



# OLIVE BRANCH MISSION

Caring for Chicago's most vulnerable  
and hurting for more than 157 years.

6310 South Claremont Ave | Chicago, IL 60636

# OLIVE BRANCH MISSION

SERVING CHICAGO'S MOST VULNERABLE FOR MORE THAN 157 YEARS

Overview of services provided in 2024



Placed 94 families  
in permanent housing in 2024



667 Youth  
1/3 of OBM clients are  
under 18 years old

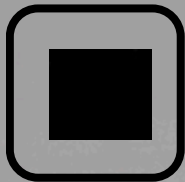


Provided  
136,857  
nights of shelter



24/7  
Schedule

85  
referrals for  
alcohol/drug  
treatment recovery



Served 339,231 Meals  
to individuals each year, meeting an  
urgent and basic need for our clients

911  
referrals to  
health/mental health  
services



Distributed 2,342 Bus Cards  
to clients to ensure reliable  
transportation

We partner with the  
City of Chicago and  
public and private  
agencies to provide a  
comprehensive array of  
options.

1965  
referrals for education,  
job placement/training,  
housing, etc.



**WE PROVIDE DIRECT SUPPORT FOR 2,400+**

individuals in urgent need of housing, support, and assistance each year.

# How and Why We Serve

Founded in 1867 and led by courageous Free Methodist Women who dared to minister where most would not go, Olive Branch Mission is not only the oldest rescue mission in the City of Chicago; it is the Nation's oldest and longest running rescue mission.

Historical records recount their travels through Chicago's streets and alleyways at all hours of the day and night, during the worst of weather to care for the hungry, homeless, sick and dying. These dedicated Mission women regularly ministered in Cook County Jail and Cook County Hospital. They fought their social battles upon Christian principles and challenged common social ills.

While the initial motivation to start Olive Branch Mission was to provide women an alternative source of income in response to prostitution and an immediate and urgent and growing crisis of the enslavement of young girls to sex trafficking, it wasn't long before the ministry grew to include support of homeless men, women and children. The organization eventually expanding to include support for the dire needs of alcoholic and addicted men and women who existed on the fringes of society.

||

***For more than 157 years, Olive Branch Mission has served the most vulnerable among us and employs the same empathetic and welcoming hospitality of its founding ideals –no one is turned away.***

In a rapidly re-emerging city, Olive Branch Mission was addressing the spiritual and physical needs of a very poor and homeless population. The Mission applied an aggressive outreach emphasis toward developing intentional relationships with those who were broken, cast aside and rejected by society. Olive Branch Mission has consistently resisted an approach of condescending compassion as it has cared for individuals and families in need. Rather, it has always tried to affirm the dignity and value of each and every person, no matter their condition or immediate circumstances.

Wars, economic depression and civil unrest came and went, as did social, political and theological theories about poverty's causes and cures. Through it all, Olive Branch Mission has endured and to this day remains steadfast, carrying on an unwavering commitment to those who have lost their way. In the streets, in the alleys, under isolated bridges and in abandoned buildings is a wealth of lost human potential and resources. Olive Branch Mission declares that it can be reclaimed and restored. In fact, for the very sake of humanity – it must. In caring for and helping someone who has lost their way, we indeed are caring for a part of ourselves.



# Journey to a Better Life

Olive Branch Mission is tackling the urgent need to provide a safe haven for people experiencing homelessness in Chicago. We meet people when they are at their most vulnerable –without shelter, without adequate resources, without immediate direction, and often times, without hope.

We focus our efforts on building people, and employ a 360°wrap-around approach to servicing clients. From the time a person is welcomed into our space, their most immediate needs are addressed and we prioritize providing the resources, support, and compassionate direction to assist in their journey to a better life.

Our strong and collaborative partnerships with the City of Chicago, and various social service agencies allow case managers to quickly assess a person’s needs and work with them to determine the most appropriate path combating the issues that led to homelessness.

“

*Olive Branch Mission showed me compassion, gave me hope, and saved my life.*

*-John W.*

## Step 1

We welcome potential clients at our entry doors that never close.

## Step 2

Immediate urgent needs are quickly addressed: food, clothing, shelter.

## Step 3

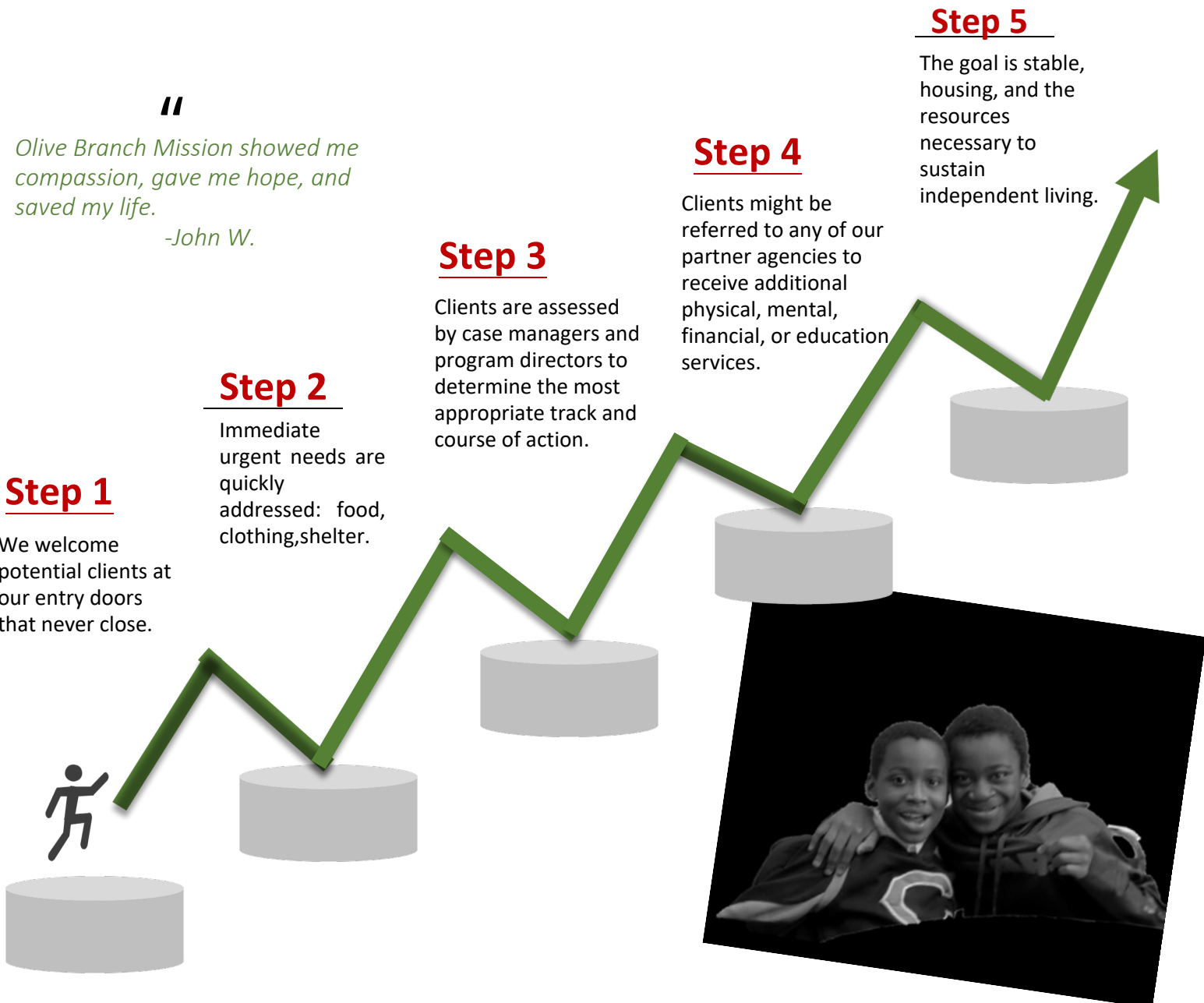
Clients are assessed by case managers and program directors to determine the most appropriate track and course of action.

## Step 4

Clients might be referred to any of our partner agencies to receive additional physical, mental, financial, or education services.

## Step 5

The goal is stable, housing, and the resources necessary to sustain independent living.



# A Crisis in Our Country

Thousands of Chicagoans lack stable, permanent housing. Tens of thousands more are just one unexpected expense away from the same fate. Nearly a fourth of Chicagoans live below the poverty level.

Homelessness is a community crisis that requires a community response. This economic problems in Chicago and cities around the Country are exacerbated by a severe shortage of affordable housing and chronically low wages for many individuals. The high cost of living often forces people to choose between food, health care, and other expenses, forcing them out of their homes and without stable housing.

Olive Branch Mission believes it is our responsibility to do all we can to support our city's most vulnerable individuals.

We're on the Front Lines of the fight against homelessness.

The cause of this crisis is multi-faceted and we address them from every angle.

## **Cause: Lack of Affordable Housing**

In light of our city's severe lack of affordable housing, Olive Branch Mission addresses clients' most critical and pressing need – safe, clean, and warm shelter to more than 2,400 people each year, including 667 children. This totals more than 136,857 nights of shelter for individuals in need.

## **Cause: Lack of Employable Skill / Education**

One of the most necessary services we provide individuals at Olive Branch Mission is referrals for educational support. Some clients enroll in on-site tutoring and GED preparation classes, while others are connected to an employment staffing network. We connect 1,965 clients to educational programs and job training programs annually.

## **Cause: Physical and Mental Health Challenges**

Approximately 67% of the homeless population lives with mental illness, according to the U.S. News & World Reports. In 2024, Olive Branch Mission referred over 991 clients for mental and physical health services –providing the guidance to receive direct support and resources to address health challenges.

## **Cause: Lack of Resources and Direction**

Some clients lack the know-how and basic resources to navigate life. At Olive Branch Mission, we assist in providing clients with the tools to navigate life. This includes allocating thousands of bus passes annually to ensure safe, reliable transportation. We provide advocacy to secure mainstream benefits as well as vital records and documents. We provide the essential wrap around services necessary to obtain and maintain self-sufficiency and sustainability.



“

*Olive Branch Mission is not in the business of simply giving handouts, glorifying, managing or maintaining human tragedy and poverty, but rather, this great Mission stands firm against enhancing dependency.*

# Key Areas of Investment

## FINANCIAL NEED

The need is great. Until homelessness is eradicated, there will be people who depend on the support and resources of Olive Branch Mission to help them navigate a better tomorrow for themselves and their families. The work we do at Olive Branch Mission has a ripple effect in our communities, and in our city. Our key areas of financial needs include:

### HOUSING

When an individual enters the doors at Olive Branch Mission, they have reached the end of their personal resources for housing. While a job loss, a mental or health crisis, or some other factor may have been the reason for their situation, the result is the same – they are vulnerable, lack resources, and are searching for help. For more than 157 years, Olive Branch Mission has been the helping hand that individuals and families have depended on to meet their immediate need for housing. Providing shelter for thousands of vulnerable individuals is a multi-faceted responsibility. We work hard to ensure that our clients feel welcome, safe, and valued. Maintaining this standard with security, utilities, and other expenses requires considerable financial resources.

### MEALS

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our food partners – The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Starbucks, Inc., and the community-based Whole Foods. Olive Branch Mission provides more than 350,000 meals for individuals each year. Still, the organization dedicates a significant portion of its budget to ensuring we provide for this most basic human need.

### PROGRAMS

While immediate shelter and addressing hunger is often the foremost urgent need, Olive Branch Mission is in the business of ensuring individuals identify the unique challenges that may be the root cause of their inability to secure and maintain housing and live independently. All potential clients work with program directors and case managers to address the underlying causes and work to design and enact specialized individual service plans to mitigate them.

### CAPITAL AND STRUCTURAL

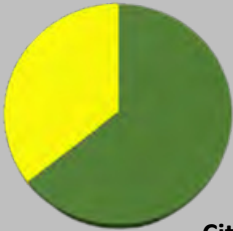
Olive Branch Mission’s main structure is over 115 years old. The 60,000 square foot structure requires significant maintenance and consistent repairs. The electrical and plumbing systems are antiquated, and any emergency, like the pipe burst we experienced in February 2019, poses a significant financial challenge to operations. Donors were generous then and we can only hope that the same will be said for any future emergencies. However, good stewardship requires that the organization be prepared and financially strong so that one emergency doesn’t threaten our entire operational system. Olive Branch Mission desperately needs a complete elevator and lift replacement to adequately serve our residents with limited mobility. Our goal to renovate unused spaces to provide additional beds for non congregate living requires earmarked funds to become a reality. Efficient food storage spaces are essential. Our current storage area requires improvement and modernizing.

Olive Branch Mission must secure

# \$4.4M

in public and philanthropic dollars to carry out its mission this year.

Philanthropic  
Need  
\$800,000



City of  
Chicago  
\$3,600,000

At Olive Branch Mission, we house more than

# 340

individuals experiencing homelessness each day –more than 1/3 of them are children.

The cost to provide shelter, resources, referrals, and food for one client for one night is

# \$35.

# Help Us Support People in Urgent Need

Each day, our staff work hard to make sure the Olive Branch Mission carries out its mission and expresses its values of compassion, welcomed support, and serving with dignity and respect. However, our reach and ability to serve the community is limited by the resources we have at our disposal. We intend to be around for the next 157 years, or until the crisis of homelessness is no longer an ill in our city. Until then, join us in supporting our city's most vulnerable by making a financial investment in the lives of the men, women, and families who urgently need our help to transform their lives and begin the journey to a better life.

Our capacity to help more men, women, and children, depends greatly on the generosity of our friends and partners, like you, who share an affinity for the vision and mission of Olive Branch Mission.

**\$105** → Provides a person's intake, food, programming, and shelter for 3 nights.

**\$245** → Provides a person's intake, food, programming and shelter for one week.

**\$980** → Provides intake, food, programming, and shelter for a family of 4 for one week.

## Here's How

Financial Gifts: We accept cash, checks, corporate matching, and gifts of stock.

In-Kind Donations: We need food, clothing, toiletries, sheets, blankets, etc.

Volunteering: Contact us today for individual and group opportunities.

\*All donations to Olive Branch Mission are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.



*We are in the business of human development, providing opportunity for recovery, restoration, reinstatement and re-entry unto a productive life. Olive Branch Mission remains a place where lost, injured, broken and desperate lives can freely, safely and unconditionally receive help, love and care.*



# Olive Branch Mission

For more information, contact us:

6310 S. Claremont Ave

Chicago, Illinois 60636

Tel: 773.476.6200

Fax: 773.476.0222

[www.obmission.org](http://www.obmission.org)