

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSION

MARCH 2022



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Hunger, a Restraining Order and New Life

Brandon never thought he'd be a Christian.

He never thought he'd be claiming Jesus as his Savior.

He never thought he'd be living a new life.

But he is — for two reasons. First, because God is good. Second, because friends like you are generous.

To understand how massive Brandon's transformation is, we have to go back to a time when heroin and meth were all he cared about.

Forbidden to See His Family

Brandon was so lost, so hurting and so deep in his addiction that he turned against everyone who had loved him. Things were so bad that his family put a restraining order against him.

He ended up on the street for two years.

"You spend every day just trying to feel comfortable," he says. "Getting high is the only way you can cope."

(Continued inside...)



"Now that I have a home, walking outside where it's cold, it just reminds me of how grateful I am that I'm not sleeping outside anymore." — Brandon

Get involved at srmission.org/newlife

Hunger, a Restraining Order and New Life

(Continued from cover)

The Deepest Hunger You Can Imagine

"I wouldn't eat for days, and I got down to skin and bones – just ribs . . . if I did eat, it's only because I stole something so I could eat."

Finally, Brandon got so desperate that he decided he had to come to the Mission. Once he got here, friends like you provided him with meals, safe shelter and the chance to enroll in the New Life Recovery Program.

Through those things, Brandon saw God's love and decided to give his life to Jesus.

New Life

"I never thought that I would be where I am now. I never thought I'd be a Christian. I wouldn't even know myself, just a few years ago."

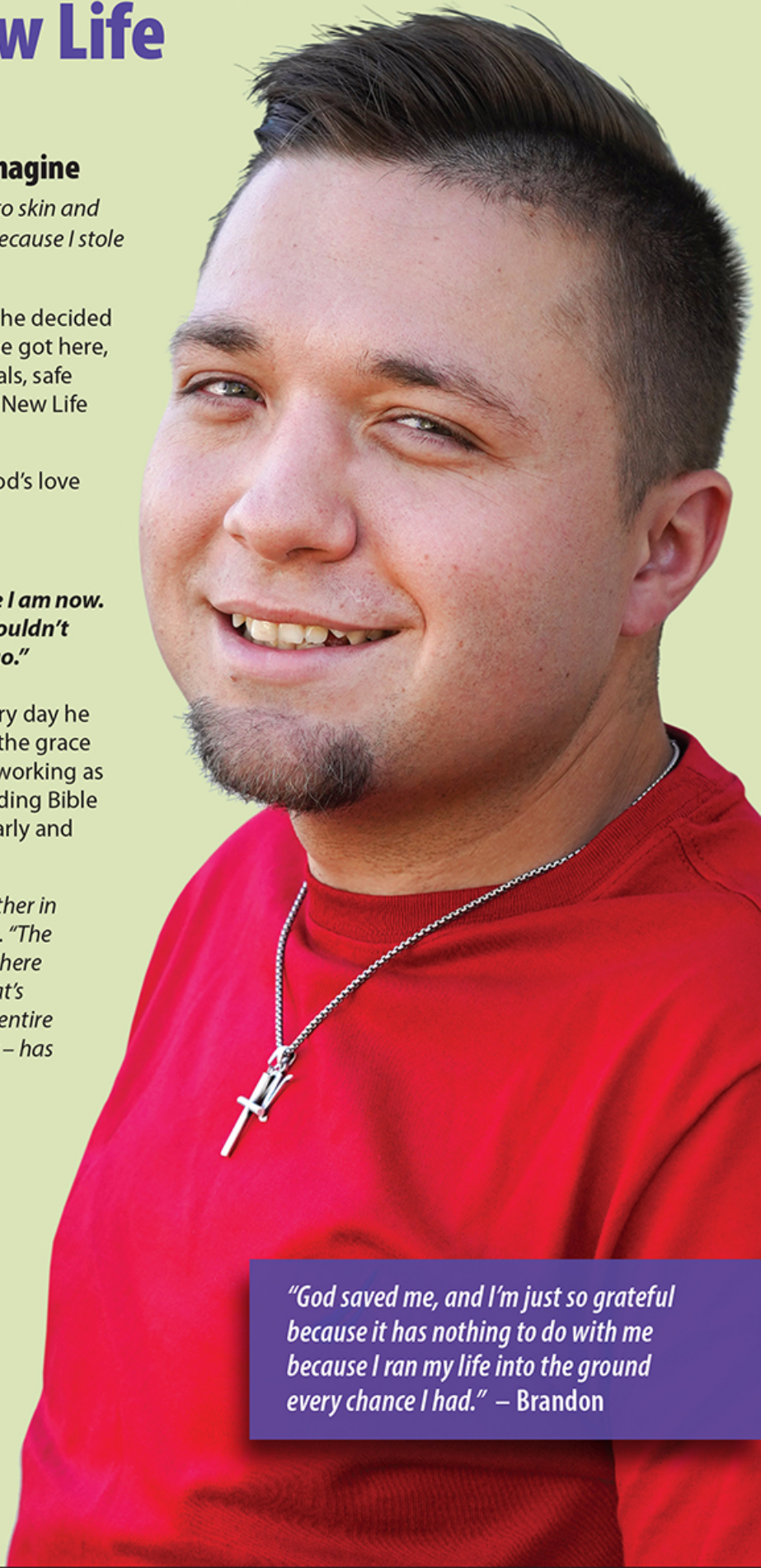
Today, Brandon is living a new life. Every day he wakes up grateful for the Mission and the grace that God has poured out on him. He's working as an electrician and hopes to start attending Bible college soon. He goes to church regularly and has a stable hope.

"If it wasn't for the Mission, I would be either in prison or dead or still homeless," he says. "The biggest blessing of all is that the Lord is there and the Lord is doing His work there. That's where I was saved. And that's where my entire life – and not just my life but my eternity – has been totally changed."

The restraining order has been tossed out and Brandon has reconnected with everyone in his family. He loves spending holidays with them and will likely get to celebrate Easter with them this year!

You can help someone begin living a new life today!

"God saved me, and I'm just so grateful because it has nothing to do with me because I ran my life into the ground every chance I had." – Brandon





What Jesus Offers

Jeff Gilman
Executive Director



My friend, Tim Stafford, who you can read more about below, has written several books. One of his books from several years ago is called *Surprised by Jesus*. One of the chapters in that book is on the risen Jesus and it perfectly captured one of the challenges that many of us run into when we celebrate Easter and the resurrection.

It's easy to think resurrection is something only about the afterlife – about eternity. But when we only think about it that way, we miss out on the fact that resurrection is also about real,

living, breathing life, here and now.

That's what Christ offers you and me. It's what He has given Brandon.

The message of Easter isn't only that we can have hope for new life someday. **The message of Easter tells each of us we can have new life here and now.** And that's what we will celebrate – and what we will offer to every person who comes to our Easter Feast. I can't wait to see what God does!

Book Giveaway

Tim Stafford has been volunteering as a mentor in our men's program for about 10 years, and the impact it's had on him has been personal, profound and life changing.

In fact, he told his wife it was the most fulfilling thing he's ever done. As a former editor of *Christianity Today* who has traveled the world, that's one of the biggest compliments we've ever received.

"Once I got plugged into it and began to really get to know men in the program, and get a view of their lives, learn about the issues that they face, it just seemed like, somebody needs to write about this, and then maybe it's me... I wrote a trilogy that is loosely connected to each other and to the Mission."

Tim's books are all works of fiction, but if you read them, you'll be able to see the strong influence of the Mission in them.

If you'd like to receive complimentary copies of one or more of Tim's books, contact Eric Sangervasi at 707.578.1830 x316 or esangervasi@srmission.org



Give Life-Changing Easter Meals



Brandon is proof that we have people living in our community who desperately need new lives. And we have the opportunity to share the truth of the resurrection and the hope of new life with them this Easter.

You can help by giving a gift to provide meals! Each \$1.87 you give will help feed one person and every gift can change a life.

"You may not see it when you're making a donation, but it really, it does change lives," Brandon says. "I'm an example of that."

"Anything you give changes people's lives. It turns people's lives around and gives people their family back and all of that. It changes someone forever. It changes someone's eternity. There's no greater blessing than God allowing us to take part in His plan of salvation."

Our Easter Feast will be as big as community guidelines allow! We want to invite as many people as possible into the hope of the resurrection and into new life.

You can help by providing as many meals as you can! Each \$1.87 feeds one person!



To help in time for Easter, please send your gift by March 31st. You can also give securely at srmission.org/newlife

Give Life-Changing Easter Meals

Yes, Jeff! I want to help our addicted and needy neighbors experience new life. I'm sending a key partner gift of:

- \$_____ to help as much as possible.
 I'm interested in volunteering for the Easter Feast.
Please contact me: _____

Name _____
Address _____
City, State ZIP _____

Each \$1.87 you give helps feed 100 people this Easter season!



Going by mail call 811 on the back of the form to see what your gift is doing. To help you, we have a higher purpose.



REAL CHANGE

is the newsletter of
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It's Not Just a Job



As the Director of Partner and Community Ministries at the Mission, Eric Sangervasi loves to connect people to the heart of this ministry.

A Special Message from Eric Sangervasi

My first exposure to the Redwood Gospel Mission was when a friend invited me to chapel service. I went and thought it was great. But I never really thought about it much until a few years later when I was looking for work and applied for a job at the Mission.

As I interviewed, I knew that this is where God wanted me. It's been nearly 10 years now – I've had several different roles, and each one has been a blessing. Working at the Mission has been more fulfilling than any job I've ever had. It feels like a family, and I truly love those who we get to do life with.

If you're reading this and feel God is tugging at your heart, the Mission might be a place for you, too. If you're interested in the possibility of working at the Mission, give me a call at 707.578.1830 x316 or email me at: esangervasi@srmission.org and let's start the conversation and see where God leads.



What Are You Doing on Easter?

This Easter we hope to be able to feed around 250 people and you can help – not just by giving life-changing \$1.87 meals – but by volunteering to help at the Feast!

We're looking for people who are able to join us to help serve meals, greet guests, seat individuals, offer a friendly smile and pray with men and women who ask for it.

As Tim says, volunteering is one of the best ways to make a personal impact and to see that impact with your own eyes.

If you're interested in helping, contact Mariella Zapata at 707.578.1830 x306 or mzapata@srmission.org to sign up, or mark the box on your return form when you send your gift to provide meals.

Our Easter Feast is one of our best outreach opportunities of the year!