

Exodus satisfies hunger for change in life

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DALLAS—Even as a small child, Terri knew the meaning of hunger. She was poor as far back as she could remember. Her mom resorted to writing hot checks to buy food and eventually was imprisoned for it.

Her early life took Terri from one challenge to the next. She dropped out of school in seventh grade. At 14, she started drinking, and three years later, she was using hard drugs.

By age 40, she had been in more than one abusive relationship and served a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence for a drug charge. Not long after, she became pregnant.

Finding help at Exodus

Unsure what her future held and with a new life on the way to care for, Terri sought help. She was admitted into Exodus Ministries after her release from prison with her six-day-old newborn son, Brayden.

Exodus is a Dallas-based residential Christian ministry that helps formerly incarcerated mothers successfully re-enter society.

While at Exodus, Terri was provided with her own fully furnished apartment. She vividly remembers opening the refrigerator and pantry and seeing them stocked with food. The Texas Baptist Hunger Offering provided the funds to supply the groceries to Terri, as well as each new resident at Exodus.

Teach life skills

Exodus not only helped meet her immediate needs with food, formula and diapers, but also taught her how to meet her own long-term needs through budgeting classes, job training, spiritual support and prayer.

“They helped me learn how to budget, because I had no idea how to budget or save money,” she said. “When I graduated from Exodus, I was still able to save ... and budget and put back money in case I needed anything.”

Moving on up

While she lived at Exodus, Terri worked at a dishwashing job.

“I hated it, but I knew that I had to have income, so I did it,” she said. “ I went from washing dishes to managing the cafe. I’d been there for two years, and in March 2017, I took over as owner. I achieved all that in three years, and had it not been for Exodus, it wouldn’t have been possible.”

As a small business owner, Terri now is able to provide for herself and her son—a reality she dared not dreamed of before. She also finds encouragement from her Exodus family as they continue to point her to God for strength, hope and a strong future.

Make a real difference

“Hunger is something that can be satisfied with a meal,” said Ali Corona, hunger and care ministries specialist for the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission. “But it will come back again and again until a person is equipped to provide for themselves.

“Through ministry partners like Exodus, the hunger offering is able to make a real difference in the lives of thousands in Texas and around the world.”

Many Texas Baptist churches are collecting the hunger offering May 14 in observance of Mother’s Day. To donate online, click [here](#). To see a related

video, click [here](#).