

# Paul's Ponderings

"Hey, Johnny, listen to me!" How many times have we, as parents, said this to our young children? Why don't they listen? Did they hear and not listen? There is a difference between listening and hearing. Have we taken our own inventory of how well we listen to God?



Paul Stasi  
Executive Director

I'm reminded of the calling of Samuel as a youth in 1 Samuel 3 where God calls to a young Samuel while he is serving in the tabernacle. Samuel runs to Eli thinking he was being called by him, but ultimately understands that it was God's voice directly speaking to him. This marked the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry. He listened and obeyed God throughout his life, even when it may not have made sense. So, not only are listening and hearing two different things, but there's another layer of obedience.

## LISTEN

Yet still another layer is applying this in our relationship with others. James 1:19 says that everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak.

We've all heard the quip, which has been attributed to Greek philosopher Epictetus, "We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." This places emphasis on the importance of active listening and prioritizing understanding others over speaking oneself.

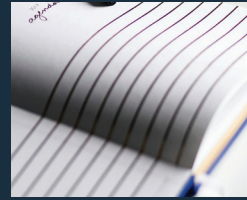
This all ties together because as we hear God's voice and listen to His direction, we will know God's will for our lives better and follow it. Naturally, His desire is for us to have positive relations with others which involves listening over speaking.

At City Rescue Mission, the group and individual counseling, as well as the life skills classes have, as part of their focus, listening and hearing God's voice, obeying His direction, and then improving relationships with others. This allows our students to dig deep into character transformation. As they apply these principles, they add tools to their toolbox, to move on to be successful in their lives.

This life transformation is only possible through your gifts and offerings. We are so grateful for your support on God's work here at City Rescue Mission.

## Living and Giving Made Simple

When stuff and schedules are out of balance, it clutters our soul and makes it challenging to serve others. Here's how to live lighter:



**1. Seek solitude.** Thomas Edison said, "The best thinking has been done in solitude." Turning down the noise level in your life—your phone, TV, and commitments, to name a few—results in a mind at peace and a heart open to give and serve.

**2. Streamline schedules.** Remember, every time you say "yes" to something, you're saying "no" to something else. This clarifies what (and who) deserves the gift of your time.

**3. Spend wisely.** Acknowledging all I have is a gift, frees you to give to others locally and globally.

**4. Strengthen relationships.** There are three strong themes in Proverbs: trust God, care for others, and live as a person of peace. Living according to these concepts can simplify your actions, rooting them in love.

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy by contacting Angela A. Washington at (904) 421-5147 or [awashington@crmjax.org](mailto:awashington@crmjax.org) - Visit [crmjax.legacywill.org](http://crmjax.legacywill.org) to bless your family with an up-to-date will.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

City Rescue Mission is in need of the following:

- Homes of Hope Roof \$15,000
- Bus passes
- Clothing, shoes, and accessories for men, women, and children for Thirft Store
- (2) Ninja Professional Food Processors 850 watts \$230 each
- (2) Hally Stainless Steel tables for prep 30"x48" \$162 each
- (3) Music Stands

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# New Life NEWS

JANUARY 2025



## SHANDA "THIS IS A PLACE OF HEALING"

After a difficult childhood and broken marriage, Shanda met a man whose kindness made her life complete. When he died, she was devastated – and headed down a self-destructive path. At the Mission, through gifts and prayers from friends like you, she was strengthened by God's love and is healing spiritually, emotionally and physically. We're so grateful for your continued partnership and generosity.

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THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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# SHANDA'S STORY

## "THIS IS A PLACE OF HEALING"

Shanda married at age 18 – to escape the struggles that had forced her to grow up way too fast.

The little girl lost her mother when she was only 7. Along with her younger sibling, she moved in with her grandmother who battled diabetes and lost her leg three years later. "So I took on the responsibilities of the household – buying groceries and paying all the bills," Shanda says, on top of going to school and caring for her brother.

But her marriage wasn't the refuge she'd hoped for. After several years of turmoil spawned by substance abuse, it ended. Then she met the love of her life.

**"He was the kindest man you'd ever want to know."**

With his encouragement she regained her sobriety and cared for him with heartfelt devotion after he was diagnosed with a terminal illness. In 2020, he passed away.

**"And five days later, the world shut down."**

Once active in her church and a volunteer at a soup kitchen, Covid restrictions meant Shandra had little contact with those who had been her foundation of support. She was left to grieve alone. And she rekindled her substance abuse.



**"I had lost Shanda. I didn't know that girl I was looking at in the mirror. And then one day I looked, and she was back."**

When the constraints were lifted, she renewed important relationships, but she couldn't shake her self-destructive habits.

**"I had one life in the daytime and another one at night, and the two were beginning to clash."**

In a moment of clarity, she realized the dangerous path she was on and pledged to change direction. She contacted her cousin who is an advocate for our ministry and was guided to our door.

Despite her longing for change, however, the transition wasn't easy – she felt burdened by our rules and structure. But soon after joining our LifeBuilders Program – where we addressed her spiritual, emotional and social needs – she realized it was the best thing that ever happened to her.

**"I learned more about God in three months than in the whole 59 years of my life,"** she says, and His love began to heal her addiction.

**"I'd been depressed and lonely and trying to overcome it with substances instead of God's Word. And when you realize how much He loves you, it's amazing!"**

She is also grateful to our medical staff for recognizing and helping her manage critical physical issues she wasn't aware of. And she has a Christian community she can call on any time for support.

Now healthy, sober and filled with newfound knowledge of the Bible and the Lord, Shanda sees herself differently and knows she is a blessing to others.

**"The Mission showed me I can live again and I still have something I can give to society. I've got a job to do for the Lord and I'm so anxious to get out there and start doing it."**

# HOMELESS MEMORIAL



- Honoring**
- |                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Valerie McCracken                 | Charles Watson   |
| Carly Adams                       | Tracy Lee Biggs  |
| Robbina D. Carroll                | Kevin Scott Carr |
| Frank Liger                       | James Tyson, Jr. |
| Tyrone Raham                      | Tammy Smallwood  |
| Wiley Anderson                    | John Wilder      |
| Bobby Bryant                      | Billie Dodson    |
| Lisa Ellen Williams               | Aubrey Long      |
| Michael Green                     | Tracy Schetrompf |
| Melinda Aline Charles             | Eddie Elvord     |
| DeShayr Barnett                   | Timothy Stewart  |
| Darlene Hollie                    | Samuel Henry     |
| Terry Pugh                        | Cleveland Wilson |
| Richard M. Labo                   | James Wise       |
| Bryce Ann Russell                 | Marvin Johnson   |
| Louis Edward Atchison             | Michael Thompson |
| Tracy E. Whitaker                 | Eddie Holland    |
| Randy McKeel                      | James Carr       |
| Joe L. Grant                      | Charles Boyance  |
| Luis R. Marciano-Santos           |                  |
| Carmelina Elizabeth Henry         |                  |
| Charlotte Emma Jessica Montgomery |                  |

A heartfelt thank you to the community members and organizations in Jacksonville—like Changing Homelessness, Sulzbacher, and the City of Jacksonville—who stand with us in the fight to end homelessness. Together, we honor the lives lost in 2024 while experiencing homelessness. Thank you for loving them and joining us in remembrance.

## SAVE THE DATE

# 10th Annual Difference Makers Gala

May 1, 2025

Southbank Hotel | Jacksonville Riverwalk

*"A Night at the Opera"*

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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT TINA DANIELS, CRDH

Tina Daniels is a retired dental hygienist, a dedicated board member of City Rescue Mission, and a woman whose 30 years of service to the organization reflect her deep passion for helping others. A wife, mother, mentor, active church member at Woodlawn Presbyterian and outdoors enthusiast, Tina's life is a testament to faith, positivity, and service.



Her journey with CRM began in 1997 when, as president of the North Florida Dental Hygiene Association, she sought ways to give back during Thanksgiving. A chance collaboration with CRM sparked a lifelong connection. Tina became one of the first women on CRM's board in the late 1990s, where she has continued to lead with compassion and a mission-driven heart.

As a healthcare provider, Tina's work at CRM extends to the dental clinic, which she helped establish alongside Dr. Karen McCarthy. Recognizing the critical link between oral health and overall well-being, Tina leveraged her position as a professor at Florida State College at Jacksonville, to create a student dental hygiene rotation, giving students hands-on experience while enhancing CRM's services. Today, CRM's dental clinic stands as a vital component of its comprehensive approach to health and wellness.

Tina is especially inspired by CRM's LifeBuilders program, which supports individuals overcoming homelessness and addiction. "LifeBuilders doesn't just change lives—it rebuilds them," she says. Graduates not only regain self-worth but often become beacons of hope for others.

Tina revels in the fact that CRM is more than a shelter: "From day one, we provide resources to reshape lives—training, counseling, education, and above all, a connection to Jesus Christ."

# STUDENT CHRISTMAS PARTY



## Christmas PUBLIC MEAL

# BIG FURNITURE SALE

JAN 31 - FEB 28



**CRM**  
CITY RESCUE MISSION  
THRIFT