

After a “Late Start,” Elizabeth is Making Up For Lost Time

YOU GAVE HER FAMILY A SAFE, SECURE FUTURE

For the past ten years, Elizabeth had been a stay-at-home mother of four. But the “stay-at-home” part was hardly voluntary. Rather, she felt like a prisoner in her own home. Elizabeth was completely dependent on her partner, who would not allow her to have a job, money or even a phone. *“He was more of a parent to me than a significant other,”* she says, *“an overbearing, strict parent.”*

As his grip tightened, his controlling nature soon devolved into terrible abuse. When she could no longer endure his verbal, emotional and physical violence, Elizabeth took the children and sought help at a local shelter, but that was only a temporary reprieve.

With no long-term options, Elizabeth was forced to return home. Sadly, her abuser picked up right where he had left off. *“When you’re in that situation, you don’t think*

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“When we came here, we felt safe.”

Elizabeth
LSS CHOICES Client

**A MESSAGE FROM
RACHEL LUSTIG,
PRESIDENT AND CEO**

Summer should be a time to enjoy long days and warm nights filled with family, friends and fun. But it's not like that for everybody.

Here in Central Ohio, hundreds of men, women and children are barely getting by. Children who had free school meals every day are hungry because their parents can't afford groceries. Our neighbors experiencing homelessness are in danger of dehydration or heat exhaustion. Victims of domestic violence and their out-of-school children pray to make it through the day without being abused.

Lutheran Social Services is here for all of them, providing shelter, food, safety and healing. Your support helps to fund a continuum of services, providing vital care to our hurting neighbors in 21 counties.

Thank you for helping to create a better community through your compassion. I wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy summer.



Rachel Lustig
LSS President
and CEO



Help Our Hurting Neighbors This Summer

Summer can be a harsh time for our neighbors who are homeless, abused and hungry. Many turn to LSS for help to get through these challenges. But summer is a challenging time for us as well, as donations don't always meet the growing needs.

Please continue your generous support to keep the services flowing through the summer. You'll provide hope for:

- Families who visit the LSS Food Pantries to help feed their children this summer when school lunches aren't available.
- Men and women who are struggling with poverty, job loss or other devastating crises at LSS Faith Mission.
- Victims of domestic violence and their children at LSS CHOICES fleeing abuse or working to heal and rebuild after experiencing trauma.

Your gift will provide help — nourishing food, safe shelter and life-transforming services — and restore hope to our neighbors in need.

Please give today — and again later in the summer if you can. You can give online at lssnetworkofhope.org/SummerNews, or just use the enclosed reply slip to send your gift today. Thank you!



THANK YOU FOR SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

Over the past year, you helped provide more than 500 U.S. veterans with life-changing aid from LSS homeless service programs.

These programs include emergency shelter, transitional housing and Supportive Services for Veteran Families, a VA-supported program designed to quickly get homeless veterans and their families into permanent housing.

Bless you for giving back to our veterans!

You Helped Lead Elizabeth From Crisis to Confidence

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“Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.”
— Psalm 31:24



effectively because you're scared," Elizabeth says. "The only thing you're thinking is, 'Obey him or else.'"

The turning point came when she was beaten badly enough to go to the hospital. "He punched me in the back of the head, and I put my hands up to block it, and I had a whole bunch of bruises. It scared me. It scared the kids. So I took the kids and left."

The hospital referred Elizabeth to LSS CHOICES, our shelter for victims of domestic violence. Here, she and her children felt safe, cared for and respected. "It was very helpful because I didn't have the financial stress on top of trying to emotionally heal and undo that trauma," she says. "LSS CHOICES really helped me and my kids build a new life."

During the time her family stayed at LSS CHOICES, she found a job — her first in over 10 years. "I'm getting a late start stepping into the world." Thanks to you, however, it's a

world full of promise and peace. Now living in her very own apartment, she is excited about the possibilities ahead, especially for her children.

She continues: "The kids are happy. They can actually come home and study in a calm environment. The school says their grades and their behavior have improved dramatically."

Despite her "late start" at independence, Elizabeth is making great progress. Since she started working and renting, her credit score has improved, and she hopes to be able to buy a house someday. Most importantly, she now has self-confidence that will carry her forward and inspire her children. "It was empowering to know I overcame my fear of leaving and just left," she says.

Thank you for helping Elizabeth and so many others find courage in a time of crisis.

You Gave Jeffrey Help in His Time of Need

Ask individuals at LSS Faith Mission what led to their homelessness, and you will hear a number of accounts, each one as unique as the person telling the story. Most, however, can point to one event in their life that kicked off the downward spiral that brought them to Faith Mission. In Jeffrey's case, it was his divorce.

Jeffrey was doing fine until his divorce left him without a home. He turned to his brother for help and moved in with him. When his brother passed away, Jeffrey was unable to pay the bills on his own and lost that home as well. After a brief stay at Faith Mission, he attempted to reconcile with his wife but was unsuccessful.

Jeffrey was also battling two serious health issues: COPD, a chronic lung condition, and congestive heart failure. He would never have survived life on the streets.

Thanks to you, Faith Mission was here for Jeffrey. Not only was he able to sleep in a safe place and have nutritious meals, but he also had access to the LSS Health Center. Here, he got medication and support for his chronic conditions, as well as new glasses and dental care.



Jeffrey now receives disability payments, and Faith Mission is helping him find affordable housing. He will always be grateful, not only for what your support did for him, but how it helps so many in need. *"There are a lot of people who sleep outside. Faith Mission is very helpful. I appreciate it,"* Jeffrey says.

"Faith Mission is a life saver, a help in time of need."


LSS Faith Mission 60th Anniversary Honored in Prayer




On May 21, churches, community leaders and volunteers celebrated a milestone for LSS Faith Mission: 60 years providing shelter and services to those experiencing homelessness. These friends gathered to pray in thankfulness for lives changed over the past 60 years and for another 60 years of compassion to follow.

Your gift offers healing and hope to people in need across Lutheran Social Services. That includes:

 Meals and shelter to homeless and hungry neighbors at LSS Faith Mission in both Franklin and Fairfield counties.

 Nutritious food for families struggling with hunger at the LSS Food Pantries.

 Safe refuge and healing for domestic violence victims and their children at LSS CHOICES.

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