

IMPACT REPORT 2020



MERCY
HOUSE

A portrait of Pastor Ken Austin, a Black man with a white beard and mustache, smiling warmly. He is wearing a white collared shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a building and trees.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR KEN AUSTIN

I've been honored, as a pastor, to help people understand the promises of God, given throughout his Word. It has been another honor to be part of carrying out those promises.

God is using the Mercy House, New Walk of Life, and you to fulfill his promises to his people. His promises in Matthew 6 to feed and clothe his people like the birds in the sky and the lilies of the field. God invites us into filling those promises every day through our Mercy House team and your generous partnership.

Nevermore has that been true than in 2020. With the global pandemic, we saw God use our two fishes and five loaves of bread on Council Street and magnify it to feed the 5000. As you'll see in this report, the virus has led the demands on our services to grow exponentially, and God met those needs.

But it wasn't just basic needs of food, clothing, and hygiene.

It was growth needs. We started a reading program for the children of our neighborhood to improve their literacy and therefore improve their lives. We started a homework help program to ensure our children weren't falling farther and farther behind because of the virus.

We helped people get jobs in a time of high unemployment and housing in a time of evictions.

God led us to start a conference call in March to connect agencies serving vulnerable populations during a time of confusion and chaos. What started with 4 grew to 258 partners from nonprofits, governments, businesses, and churches all working together to form a coalition solving COVID-related problems and sharing resources, comfort, and hope. With it, we prevailed.

This year brought extraordinary challenges and daily reminders of our extraordinary God.



Pathway House



Reading Program



Uncle John's Library



A Safe Place to Play



Computer Lab



Homework Help Program



FOOD SERVICES

Mercy House provides daily hot lunches, Monday through Friday to our neighbors experiencing hunger, as well as snack bags and emergency grocery bags.

733.3%

increase in lunches served in 2020 compared to 2019. There was a 75.8% increase in grocery bags distributed.

437.5%

increase in hygiene bags distributed in 2020 compared to 2019. There was a 32% increase in showers taken.

HYGIENE SERVICES

Mercy House distributes hygiene kits, diapers and wipes, and has showers available to neighbors-in-need and neighbors experiencing homelessness and poverty.



CLOTHING SERVICES

Mercy House has a clothing closet with items for everyday life or job interviews and uniforms, funerals, and other clothing needs. We also have washers and dryers to meet our neighbors' laundry needs.

35.7%

increase in clothing closet provisions in 2020 compared to 2019. There was a 40.7% increase in loads of laundry in 2020 compared to 2019.



**THANK YOU FOR AN
INCREDIBLE YEAR**

THE BRIDGE WE NEED TO BE

By Pastor Ken Austin, November 13, 2020

One of our high school seniors, a teen in the New Walk of Life Church youth group, was talking with one of our team members a couple of weeks ago about her post-graduation plans. This young woman was accepted to college and has an idea of what she'd like to do, either nursing or dental assistant or hygienist. She wasn't sure and didn't know how to choose except to go into college and take classes and pursue the options and figure out what she could do from there.

Something niggled at our team, though. Surely there'd have to be a way to help her figure out before she spent thousands of dollars she didn't have and years upon years, only to maybe possibly sort of figure it out. So our team racked their brains until one had an idea. We called up a dentistry practice to see if our teen could talk with one of their assistants or hygienists. They did us one better. Our friends at Carmichael Dental Care invited our teen to come shadow one of their assistants and one of their hygienists for a few hours.

So on a Monday morning, tennis shoes laced up, mask on, and eyes wide, our teen walked through the doors to watch an extraction and witness a cleaning.

We had picked her up that morning, drove through to get some breakfast, took her to the dentist's office and waited in the lobby, working on the logistics for our Reading with Grace and Mercy Program. After a couple of hours, she came out to the lobby, was ready to go, and we thanked our friends and headed out.

This was significant, not only because she now knows what she wants to do, and learned that the State of Alabama has a program that allows her to become a dental hygienist and assistant through an apprenticeship-type program of on-the-job training. So she can work a livable-wage job as soon as she graduates high school while training for a career in dentistry. This was also significant because it bridged an opportunity gap many of us simply aren't aware of.

There aren't any dentists here on the west side of Montgomery.

How can our kids dream of a life, attain a life, beyond what they've known, if they aren't given the opportunity to witness it for themselves? We can tell these kids that they can rise out of poverty all we want, but if they don't see it for themselves, why should they believe us?

We, alongside our partners in ministry, bridge the opportunity gap that children living in an impoverished community experience. Our church partners, business partners, family partners, government partners, we all link arms and try to offer opportunity after opportunity to these children and teens we so desperately care about, in order to expose them to a life they can have if they reach out and grab it. We try to show them that they're not reaching alone and that we believe and will make every effort to ensure whatever they're reaching for is within their grasp.

Getting to know our kids, learning how each one is beautifully wired and crafted by God and uncovering the call He has on their life, it's a joy. It's an honor and a privilege. Our community partners make it possible to speak into that calling, that crafting, and to show them the life God has for them.

We get to be that bridge; God invites us to be that bridge. And there are many more kids who never believe that bridge will be built for them, who wouldn't dream of asking for it. We're working - and invite you to help us - to show them they're wrong. That they're dearly loved and their future is radiant.

One of my employees told me that for the rest of Monday, after the visit to the dentist, the only thing she heard from our teen was about teeth and how excited she is about the opportunity she has to work in dentistry in just a few months.

That has me smiling ear to ear.

God Bless,
Pastor Ken Austin





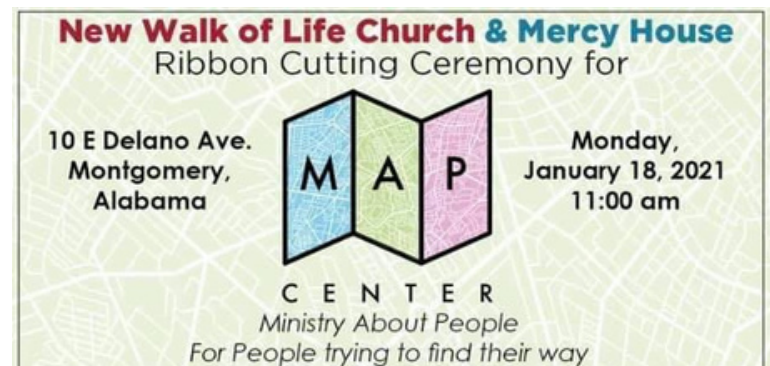
LOOKING FORWARD

In 2020, WSFA Channel 12 news, a staple in the River Region, donated their 12 E Delano Ave building to the Mercy House and New Walk of Life ministries.

In 1954, the building on Delano Ave was built to broadcast the news. In 1954, the building on Council Street was built to make people anew. During and since the historical Montgomery Bus Boycott and the overall Civil Rights Movement, both buildings have served this community well. After 65 years, God in His divine wisdom has seen fit to bring them together for his glory.

We are feeling led by God to continue our initial work of building a holistic job training, life skills, and disciplining program designed to redirect lives in a Christian environment. Our work derives from the belief that each person has a God-given purpose in their life.

Two main barriers to attaining and holding a livable wage job are childcare and transportation. We are placing a preschool in the building alongside the educational and career training opportunities as well as starting a transportation ministry in order to ensure no one who comes to our doors trying to redirect their lives is faced with insurmountable barriers.



Be on the lookout in 2021 for the opening of the MAP Center.



"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth."

1 John 3:18 NIV



A gift of love!

150
CALORIES
PER PUS

GIVE AND SERVE

In 2021



The Front Porch

I wanted to share with you about a neighbor-in-need we're serving right now. He's a young man in his thirties who recently came back to the Washington

With Your Time

The Front Porch

Receive monthly email updates from our house to yours by subscribing to The Front Porch email newsletter. Visit [mercyhousemgm.org](https://www.mercyhousemgm.org) to subscribe.

Facebook

Follow Mercy House on Facebook for real-time updates and needs, to learn what is going on here on Council Street. You can find us at <https://www.facebook.com/mercyhousemgm/>

With Your Talents

Volunteer

Want to serve God and our neighbors-in-need with your time and talents? Serve here! Whether a one-time visit to volunteer, a serve day with your church or business, or as a recurring volunteer, we'd love for you to serve here. For more information, visit www.mercyhousemgm.org/volunteer



Intern

We're looking for motivated, hard-working, and adaptable students and recent graduates to join our intern program. Our internship opportunities are flexible. We offer both part-time and full-time internships that can last either one semester or two. Our intern program is designed to ensure you have ample opportunities to learn and that you leave here ready to make the world a better place than you found it.

With Your Treasure

When you give here, you're not giving *to* Mercy House, you're giving *through* Mercy House and to the work God is doing in West Montgomery. We're confident you'll see the impact your gift has on both this side of Heaven and the next. Learn how you can partner financially at <https://www.mercyhousemgm.org/giving>





**THANK
YOU**

Thank you for rising with us to meet the needs of our neighbors during an unexpected time. Because of God's provision and your faithfulness, we can humbly say that no one who stopped at our porch left hungry or cold or without, if even for a moment, experiencing the love of God. Rejoice with us at God's past impact and future plans for his people in West Montgomery.



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