



# University Community News

Volume 12

*Restoring hope . . . one life at a time.*

Issue 1

## 2016

## THE YEAR OF "THE PROPHETIC WORD"

Here we are already coming upon the end of the first quarter of 2016 and cannot believe how fast it has come and gone. As we reflect back on 2015 we are all in awe at the faithfulness of our God! It has been our best year ever in the history of University Community Ministries (UCM) and it is all because of you, our faithful family and friends, through your support with your finances, your time and service, but most important your prayers.

In January of 2015 Pastor Tony Stewart, of citylife church, declared that it would be the year of "ONE": A year to UNITE – IGNITE – IMPACT. John 17:20-22 says that Jesus prayed for us that we would be one as He and the Father is one. UCM joined Pastor Tony in this declaration. We knew that if we are going to make a difference by "restoring hope one life at a time...", then we need to make sure that we are **united** as one; **ignited** by the fire of the Holy Spirit; and empowered to make an **impact** in our city.

UCM is blessed to be united with brothers and sisters in Christ from various other churches throughout the Tampa Bay community. We are currently connected with citylife church, LifePoint Church, Idlewild Baptist Church of Odessa, Watermark Church, Acacia Grove Church, and Life Springs Baptist Church. "TOGETHER" we are impacting our city with the love of God.

Because of people like you who have a heart of love and compassion for the poor and needy in our community, UCM was able to provide a lot of services to those in need in 2015. Below are just a few of these services:

- Assist a mom whose daughter was in the hospital in Virginia in a coma by providing her with a hotel room and transportation.

- Rental assistance and Christmas gifts for a couple with three children who lost their home in a fire.
- Supply moving assistance for a physically handicapped lady.
- Groceries for a single mom with five children.
- Volunteers gave 1,500 hours of various support and social services to 3,100 homeless and needy friends in our community.
- Served 4,000 plus meals to our hungry friends.

### Matthew 25: 36-40

"For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'"

We believe that 2016 will be the year of "The Prophetic Word": The year that we will speak God's Word over our home, church, children, job, ministry, and circumstances and see the blessings of God manifested.

Proverbs 18:21 declares that "Death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat of its fruit". The words that we speak can bring forth good or evil and whatever words we choose, we will be responsible for its consequences. **So let's choose to speak life!**

### SAVE THE DATE!!

- 4/02/2016 - Bowl for Hope
- 08/06/2016 - Family Fun Day
- 09/22/2016 - Restoring Hope Banquet

UCM is all about *"Restoring hope . . . one life at a time"*.

## IN THIS ISSUE

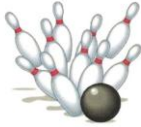
### JAN – MAR 2016

OUTREACHES	Page
Bowl for Hope	2
Friendship Bridge	2
2016 "Chili Cook-off"	2
Operation Jumpstart	3
UCM	Page
Needs/Announcements	3
How You Can Help	4
Did You Know	4

By America Van Gulp



## BOWL FOR HOPE



April 2, 2016  
11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Hosted by



The **2016 Bowl for Hope** fundraising event is going to be better than last year. The 5th annual Bowl-A-Thon will be hosted at Pin Chasers Bowling Center again this year on April 2, 2016 from 11:00 pm – 1:00 pm at 4847 N Armenia Ave., Tampa, FL 33603.

Each bowler is expected to solicit sponsors for their two games of bowling with goal of raising \$10,000 from the event. Each bowler will receive complimentary food and drinks and an opportunity to win a wide variety of raffle prizes throughout the two-hour event.

University Community Ministries (UCM) is providing volunteers and/or their guest with the opportunity to field a team of five (5) bowlers. Those bowlers and friends of UCM would solicit people to sponsor their team. The sponsor is committing to a one-time contribution. Lane sponsorships for \$250.00 per lane will also be available to community partners' businesses. No gift will be too small and it will make a difference in someone's life.

Please support this fun and worthwhile event and remember all proceeds benefit the program and services of University Community Ministries, Inc. We are expecting the Bowl for Hope to be a great team effort. If you are interested in helping us reach our Bowl for Hope Fundraising goal, you can donate on our donation page at <https://university-community-ministries-inc.networkforgood.com/projects/10765-main-donate-page>

You can also contact our Bowl for Hope Chairman, Justin Dolan at 813-655-4444 or contact the UCM office at 813-935-8400.

## FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE (Senior Adult Events)

Friendship Bridge Luncheons Stay Lively

By Pat Fulton



Lunch is never dull for Friendship Bridge members. Take a look at the themes for the first three gatherings of 2016: Back to the 1950s (January); Do Your Heart Good (February); and Safety for Seniors (March).

Because of the lively programs led by Pastor Molly Cox and the ongoing friendly atmosphere, attendance is growing, month by month. For the 1950s revival, the group sang songs from that era. The Valentine's Day theme meeting also featured a sing-along, led by Ozie Brown with accompaniment by John Maglott. Miguel Thornton told the group about the beginnings of the Tuskegee Airmen and their achievements in World War II.

Identity theft, fraud and scams targeting seniors, hurricane safety and carjackings will be vital topics at the March meeting, brought by members of the Crime Prevention Task Force.

During each luncheon, the newsletter editor goes from table to table, getting responses to a predetermined question. The answers appear in the next month's issue of *Senior Link*, the Friendship Bridge newsletter. Questions have included, "If I were king/queen of the world," and "If I could relive one day of my life."

## "The First Chili Cook-off"

By Ashley Dolan

The first ever chili cook-off was hosted by Acacia Grove Church in coordination



with University Community Ministries for the Sulfur Springs community January 30, 2016. It was a beautiful day with wonderful people and some pretty awesome chili. The chili cook-off contestants were composed of 10 different, competitive cooks competing to have the best chili in town or well... at least for that event.

Not only did this event serve food, but there were also plenty of clothes to give out to those in need that the ladies worked together to organize! January seems to be the time when Tampa consistently gets cold (or at least cold in my books... 70's and below is boot weather for most Floridians!) so it was great timing to give out some winter clothing to those in need. This event was a great opportunity to fellowship, be blessed, and bless others.

It was great to see people come together from different churches for the purpose of serving God. Our purpose according to Ephesians 2:20 says: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Isn't it great to know that God has a plan for us to serve His kingdom? That we have a much bigger purpose here in this world? That we all have spiritual gifts we can use to serve His purpose? God's plan is always the best plan. This is something I have to keep on reminding myself when something doesn't go my way. A big thank you to Pastor Josh Callahan from Acacia Grove Church for organizing this event!



## OPERATION JUMPSTART (Homeless Community Outreach Program)



### Renice (Leon) Freeman "Restored Hope"

By Justin Dolan

Brother Leon is and has been a friend to many people in the Sulphur Springs Community for a long time. As of late he has found many things going his way although throughout the years things haven't always been so great.

The UCM Operation Jumpstart Program provides the homeless with a hot meal every Saturday morning and Leon joins the group for breakfast. In the past UCM was blessed to be able to provide a place on Sunday to take showers, get personal hygiene items, shoes, a change of clothes, a haircut, and a hot lunch for our homeless friends. Leon has been homeless for many years and was able to avail himself of some of our services throughout that time. Leon has slept all over the streets of Tampa and his most recent home was in an abandoned church. During his time staying at the church Leon acted as the grounds keeper for the owner who allowed him to stay there. He has built a knowledge of and faith in our great God and makes sure to volunteer at church and attend Bible studies and services.

A few months back, things went from bad to worse for Leon. He was staying in the abandoned church without electricity, water, A/C or heat. Then an eviction notice was posted on the door with the demand that he vacate the property. That same week, Leon was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver. Now he not only has a very serious health condition, he is also being forced onto the streets again, and has no place to keep his beloved companion (his two-year-old dog named Venus).

While everything was looking pretty bad for Leon, some very loving volunteers from citylife church and UCM Operation Jumpstart came together to pray and assist, and our prayers were answered. Through the grace of God, Leon found out about Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Alliance's effort called Operation Reveille who assists the homeless veterans in finding a place to live. We went there together and Leon was able to get food, clothing, a suit, a bus pass, and an apartment for free and they also let him take his companion, Venus! The first thing he did when he got his place was to drop to his knees, put his head on the ground and pray thanks to God.

Psalms 55:22 says "Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken." Leon is in a much healthier environment for his condition now. Praise God! Now when we go to visit Leon at his apartment I am greeted by a smile, a wagging tail and there is always a Bible open on the table.



### NEEDS

UCM needs your time and talents – volunteer today! Call the UCM office at (813) 935-8400 or email us at [info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org) and let us hear from you!

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you prefer to receive the UCM Newsletter via email, then email us at [newsletter@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:newsletter@universitycommunityministries.org) to be placed on the emailing list and removed from our mailing list.

### CHECK US OUT!

Visit UCM's **NEW & IMPROVED** website at [www.universitycommunityministries.org](http://www.universitycommunityministries.org) for the latest news and events. Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. You can also like us on Face book at [www.facebook.com/UniversityCommunityMinistries](http://www.facebook.com/UniversityCommunityMinistries)

If there is anything that you would like to see posted on the website or in the quarterly newsletter, email us at [info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org) or fax to (813) 968-8400. We would love to hear from you!

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#### Leadership Team

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University Community Ministries, Inc.  
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Tampa, FL 33682  
813-935-8400 / 813-968-4140FAX  
[info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org)  
[www.universitycommunityministries.org](http://www.universitycommunityministries.org)



## YOU CAN HELP

Join UCM in *Restoring hope . . . one life at a time*. As a supporter, you will receive our quarterly newsletter with important messages about our programs as well as success stories about the people we serve. UCM is a non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

## DID YOU KNOW

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop at AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to University Community Ministries Inc. Bookmark link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-3511326> and support us every time you shop.

**YES**, I would like to partner with UCM in *Restoring hope . . . one life at a time*. Enclosed is my gift to UCM in the amount of:

\$500     \$100     \$250     \$50     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 One Time     Monthly     Quarterly     Annually

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in becoming a volunteer.

### Planned Giving Options:

Please consider a gift to UCM in your will or estate plan.

Please send me information about naming UCM in my will.

I have already made provisions for UCM in my estate plans.

**Thank you.**  
**Make checks payable to: University Community Ministries, Inc.**  
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Tampa, Florida 33682  
[info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org)