



Home Cooking With A Delicious Mission

June 29, 2016

Pamela Grow

Dear Pamela,

No one should be hungry or homeless! That's why we gladly worked in exchange for meals at Grace Café. We were grateful for the opportunity to help others while enjoying healthy, tasty meals that kept us going.

You see, life isn't fair. Just one month ago our family had nowhere to go. We needed a little help though we never imagined we would one day depend on the charity of neighbors. Unless you've been through it you never think it can happen to you.

You don't just decide to be hungry or homeless. Living paycheck to paycheck, it doesn't take much to trigger a crisis.

We shared a house – my girlfriend Jess, her mom, our friend Anthony, and Papaw. Our journey to homelessness began when my car got two flat tires. We also had a truck but it wasn't registered or insured. Mom took a chance borrowing our truck to pay the rent and drive to the courthouse to get it legal. She didn't make it.

Mom got arrested and incarcerated – with our rent in her pocket when she got pulled over.

We went to the jail to get the money. They wouldn't give it to us. When you're locked up they take your money.

Half goes to the jail and the rest goes into a commissary account – no exceptions. You guessed it... We got evicted because we had no way to pay our rent. Then I lost my job because I couldn't get to work without a car.



What do you do when there's nowhere to go, no family nearby, a car with two flat tires, an ailing Papaw, and no jobs?

I parked the car with the flat tires at Walmart and Jess, Anthony, Papaw and I walked to a friend's house in Junction City. We borrowed two tents and our friend gave us a ride back to Danville so we could camp at Pioneer Playhouse. Mrs. Henson was hesitant at first but after hearing our story she told us about Grace Café and said we could stay for the weekend if we agreed to volunteer there.

You won't believe what happened next.

The first night it stormed - one of the worst we've ever seen. It was terrifying spending the night under a tent listening to trees snap, lightning crackle, and thunder roar right beside us. We got soaked, had no supplies, and very few clothes. Papaw couldn't handle it and got sick. He's just too old to camp outdoors.

The second night was stormy too. Thankfully, Mrs. Henson gave us permission to stay in an abandoned camper nearby – a *little* safer than the tents.

The next day something GOOD happened. We got to Grace Café!

You should have seen us cleaning up as best we could. We left Papaw to rest and walked to the Café. The love and acceptance we felt was incredible. They didn't judge us. We ate a delicious meal, then dove right in serving food, bussing tables, and cleaning. They even sent food home for Papaw.

You can't imagine how GOOD it felt... to take a break from hunger AND be treated so kindly!

We got a hand up, not a hand out. We worked for 10 days and earned hot, *totally delicious*, meals to nourish our bodies by volunteering – a reminder that we've still got valuable skills even if we're unemployed. Mrs. Henson let us stay in the abandoned camper a little longer because we were dedicated to helping the Café and ourselves.

You'll be happy to hear that we eventually got Papaw into the shelter in Stanford and found a relative in London to take us in. We were sad to leave Danville and the Café but grateful for all they did for us during our time there.

Our family became homeless due to a lethal combination of bad luck, car trouble, and job loss - all in a matter of days. It brought us to our knees. Everything was fine until it wasn't. Fear, hunger, despair, and a sense of failure tortured us. Before we found Grace Café people looked down on us as we walked through Danville with our tents and packs.

Hunger and homelessness are horrible... but losing your dignity is the worst suffering of all.

Thankfully, Grace Café was there to give us hope and that extra push to stay positive instead of being sucked into a downward, depressing spiral of despair.

I'm writing to you because Grace Café needs YOU more than ever. There are so many people like us that need just a little help to get back on their feet.

You should see the lines outside daily filled with guests whose difficult life journeys led them to depend on their neighbors for a while. When the Café is closed two days a week, they go hungry – because they simply cannot afford to pay for food, rent, and health care.

By supporting Grace Café, you help people like us regain our independence. Will you please make a gift to the Pass the Plate for Grace Campaign today? Then drop by Grace Café to enjoy a meal with your family. You'll be glad you enjoyed a most delicious meal. I promise!

With gratitude to Grace Café for all you've done, and continue to do,

Aaron

Aaron

A Grateful Volunteer at Grace Café

Thanks to the generosity of our customers who pay the suggested donation for meals, or guests who pay-it-forward by contributing a little extra, and the donations of those who pay-what-they-can, **Grace Café raises 57% of its budget from in-Café meal donations.** The rest comes from generous friends like you who believe in our mission to END hunger and food insecurity in our community.

That's why we're asking you to DONATE TODAY... because people like Aaron and his family need to eat every day with dignity!

Join the Pass The Plate for Grace Campaign to open Grace Café seven days a week. As soon as you help raise \$25,000 it WILL happen! The campaign has already raised over \$10,000 in only two months because friends like you stepped up to the plate and gave.

Will you please consider a tax-deductible gift of \$25, \$50, or \$75 to the campaign? Perhaps more? Better yet, will you give a gift that's affordable to you? No matter how big or how small, your gift will go a long way to making sure everybody in our community can enjoy a fresh, local, and nutritious meal everyday. **With dignity!**

With Grace and Gratitude from all of us at Grace Café. **THANK YOU!**

Rockelle

FOOD. GRACE. LOVE. DIGNITY. ENJOY. ENJOY. ENJOY!

Grace Café, Inc.
P.O. Box 2384
Danville, KY 40423-2384

YES! I want to END hunger & food insecurity in Danville & Boyle County, KY.

Please return this card with your gift in the envelope provided. Or, visit www.gracecafeKY.org and click on **DONATE NOW** to make a monthly recurring gift via PayPal. A gift of only \$25 per month will provide 100 meals per year for a neighbor in need.

I have enclosed a tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$_____. Please make checks payable to Grace Café, Inc.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email address _____ Telephone # _____

_____ Check Enclosed. OR, _____ Mastercard _____ Visa _____ American Express _____ Discover

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Signature _____ **Thank You.**

Grace Café, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. We want to hear from you! Please use the back of this card to provide feedback, ideas & suggestions.

PTPNO