Meet Chris Lennington – he spent his teens in juvenile detention, a boys’ home, and prison. After, he had an addiction to alcohol and struggled with homelessness. After six months in Waco, Chris started going to Church Under the Bridge just for the food and was still drinking heavily. Chris ended up at the Manna House, Mission Waco’s drug and alcohol recovery program for men, but did not complete the program. He returned a year later because he was homeless and unemployable.

In 2017, Chris graduated the program, but after 16 months of sobriety, an on-going struggle with depression caused Chris to relapse, quit his job, and lose his home.

Chris was planning on leaving Waco when Manna House staff convinced him to return to Manna House for a third time. “I thought, ‘Why even go back? Why even waste your time?’ I had been monitoring the guys before I relapsed, and I knew if I went back, I was going to have to be in the program with the same guys I was monitoring before. I felt ashamed.”

This time, however, huge improvements were made when Chris received treatment. He graduated in the beginning of 2019 and now has a full-time job and works part time at the Manna House.

“It was life changing to have other people - Mrs. Sandy, Chris B, Mr. V, Mike, and Daniel Jones, who truly cared about me. They love me closer than my family. I see God in that. It made me believe in myself because they believed in me. I am sure God was calling me to Waco to pull me through all of this. Now, I can walk with some integrity, people trust me with stuff, and I’ve got keys! I’ve got two jobs that I love. Everything I have that’s from Him, I want. Nothing’s happening in my life that I can’t stand. Thank God for working through all the people involved with Mission Waco because it absolutely transformed my life.”

“THEY LOVE ME CLOSER THAN MY FAMILY. I SEE GOD IN THAT.”

If you have been keeping up with our Next 25 efforts you’re aware of Chris’ story and how much we’re in need of a new Manna House. During this giving season we wanted to keep stories of life-change front and center because this is the impact your dollars have when you give to Mission Waco.
We want donors to know we operate with complete financial transparency and for the fourth year in a row, we have received a four-star rating from this well established and trusted organization. “This is our highest possible rating and indicates that your organization adheres to sector best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way... Only 19% of the charities we evaluate have received at least 4 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Mission Waco Mission World outperforms most other charities in America.”

-Michael Thatcher, President and CEO
**HAITI CHILD SPONSORSHIP**

With some of the large sponsorship organizations you will pay upwards of $40/month to sponsor a child and a good amount of that covers the overhead associated with administrative costs. Here at Mission Waco Mission World for just $30/month you send a child to school AND provide meals. Will you help us bridge the gap by subsidizing the cost of going to school for our families we empower by going online and designating your reoccurring monthly gift as Haiti Child Sponsorship?

**BIKER TOY RUN & STORE**

On **December 1st** we will host our annual Biker Toy Run picking up hundreds of toys from local area churches! We collect new, unwrapped toys for lower-income children and youth. Last year twenty Waco churches participated in the collection, agreeing to allow the “Riders of the Son (CMA)” bikers to show up and pick up the toys. These gifts will be sold to struggling families at our Toy Store on December 13-14, where they get an 80% discount and the dignity of buying for their own children.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**YOU’RE INVITED TO ATTEND**

**ADVENT & ACCOLADES**

Please join us for our annual celebration of the Christmas season! We will have refreshments and fellowship at our Executive Director’s house (John Calaway) from **4:30-6:15 p.m. on Thursday, December 19th**. Please email thehub@missionwaco.org to RSVP. All volunteers and donors are invited to come celebrate the goodness of God and remember the birth of Christ.

**Reflections Theatre Company**

**In partnership with Jubilee Theatre**

**Presents**

**Christmas at Christie’s**

You’re invited to the party!

**Show Dates:**
- Friday, December 13th, 7:00pm
- Saturday, December 14th, 7:00pm
- Sunday, December 15th, 2:00pm

**Ticket Prices:**
- Adult, $12
- Students 12 and under, $7

Tickets can be purchased online through the Mission Waco Jubilee Theatre Facebook page, at the box office on the night of the event, or put on Will Call by calling Angela 254-217-5656.
As we begin to wrap up 2019 I cannot help but think of all the amazing things God has done. Homeless continue to be lifted up off the streets, people in our neighborhood have access to affordable and healthy food because of the Jubilee Food Market, and we have the privilege of seeing a thriving business, Helados La Azteca, in our Colcord Center. But did you know we receive 25% of our overall donations through year-end giving? Year after year we have relied on the generosity through this season to not only keep the lights on but to keep programs running that serve the poor in our community and around the world. Thank you from all of our staff and families we serve for your sacrificial giving!

Over 24,000 participants have experienced a 42 hour “plunge” into understanding how almost 1⁄2 of today’s world lives. One weekend can have a profound impact on your life, changing how you see the world and your role in it. Join us!

**Spring 2020: January 24-26 | February 21-23  
March 20-22 | April 3-5**

Please join us for our annual banquet celebrating volunteers, donors, and all the amazing ministry God has accomplished this year. Our featured speaker this year is Dr. Brian Fikkert. He is the Professor of Economics and Community Development and the Founder and President of the Chalmers Center for Economic Development at Covenant College. He is coauthor of the best-selling book, “When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor.”

**When: February 18th at 6 pm  
Where: Waco Convention Center**

Program begins at 10 am in the Jubilee theatre followed by food, fellowship, and a discussion on race. Stick around for a number of service opportunities in Waco.
OTHER SIDE OF WACO TOUR

This tour is an excellent entry point for Christians and other community members wanting to more clearly understand the realities of poverty in our city. Participants on this 1.5 hour driving tour hear about and see many of Mission Waco's program sites, sections of north/east/downtown Waco, and other sites to raise awareness on issues relating to poverty. In 2018, 20+ groups learned about poverty in Waco through this tour! And it’s FREE! Go to missionwaco.org/tours to find out more information.

WACO HAT COMPANY

Waco Hat Company was founded as a vehicle through which people could empower their neighbors while representing a city they love. All profits go directly to Mission Waco's efforts and you can find all their styles at the World Cup Café. You can also go online and order for friends and family. We are incredibly grateful to Jed Cole and his mom for starting such an incredible company – please buy these hats!