the Restoration Program.



Relationships

You're the key to helping more people.

No matter our age, our experience, our education...we all still have a lot to learn!

Truth is...anyone can experience homelessness. It can happen overnight or after a long hard journey. I've learned that people don't become homeless when they run out of money, at least not right away. They become homeless when they run out of relationships. None of us were created to go through life alone. If the lack of relationships is a critical factor in people ending up under bridges and in shelters then relationships have to be a part of the solution.

In the 2017 Annual Report, you will meet some of the "who" of homelessness and you'll probably notice that you have something in common with our guests. I hope you are

reminded that you have walked alongside our guests through your gifts, time, and prayers. You have played an important part in helping to restore lives and reunite families in the past year. Above all, through your investment, you are sharing God's love and the hope of Christ with those who come to us when they are at rock bottom.

Please accept my thanks for your gifts and prayers. Your compassion continues to rescue and restore hurting people every day at Mel Trotter Ministries.

Grace and peace,

Dennis Van Kampen
President/CEO

Youth House

With you, we're slowing the cycle of homelessness.

Damon* came up to Grand Rapids from Florida to start a landscaping business. When it folded, he lost his apartment and had nowhere to turn.

entered the Youth Emergency Shelter, then entered the job readiness program, secured a full-time job, and was the first tenant at the MTM Youth House.

A lack of family and positive community support is causing young men like Damon to experience homelessness in growing numbers in West Michigan. Whether it is due to aging out of foster care, escaping dangerous home situations, or getting kicked out of the family for identifying as LGBTQ, young men ages 18 to 24 are entering the Mel Trotter Youth House to find hope and "family."

Four young men live with a house mentor at the Youth House, located on Madison Avenue. They have access to a youth advocate, community supports such as local churches, and the Mel Trotter clinics. The young men are responsible to pay rent of \$250.00 per month, along with divided utility bills. To help these young men prepare for a move into independent housing, \$50.00 of the monthly rent is placed into a savings account.

Opened in April 2017, the Youth House provides a safe home and lessons in responsibility, budgeting, interpersonal relationships, and connecting with community resources. It keeps young men who are experiencing homelessness from becoming chronically homeless. Through word of mouth, Damon

"I'm very grateful for the help that I've received here," Damon said. "It's good to have someone to talk to. It's a learning experience."

Through your continued support, we're able to reach more youth who are in need.

**Damon's name is changed for his privacy and he is not pictured.*



Through word of mouth, Damon entered the Youth Emergency Shelter, then entered the job readiness program, secured a full-time job, and was the first tenant at the MTM Youth House.

Pathway Home

You helped 84 families get housing.

Pregnant, unemployed and already caring for three children, Monica* was grateful to be able to count on her mother for a place to live. Then, her mother suddenly announced that she was going back to her native Puerto Rico. Monica found herself and her children homeless in just four days.

A mother with children escaping an abusive boyfriend; a debilitating injury and loss of employment; a drastic increase in rent beyond a family's ability to pay--all these situations and more are causing families like Monica's to seek shelter at Mel Trotter Ministries. Over the last few years, Mel Trotter has created 22 family units which have been at capacity since they opened.

Monica connected with Mel Trotter and the Pathway Home Program in plenty of time to have her baby... at the Mission! After a brief hospital stay, Monica returned to MTM with her new daughter Malia. Monica

said, "I found a job pretty quick. But it was still hard finding housing."

The Pathway Home Shelter Program is a collaboration with Family Promise of Grand Rapids to quickly get families in housing and keep them there. Through this partnership and your compassion, we have been able to reduce the average length of stay in emergency shelter from one year to only 55 days on average!

Thanks to the PH Program, Monica found a place that she and her children are happy to call home. "It feels wonderful!" she enthused. Looking ahead, Monica's positive attitude and her faith in Jesus Christ will serve her and her children well.

Last fall, the Pathway Home joint fundraising campaign raised more than \$300,000 to support basic needs and emergency shelter for families.

**Monica's & Malia's names are changed for their privacy and they are not pictured.*



84

*Families found
a home through
Pathway Home in
2017.*

Rural Outreach

You helped us go farther.

\$576. Five-hundred and seventy six dollars was what Mandy* needed to avoid being evicted from her mobile home park in the Cedar Springs area. From losing her job because she took time off to care for her dying mother-in-law; to her husband's incarceration; to a divorce, Mandy experienced a great deal of trauma in a short period of time. She and her four-year-old daughter were about to be driven out of their paid-off mobile home the week of Thanksgiving because Mandy could not come up with the past due lot rent. That's where Mel Trotter came in.

In June 2017, MTM hired Steve, a case worker, to help with outreach in northern Kent County who helps bring services to those like Mandy who live in areas with limited resources. These outreach efforts are in partnership with North Kent Connect, Lean on Me Outreach, and Cedar Springs Public Schools.

Cedar Springs Public Schools estimates 51 students are currently homeless in the district. These families have no permanent address—they are living in motels, cars, or bouncing from friend to friend as they double up. Steve's goal is to guide people to services which aren't easily obtained when you live outside the city or the suburbs of Grand Rapids. But his greatest desire is to keep people in their homes as he was able to do with Mandy.

Steve explains, "We're able to offer rural families quick empowerment—not the long-term help that can breed toxic charity. Often, families only need a one-time financial boost and follow-up connections to churches and other services to keep them moving forward."

You allow us to reach people like Mandy and at times we get to stop homelessness before it starts. Thank you. By the way, Mandy now has a new job, is learning to manage her finances and provide for her family.

**Mandy's name is changed for her privacy and she is not pictured.*

A night scene of a house with glowing windows and a field of purple flowers in the foreground. The house is in the background, slightly out of focus, with two windows illuminated from within, casting a warm yellow glow. The foreground is filled with a field of purple flowers, some in sharp focus and others blurred. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

“

Don't be afraid. Just stand where you are and watch the Lord rescue you.

EXODUS 14:13

Ministry

A new model restores lives in Christ.

Mel Trotter Ministries celebrates 118 years of life-changing ministry this year. Many guests who struggle have told us that they know they can find help at the cross – the physical cross on the corner of the building and the foot of the cross, where Jesus died for our sins.

Long-time staff pastor Reverend Leonard McElveen (who also serves as the VP of Ministry and Outreach) was inspired by God to reform the old rescue mission model by offering a dignified choice to worship.

“Guests are experiencing for the first time what it means to be part of a spirit-filled family and to walk with a Christ-centered community of grace and compassion. I want to see them grow in faith and connect with a local church,” explained Reverend McElveen.

Inspired by witnessing lives restored through relationships with Christ, churches and other

faith communities, Reverend McElveen began leading a new chapel model in 2017.

“The same [spiritual] food that sustains our donors and volunteers will also sustain the guests at the Mission. Churches – their pastor, their praise team, and their congregation now bring their top notch services here. I encourage them to be real, loving and humble...to build connections so that when our guests leave MTM, they have a church family to stay connected to.”

The MTM ministry team facilitates chapel three times a week, coordinates prayer meetings, plans spiritual retreats, designs devotionals and events for guests, and provides pastoral care.

Countless individuals found a new or deeper faith in Jesus last year. This great harvest is because of your support and prayers.



Reverend Leonard McElveen, VP of Ministry & Outreach, prayed over the guests.



Sandy Enders, volunteer, worked on the logistics of The Heartside Christmas Store.

Volunteer Highlight

Sandy Enders

Meet Sandy Enders. Sandy first came to Mel Trotter Ministries as a volunteer in the 90's, then she was on staff for six years, and after retiring she came right back and has been volunteering for the last 10 years or so.

There are three reasons she feels drawn to spend her time at MTM.

First, is her faith. "The thing that draws me back to Mel Trotter Ministries is that they serve the least of our brothers and sisters; and that's who God calls us to serve. People's lives are changed at Mel Trotter—through their relationship with the Lord and through the good guidance they receive from the people here."

Sandy is in her 70's but she isn't slowing down and she still finds it very fulfilling to work. That's the second reason she's at Mel Trotter. Volunteering keeps Sandy busy and she finds it

very gratifying to help out and serve. "The relationships I build with the guests are long-term. I still run into and get hugs from people I knew at Mel Trotter 10 years ago."

Last and certainly not least, Sandy says volunteering at Mel Trotter allows her to be a role model to her four children, their spouses, and her eight grandchildren. "They see me walk the talk about serving the Lord. I try to volunteer at the Thanksgiving Community Meal every year and I often get one or more of my family members to come along and serve too."

Why not consider joining Sandy and the hundreds like her who make the work being done at Mel Trotter Ministries possible? Visit meltrotter.org/volunteer and see where we could use your gifts and talents. Sandy would love to hear from you!

Events



21st Annual Golf Event



Season of Hope



Same Kind of Different as Me



Thanksgiving Community Meal



Christmastime Luncheon

Outcomes

In 2017, your investment made a difference.

Rescue

101,987

nights of emergency shelter for individuals & families.

129,313

nourishing meals served with love and dignity.

460

youth ages 18-24 were served.

Restoration

401

men, women and children found stable housing.

103

people secured employment.

88%

of guests who exit MTM programs successfully remain housed after one year.

84

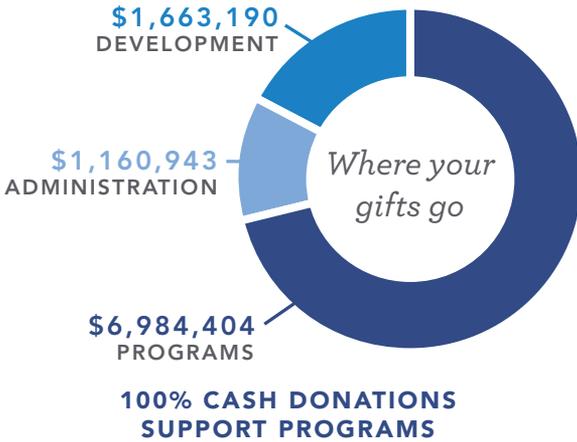
families with children found housing.

2,077

patients visited the Clinics, which provide vision, dental and chiropractic services.

Financial Information

Your investment in rescue & restoration.



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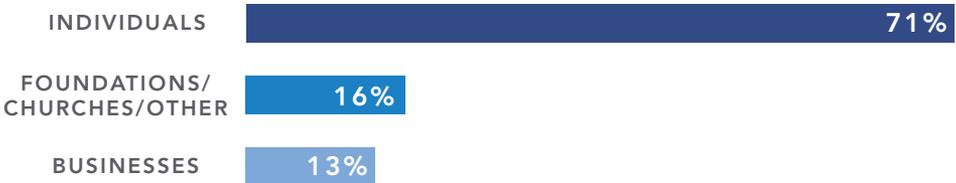
He will rescue us because you are helping by praying for us. As a result, many will give thanks to God because so many people's prayers for our safety have been answered.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:11

Annual Income for FY 2017 \$10,276,735



Sources of Support



For more information, refer to the Form 990 online at meltrotter.org/financials.

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2017 - 2018

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MEL TROTTER

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