

The Season of Hope



Your gift to Channel One offers *hope* to families like the Bookers.

The Perfect Storm

Together as family, the Bookers have overcome many obstacles. After working as a chef for many years, Perry Booker was forced into retirement after a series of back surgeries left him disabled. His wife, Jennifer, suffers from fibromyalgia and arthritis and has already endured knee replacement surgery at a young age. These medical conditions also render her unable to work. Their family was living in a rough neighborhood in the Twin Cities and the school was not providing the children with a safe environment or providing one of the children with the extra help he needed.

In search of a better environment for their three children, Perry and Jennifer decided to move from the Twin Cities to Rochester. The move not only offered them what they deemed to be a safer city and better schools, but also the opportunity to be close to Jennifer's family. "There were a lot of different things going on in the Twin Cities, and we lived in the midst of a pretty bad neighborhood. Our kiddos were miserable, and we just knew we had to do something," said Jennifer.

Transition

After moving to Rochester, they determined that staying with family in the area long-term was not feasible and found themselves homeless and living at the Comfort Inn. The Booker Family found the search for affordable housing in Rochester to be a great challenge.

Additionally, feeding their family of five was becoming increasingly difficult. "A person that we met at Comfort Inn told us, 'There is a food shelf you guys should check out. It's like you are going to the grocery store.' So I said we would give it a shot. We came to Channel One, and it's pretty much like what she said!" said Perry.

They also hit a jackpot garage sale with kitchen appliances that would help them prepare nutritious meals right in their hotel room. "We were able to bring food back to the hotel, which was awesome, and we invested in some things to prepare the food. My husband hooked us up at a garage sale!" said Jennifer.

Even though the Booker family found themselves in a challenging circumstance, they still felt blessed by

the services at Channel One and wanted to share with others at the hotel that also needed a good meal. “Guys coming home from their jobs would say ‘Hey, it smells good in here. What are you cooking?’ Some were from other states and hadn’t seen their families in a while and missed a home cooked meal. We would ask, ‘Do you want to join us?’ They would be like, ‘Are you serious?’ It was a spiritual thing for us,” said Perry.

“I am always thankful for what I receive from Channel One,” said Perry. “I try to make the best of what we have. I am very creative with what I have. My kids love my cooking,” said Perry.

After three months at the Comfort Inn, Jennifer became emotional and frustrated with their lack of success in the housing search. However, hope was just around the corner. “At one point she broke down and cried. I told her God is not going to bring us here and not bring us through it,” said Perry. “It was just a couple days later that we got the call that we had a place to live.”

“But it was very trialsome because the people that lived there before us trashed the place,” said Jennifer. “So we made an agreement with the landlord to pay for the deposit by working on the house. And we worked alright! We renovated the whole place.”

Through all of the hardship, the Booker family remained strong, determined that they had made the best decision for their family by moving to Rochester. And they were right. After moving in to their new home, the children are happy and excelling in their new school. The family’s new home is in a safe neighborhood only four blocks from Jennifer’s mom, and the family is very happy in their new community.

New Hope

Channel One has helped the Booker Family during their recent trials, and the family is now getting back on their feet. They don’t even need to utilize the food shelf on a monthly basis anymore. “We have not had the need to utilize the food shelf in a little while. We do not want to take the food if we are not in need because somebody else may need it more than we do at that point,” said Perry.

The Booker family found many resources in the community, from food assistance at Channel One to Mayo High School students helping with affordable truck repairs. They even found a great way to furnish their new home through a local company that accepts payments. In addition to the Channel One Supplemental Food Shelf, the Booker children are also recipients of the Channel One Backpack Program.

“You don’t even know how Channel One helps our family!” said Jennifer. “Everything came together at a perfect time because a lot of things fell apart.”



Perry and Jennifer Booker are proud parents of their three children Israel (11), Angel (9) and Trinity (4).

I want to provide hope to children, seniors, individuals in times of crisis, and families like the Bookers this Holiday Season.