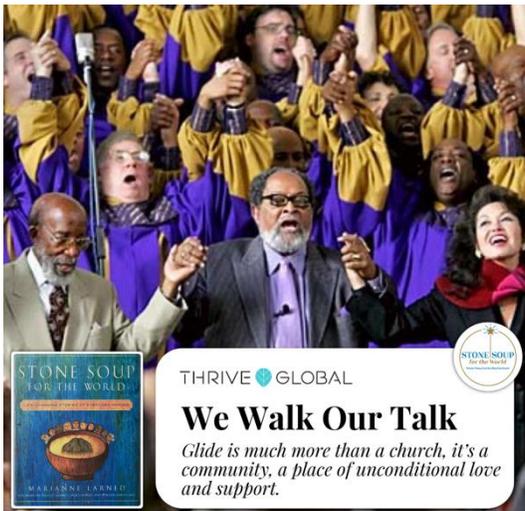




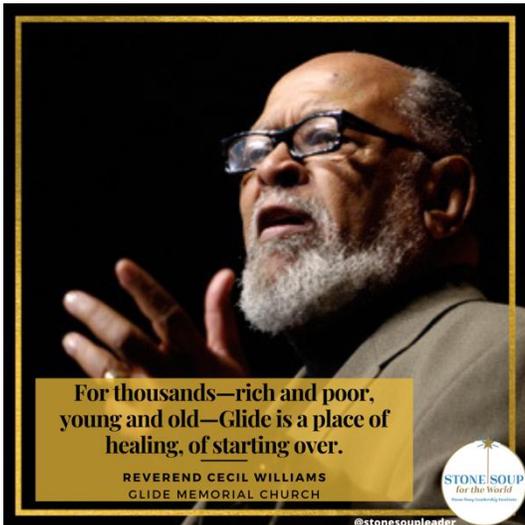
Stone Soup Leadership Institute's Hero of the Week
Reverend Cecil Williams, Glide Memorial Church
Week of December 20-26, 2020



Sunday: Thrive Global: Reverend Cecil Williams, Glide Memorial Church

#SundayThoughts For this week's story on @AriannaHuff's @Thrive we honor @Reverend Cecil Williams, the pastor of Glide Memorial Church (@glidesf) in San Francisco. For thousands—rich and poor, young and old—Glide is a place of healing, of starting over.

#StoneSoupLeader #GlideMemorialChurch #GlideSF #LoveinAction #RecoveryTime #SundayThoughts #SundayMorning



Monday: Reverend Cecil Williams, Glide Memorial Church

#Monday Motivation: Reverend Williams advocates for the use of unconditional love and a non-violent battle cry "it's recovery time!" Now more than ever, is a good time to follow his lead and support those struggling during the pandemic.

#StoneSoupLeader #GlideMemorialChurch #GlideSF #LoveinAction #RecoveryTime #MondayMotivation



Tuesday: Hero Report: Reverend Cecil Williams

As an activist and pastor Cecil Williams has transformed thousands of lives around the world. In honor of his work in the Tenderloin and the City of San Francisco, the Glide Church street location was renamed Rev. Cecil Williams Way.

Follow us to receive more inspirational stories about everyday heroes who are working to make the world better.

<https://youtu.be/jzaL84g35wM>

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#GlideSF #LoveinAction #RecoveryTime

GLIDE

- Provides 15,000+ meals weekly.
- Supports 400 families with online school enrichment.
- Over 65,000 volunteer hours.
- Offers Free COVID-19 Testing.
- Online delivery: case management, family support services, violence intervention classes.

STONE SOUP for the World
@stonesoupleader

Wednesday: Glide Memorial Church Success

Did you know @GlideSF is a nationally recognized center for social justice, dedicated to fighting systemic injustices, creating pathways out of poverty and crisis, and transforming lives? Learn about the ways that Glide has worked for over 50 years to advance a better world.

<https://www.glide.org/>

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STONE SOUP Honor ROLL 2020

GLIDE

HOLIDAYS AT GLIDE

<https://www.glide.org/events/holidays-at-glide/>

Thursday: Call to Action : Honor Roll: Glide Memorial Church

Each year, @GlideSF's holiday events bring critically needed services, build community, and spread joy to their community of clients, staff, supporters, volunteers and congregants. We invite you to get involved and support Glide's holiday efforts.

<https://www.glide.org/events/holidays-at-glide/>

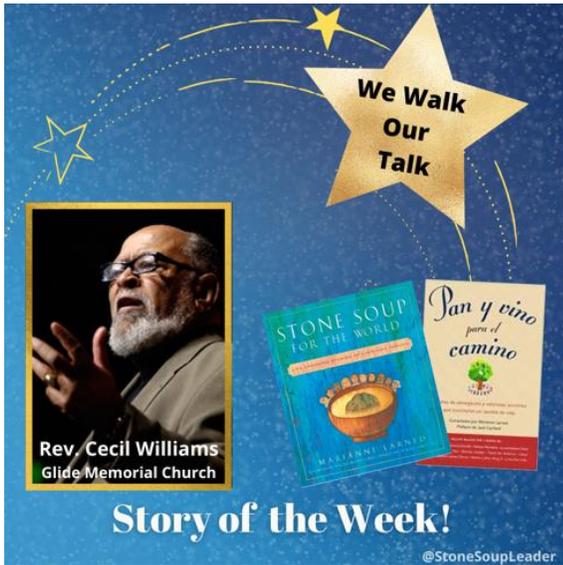
#StoneSoupLeader #GlideMemorialChurch #GlideSF
#LoveinAction #RecoveryTime #GLIDEholidays #holidayseason



Friday: Christmas Season is a Time for Giving Back!

You can make a difference this holiday season! Donate gifts and clothes to children in need and to your local homeless shelters.. Shop online, rather than in-person, or use contactless services such as curbside pickup.

#StoneSoupLeader #HolidaySeason #12DaysOfChristmas #LoveInAction



Saturday Reads: We Walk Our Talk

#SaturdayReads: This year amidst the pandemic, @Reverend Cecil Williams, @Glide Memorial Church founder was inducted into the Museum of African American Addition Recovery Hall of Fame for his outstanding contributions to the treatment and recovery among African Americans. As a pioneer in fighting the war on addiction, read about how Rev. Cecil Williams and Glide have changed lives.

Follow us to receive more inspirational stories about everyday heroes who are working to make the world better.
#StoneSoupLeader #GlideMemorialChurch #GlideSF #LoveInAction #RecoveryTime



WE WALK OUR TALK

Told by Reverend Cecil Williams
Adapted from his book *No Hiding Place*, written with Rebecca Laird

In the heart of San Francisco is the Glide Memorial Church. Glide is much more than a church, it's a community, a place of unconditional love and support. For thousands—rich and poor, young and old—Glide is a place of healing, of starting over. My African ancestors, who endured slavery, carried with them across the Atlantic a tradition that remains vitally rooted in African-American culture today. At Glide, we speak our truth by storytelling, engaging one another through dialogue and immersing ourselves in the Spirit.

We estimate that 80 percent of the people who come to us are in recovery. One of the first things we learned about fighting the war on addiction was that traditional drug-treatment programs didn't work for most African Americans. Twelve Step programs focus on individual recovery, as if independently getting clean and sober were the ultimate goal. But African Americans are a communal people—we fight for our freedom together.

I grew up in San Angelo, Texas, a segregated town prior to the Civil Rights Movement. The bars, the drinking, the rodeo tracks, the first rooms, everything in San Angelo, constantly reminded me that I was colored, black, a nigger. When I grew up and became a minister, I wanted to change that—to make life better for my people. Over 85 percent of blacks in San Francisco live in crime-ridden, bungalow

Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes

When the hundreds of marchers had converged in the center of the housing complex, I took a ballroom and began to shout to those pecking out of the top floor apartments: "C'mon down, join us. It's recovery time! We know who you are. You're our sons and daughters. It's time for you to take control of your lives!"

Slowly people started coming down, some from apartments currently serving as crack houses. We put them right up on stage and gave them the microphone. They talked about their lives. Then, late in the day, one of my staff members came up to me and said a group of pushers wanted to play a tape over our public address system. I said okay, seeing it as an opening to talk with the young men. I walked up to the door where these young pushers were held up. "Someone from the crowd yelled to me, "You ought not do that, Cecil." But I did it anyway, and that's how I met Alex.

Earlier in the week, Alex had begun to reflect on his life. He later told us, "I had been taught by my father that if I was going to live, then I should be the best at whatever I was doing. I took the bad road, being crooked, a criminal, and I was good at it. I had no money or concern for another's physical well-being. I did some time in jail. I was growing tired of life."

"I was thinking, 'I can get a job and if I don't make it, I can always turn back to what I was doing—selling drugs.' But the one who is always by my side, my baby's mother, said, 'You can make an honest living.' So I started thinking about it. That Saturday was the day Cecil and all the people came in marching.

"I listened to Cecil. What he was talking about was what I wanted to be about. After the walls at Valencia Gardens got painted, the first time the march wasn't about covering up the dirty walls; it was about the people. There was a real change in the people who lived in the projects. People in the projects who never talked to each other were now talking. There had been so much bad around V.C., I wanted to help make some good."

Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes

San Francisco live in crime-ridden, boarded-up, graffiti-plastered housing projects. Many folks are on drugs. And even if they manage to stay drug-free during the day, they eventually have to go home to projects that have become havens for every imaginable habit. The temptations are great. Since we're people were living in the projects, Glide had to go there, too.

One of the things I preach at Glide is to "walk the talk that you talk." So we walked our talk and decided to march on the most troubled housing projects in San Francisco, Valencia Gardens. We decided to march and call out the good news of recovery to our brothers and sisters. We spent dozens of hours gathering together people from the community, the public-housing tenants' association, the mayor's office, and about six hundred people from Glide. We also decided not to be stopped with our faith. We took the police with us, too.

We created a human force to influence the people in the projects. Our goal was not to own the pushers, junkies, and drug users out of public housing. We were coming to embrace them with unconditional love and declare that there was another way to live. So we boarded buses, drove up Market Street, and turned on to Valencia Street, singing songs of freedom. When we arrived, we got off the buses and marched around the projects. There in the front carried a street-wide banner that declared our unswerving battle cry, it's recovery time. Others carried placards reading the seven needs recovery and welcome home to recovery.

We marched as a posse of lovers, heralding freedom from drugs, addiction, and despair. As Alex has said to each of us, "I'm with you." Glide marched to say to one having extended family, "We're with you." Each heart bore a commitment to one another that the march was not a mere march, it was a demand: either, some carried paintbrushes and gallons of paint. Others bore hanging pieces of food, chicken and potato salad. It does no good to go to shopping and screaming for change with your empty hand shaking in the air. You've got to have something to offer.

Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes

Some after, Alex started coming to Glide. Many months later he spoke about the march on Valencia Gardens to some visitors who were interested in our recovery program. Alex said, "I remember my father telling me so many times that by being born in 1948 I missed out on everything. Malcolm X, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., Vietnam, the hippie movement, and the Black Panthers. After I came to Glide, I began to see that I hadn't missed everything. I've lived to see Glide and to know the Reverend Cecil Williams, who is not a killer but a savior. Glide saved me and my family from the madness. One of the coolest things about finding myself is that I never had to go find Glide. Glide came to my home and found me."

Alex now has a job, and he's good at it. He's a new man. "Coming to Glide was like diving a mountain where there wasn't any stairs or a clearer path. Instead there were hands, all different colors of hands, reaching down to help me. All I had to do was hang on and keep climbing until I got to the top. When I reached the top, then I looked back and saw how far I'd come. It was, and is, a beautiful view—this is recovery!"

Light up your eyes upon this day breaking for you. Give birth to the dream

Maria Angello

To support Glide's thirty-seven comprehensive programs that serve thousands of homeless, drug-addicted, downcasted, hopeless, or outcast people, visit the church's website, www.glide.org.

Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes