

# THE VOICE

HOPE AND A FUTURE

## “I WAS LIVING TO GET HIGH”

43 years ago, Judy said goodbye to a life of addiction!

Certain she was dead, Judy's friends were about to stuff her body down a garbage chute when her eyelids fluttered. The near-fatal heroin overdose taught her a lesson . . . but not the kind you'd expect.

An overdose wasn't enough to snap Judy out of her dangerous habits.

“From then on, I made sure I did drugs in my own home or some other decent place,” she said. “I wasn't going to die and be dumped into the garbage.”

As a child, she never pictured herself becoming an addict. But her life was turned upside down when her dad died in a car accident, leaving her with grief to carry as she grew up. She sought security in marriage as a young woman out of high school. But four years later, she found herself divorced. It was falling in love with a man who was struggling with a heroin habit that opened the door to drug addiction. She was hooked.

Some time after the almost fatal overdose, Judy knew something had to change, especially for her son's sake. “I didn't want his friends to say, ‘Your mom's a junkie,’” she said. But her efforts to get clean turned to alcoholism.



READ MORE OF JUDY'S STORY INSIDE ►



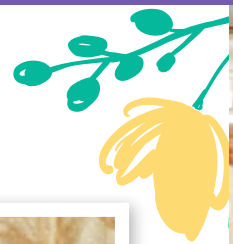
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*Summer of 1991*



*At the Mission's Harvest Home in 1984*

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## Finally free . . .

Her son eventually went to live with his dad, giving Judy no more reason to put up a front of sobriety. "As long as I had money for beer, I didn't care."

### FROM NEAR DEATH TO NEW LIFE

After a two-week binge, she found herself at a truck stop 800 miles from home with 26 cents in her pocket. "At this point, I would have tried to kill myself if I got my hands on a bottle of pills," she said.

A waitress convinced Judy to call a local church, and soon a pastor showed up at the truck stop. "He kept telling me this could be the beginning of my life instead of the end," said Judy. The conversation led her to accept Christ in a restaurant booth.

Afterwards, Judy was brought to Haven of Rest, where she found the shelter and safety she needed. Finally,

*"I would have tried  
to kill myself. . ."*

— Judy

she could focus on ending her alcoholism for good and restoring her relationship with her son.

### A LIVING TESTIMONY

Judy didn't believe she'd survive long enough to see her life turn around. But all it took to put her on the path to healing and freedom from addiction was a conversation about Jesus in a restaurant booth.

She became one of the first workers at Harvest Home and went on to study drug and alcohol counseling at The University of Akron to help other women.

So often, life-change starts with meeting a basic need. Your gift of physical care does more than bring comfort — it opens the door to new life in Christ.

Judy went to be with the Lord at the young age of 50. She was proof that your giving literally saves lives — both on this earth and for eternity.

*Easter is a season of restoration, and it's coming soon. Many still need to know that the power of Christ's love can change their lives. Your gift today is the start of a powerful transformation story!*





# ING LIVES POSSIBLE!

Celebrating  
**80**  
YEARS  
1943-2023

## CEO'S MESSAGE

### FACE TO FACE WITH JESUS



REV. JEFF KAISER  
CEO

Eighty years ago, a husband and wife, Rev. C.C. Thomas and Marjorie Ruth Thomas, gave their lives to Christ.

In faith, they answered God's calling upon their lives to open a rescue mission in 1943.

Working with a \$35-a-month budget, the Mission doors were open to people struggling with addiction and homelessness.

Judy's story (on page 1) is just one example of how God uses the Harvest Home to bring stability into people's lives.

As we celebrate 80 years of sharing God's love, serving and interceding in our communities, I want to thank you for your friendship and partnership.

As we move forward together in the years to come, much work still needs to be done.

Addiction, homelessness, mental health issues and abuse continue to create havoc for the many guests who come through our doors.

As we minister and work together, lives will be changed through God's grace. Thank you for your generous and continued support.



*Thanks to you . . .*

## WE'RE CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF TRANSFORMED LIVES

From 1943 — when the ministry was founded in a tiny storefront — all the way to now, there are so many powerful stories of restoration to tell . . . and it's all by God's grace and your support.

Without you, we couldn't have completed 80 years of providing safe shelter, meals, addiction recovery, life transformation through the power of the Gospel and so much more.

Let's celebrate together! Join us on April 28 at 6:00 pm at Quaker Station, 135 S Broadway Street in Akron. To make a reservation, contact Heather Yoder at 330-535-1563 or email her at [hyoder@havenofrest.org](mailto:hyoder@havenofrest.org).



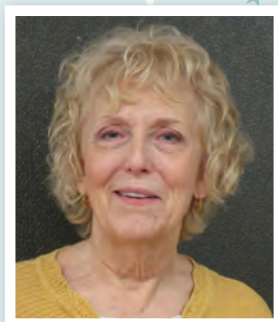
RSVP to our free Anniversary Dinner online at [havenofrest.org/get-involved/events/anniversary-banquet](https://havenofrest.org/get-involved/events/anniversary-banquet)

## *Congrats to our* **2022 WOMAN OF THE YEAR!**

To know what a deep love for the Lord and a joy for life truly look like, look to our 2022 Women's Auxiliary "Woman of the Year" — Sherry Thompson.

A former school teacher and committed servant in the Akron community, Sherry has attended the Women's Auxiliary for about 15 years. She firmly believes, "If everyone does a little part, we get the job done."

Congratulations, Sherry, and thank you for your hard work!



Your generous gift today will

# GIVE GENUINE HOPE AND LIFE-CHANGING HELP

As Haven of Rest celebrates 80 years of changing lives, we do more than look back at all the good you've helped accomplish — we look ahead to the future.

There is no end to this work, and we plan to serve the most vulnerable in our community for years and years to come. But that's only possible with the help of compassionate people like you.

Right now, we are seeking volunteers. Serving at Haven of Rest with other committed individuals is an amazing hands-on opportunity to change lives.

Alongside volunteering, your Easter gift today of any amount can do even more good and transform the life of someone who has experienced the unimaginable. Through critical care and other restorative services, you can give them the fresh start they've been longing for.

Together, we'll change so many more lives! Thank you for your faithful support!

If you'd like to start serving at Haven of Rest, sign up to become a volunteer at [havenofrest.org/get-involved/volunteer](https://havenofrest.org/get-involved/volunteer) or contact Jan Pluck at 330-535-1563.

When you give,  
please be sure  
to include your  
reply form.



## THREE WAYS TO LEAVE A LEGACY WITH YOUR GIVING

We all want our lives to leave a memorable impact. Here are three creative ways you can leave a lasting legacy:

- 1 Invite your family to volunteer.** Bring your children or grandchildren with you to volunteer for a cause you care about. You'll teach them how to give compassionately.
- 2 Create a God-honoring estate plan.** Include letters, stories, and loving words in your will. You'll leave a memorable gift for your loved ones.
- 3 Leave a gift to Haven of Rest in your will.** A charitable gift will truly express your heart for generosity and inspire your loved ones to consider their own legacy.

Contact Mike Solosky at 330-535-1563 or visit [christianwill.org/haven](https://christianwill.org/haven) for more info.

Right now, we are helping to create and update wills for FREE. Go to [giftwise.com/havenofrest](https://giftwise.com/havenofrest) for more info.

