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Victory Outreach

Committed to the passed over and forgotten

BY DAVID PLECHL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Michelle Hollins had been on drugs for more than half of her lifetime.

One cold afternoon in Chicago, someone handed her a flier about a church that was devoted to saving troubled lives through a commitment to Christ.

Hollins didn't think much of it, but held on to the little piece of paper anyway.

Over the course of the next three months she would occasionally take the flier out of her purse, glance at it, then bury it again, preferring the mind numbing high of drugs to the cold slap of reality.

But one day, after waking up to the wailing of her two sons' ignored cries, she decided to do something.

Hollins called the number on the flier.

"I was tired of being on drugs," she said.

The man on the phone told her she didn't need anything - except a little willingness to change.

"They described it as a spiritual boot camp," Hollins said.

A few weeks later, she was on a bus to Portland and determined to turn her life around.

When Hollins arrived in the 'City of Roses' she met Pastor Erskine Sias and his wife, Pastor Roxanne Sias, who manage the Portland branch of Victory Church.

Both are former drug addicts who now run a ministry and two 'restoration homes' committed to the service of 'the passed over and forgotten.'

Erskine and Roxanne help many people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction.

Hollins had been to 13 different treatment centers, but nothing seemed to work until she found Christ.

"It was always conditional," she said. "Here, they only want you to know Jesus."

Hollins said she has found safety and stability in this house committed to God's love. She is drug-free and telling others about what Victory Church has done for her.

"They accepted me into their home, and they didn't know anything about me," she said. "Everything about this home is about Jesus."

Erskine and Roxanne are committed, caring pastors, dedicated full time to the teachings of the bible.



Michael Ward has been attending Victory Outreach Church for over six months. "I put my past behind me," he said. "I came here and I am happy."



PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/ THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Victory Outreach Church members Tilden Blackbear, Terry McBee, Richard Crook and Michael Ward listen to a sermon by Pastor Erskine Sias.

"We run this church like a family," Erskine said. "Seven days a week."

Parishioners in recovery stay in one of the two 'restoration homes.' Guests are expected to rise early, pray often, and stay clean and sober.

work with the women that are turning their lives around by coming to know a higher power.

"We know what's right and wrong, yet we continue to do things we know are wrong," she explained. "But when you come to know Christ,

recovery is possible and the reward of sobriety is well worth the struggle.

"I know where I've been, I don't want to go back there," she said of her past riddled with drug addiction. "When I realize I don't have that craving anymore - it is an awesome feeling."

Hollins wants desperately to be back in the life of her sons, but for now she is taking care of the children that come through the doors of the church.

"I pray everyday to be the woman and mother I should be," she said. Hollins spends much of her time in bible study, fund raising for the church and talking to people about Jesus.

"Thanks to Victory," she said. "My heart no longer resides in misery."

Pastor Erskine Sias can be reached by calling 503-309-2655. Victory Church services are held each Sunday at 11 a.m. at 4007 N. Alaska

We know what's right and wrong, yet we continue to do things we know are wrong. But when you come to know Christ, those things weigh heavy on you.

—Pastor Roxanne Sias

Pastor Erskine bases his life and ministry solely upon the word of God.

"People ask me - 'Don't you ever get tired of doing church?'" Erskine said. "I say no, because I never got tired of doing drugs."

Roxanne says she finds it a joy to

those things weigh heavy on you."

Roxanne said she prefers to work in two's, just like the disciples. "If Michelle has a desire to use drugs, I can stop and pray with her, and lead her back into the presence of God," she said.

Roxanne tells the women that

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Obituaries

TERESA 'HIGGS' CURTIS passed away on Dec. 5 at the age of 44. Curtis, a Portland resident, was born on March 28, 1958 in Vancouver, Wa. She was a self-employed highway flagger and home care giver. Survivors include her husband, Donald Curtis, two daughters, Jessie Wilcox and Jenny Steinbach, her parents, Max and Elizabeth Higgs, six brothers, David, Larry, Dennis, Steve, Brian and Donny Higgs. Curtis was preceded in death by her sister, Marianne Higgs. A memorial was held on Dec. 14 at Killingsworth Little Chapel of the Chimes.

ANNA MARIE VEFF passed away on Dec. 5 at the age of 74. She was born on Aug. 26, 1928 in Leavenworth, Kansas and had lived in the Portland area since 1976. Veff retired from service in the army and was a homemaker. She is survived by her son, Frederick Thomas Veff, four daughters, Valerie Barnes, Cinderella Muniz, Rochelle Myers and Michelle Corona, five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Memorial services were held at Killingsworth Little Chapel of the Chimes and all remembrances can be made to the Cancer Society.

GREG 'SKIPPY' SCARBOROUGH died Dec. 11, 2002 after a long struggle with muscular dystrophy. Funeral services will be held Thursday, Dec. 19 at 11 a.m. at St. Paul Church of God in Christ, located at Northeast Rodney and Stanton. He was born on Nov. 7, 1962 in Portland, the son of Naman and Mary Scarborough. He attended Highland Elementary which is now Martin Luther King. He enjoyed cars, drawing and being with his family and friends. He enjoyed almost anything that a person who didn't have a disability would do. He leaves to mourn two daughters, Lakiesha and Tyiesha; a sister, Elnora; two brothers George and Gary; three half sisters, Selena Poston, Tuyna Scarborough and Demetria Scarborough; grandparents Namam and Zemla Scarborough; and several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and many beloved friends.