



## APRIL MEDITATION

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" I John 3:17 (ESV)

The 2022 stewardship theme at Living Word is **FAITH FORWARD**. One of the goals is to help people see stewardship opportunities throughout the year and learn more about the agencies supported by congregational tithes. The Tacoma Rescue Mission is the focus for April. As long as there is poverty, the Mission will exist. That means followers of Jesus will always be needed to help meet those needs.

We see the people the Mission serves every day. They are pushing shopping carts that contain all their earthly possessions. They are living under overpasses. They are riding city buses just to pass the time. They are shivering in cold, wet clothes. They are sitting at busy intersections asking for help. Based on appearances, they seem radically different from us. Based on our common Creator, they are exactly like us.

Meet Tanya (not her real name). She gave birth to a drug-addicted baby who was immediately placed in foster care. The court ordered her to engage in services that would lead to reunification with her child. She was also told to find a steady source of income so she could ensure a safe and stable home. When asked how her job hunt was going. She responded, "I haven't applied for any jobs. I don't have anything appropriate to wear. I could wear the clothes I have if I could find a place to launder them. I never know when I can shower and wash my hair, plus I sleep in a different place every night. Who knows if I could get to an interview from wherever I am." Those were not the only challenges she faced. She had a pre-paid phone, and if the minutes ran out before the money came in, she could not receive calls. Her teeth were rotten from chronic meth use. Her confidence was low. Even sadder, she had lost hope for a better life.

We do not know what brought Tanya to this place. We do not need to know. She is our sister, created and loved by the same God we serve. We only need to open our hearts and share our resources with her and others like her as ambassadors for Christ in this world.

*"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:17*

Yes, we know that many people are in these predicaments due to their own making. That conversation is for another day. Today we are focused on meeting the immediate needs of people. Our response to them is part of our witness. Loving God makes our hearts softer, and people need tenderness during the tough seasons of their lives. Those of us who love God need to love generously