

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSIONS



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MARCH 2024

It's Not Just About Getting Sober

When David, a 20-year alcoholic, was laid off from his job, he went home and drank himself into a stupor.

"I remember I was lying in bed, and I said, 'Look, God, you and I got to figure this out. I'm not going to do this anymore. I'm tired of the way life is, and I need something different.' I was always a believer, but God and I hadn't spoken in years."

That night, God answered David's prayer. He woke up the next morning and the desire to drink was gone. But the pain that he'd been running from with every drink was still there.

Homeless and Hungry

Unable to get another job, David lived in his truck until it was repossessed and then started couch surfing.

"I sold off everything I had left to be able to eat," he remembers.

But it wasn't just food David needed. It was a new life. His sister, Kenzie, who is the shelter manager at The Rose, our women and children's...

(Continued inside...)

"Without the Mission, I would still be heading off to my death. My soul and spirit would still be dead." – David



Get involved at rgm.org/newlife

It's Not Just About Getting Sober

(Continued from cover)

*"If you want to say anything about God,
it's that He fully redeems." – David*

shelter, saw it, too. She encouraged David to come to the Mission.

"I had been homeless for almost two years at that point," he says.

David came to the Mission and applied for the New Life Program. Even though he wasn't drinking at the time, we knew God had more for him, and as he went through the program, David began to realize it, too.

"It took me a long time to discover the underlying issue was that I never felt loved. And so I never had any self-worth, so I never cared. And I held that against God."

But at the Mission, surrounded by people who cared about him and wanted the best for him, David began to see that God loved him, too. That changed everything! David completed the program and graduated in 2022 and has been living a new life ever since.

Living in New Life

"I got a job right before I graduated," he says. "I've had three promotions and four raises. I had a friend at church for a long time that became my girlfriend and is now my fiancée." David and Laura are getting married this month! He's also been able to reconnect with his daughter, who he hadn't seen for three years.

A Call to Community

"My life before the Mission was miserable, lonely, empty. My life after the Mission is full of faith. It's full of love and it's full of community. God's calling a lot more people into His community, and I think that the stuff that we do here pushes that purpose forward," David says.

This Easter, we can push that community forward by celebrating the resurrection and sharing God's love with poor and needy neighbors. Will you help by providing meals?

What Happens at the Table



What happens at the table, when people break bread together, is holy.

That's the only word I have for it.

And that's why I'm so grateful for the meals provided by friends like you. Not only do they give much-needed nourishment for our hurting neighbors, but meals are often the start of life-changing relationships, especially at Easter.

You see, even though at the Mission we believe that Easter is the most important holiday, we don't get the crowd we do at the Great Thanksgiving Banquet. And because our Easter gathering is a bit smaller, we have

enough space for each table to have table hosts.

My wife, Kathy, and I have been Easter table hosts for the past few years and getting to share the hope that we have in Christ while breaking bread has become one of my favorite Easter traditions.

I never know who God will bring to our table and that's part of the fun. Every time, no matter who is there, it's been an incredible experience as I've gotten to see God at work.

I can't wait to see what happens at the table this year! If you're interested in being a table host, let me know. I'd love for you to get to experience it yourself.

— Jeff Gilman, Executive Director



Here's my wife, Kathy, and me at last year's Easter Feast. We're planning to host a table again this year and can't wait to see what God does through the meals you provide.

Celebrate Recovery



Not every part of our New Life Program happens on campus.

Celebrate Recovery, a community support group that is hosted at several local churches, is a big part of the process, and it's a key element for anyone in our program.

John and Phyllis, who have been Celebrate Recovery sponsors for about 10 years, helped walk David through the program.

And while "Recovery" is in the name, it's not all about addiction.

"I'd say it's Christian 12-step program," Phyllis says. "It's not just drugs or alcohol. It's for any past hurts, habits, or hang-ups that one might have. And usually, people don't grow to be past 30 without something like that in their life."

"One of the misconceptions about Celebrate Recovery is, 'It's for those kinds of people,' John says. "But it's not just for those kinds of people. It's for all of us. You might be hung up on your walk with Christ, and you don't know where the sticking point is . . . We all need it. We all need recovery."

And a big part of recovery (from anything) is relationships.

"We find that sobriety is not the opposite of addiction," John says. "Connection is the opposite of addiction. And when you're connected with others, when you're connected with yourself, when you're connected with Christ, you'll find that your need to self-medicate kind of takes a backseat."

To learn more about Celebrate Recovery and find a group near you, visit: celebraterecovery.com

Easter Blessing Bags



On Easter, God extravagantly poured out His love on us!

And one of the ways we give our guests a glimpse of His love is by handing out blessing bags at our Easter Feast.

Here's what to do:

Grab a large Ziplock bag and fill it with the following items:

- A Rain Poncho
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Small Flashlight (with batteries)
- \$10 Gift Card (fast food, coffee, movie theater, etc.)
- Beef Jerky or Beef Snacks (Individual packages only)
- Easter Candy (individually wrapped only)
- Chap Stick or Lip Balm
- Travel Size Manicure Kits

After making your bags, close them up and drop them off at the Ministry Support Office, 1821 Piner Rd by Tuesday, March 26th.



Our goal is to have enough blessing bags so that everyone at the Easter Feast receives one. Will you help?



Volunteer for Easter!

This Easter, we hope to feed around 400 of our poor and needy neighbors. And you can help – not just by providing meals, but by also volunteering at the Feast!

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

Volunteering is one of the best ways to experience your personal impact. And it's one of the most rewarding ways to spend your time.

"There's something magical that comes from serving the Lord and being of service to others," says David, our page 1 feature story who now volunteers.

If you're interested in helping, contact Tina Karns: 707.578.1830 x314 or tkarns@rgm.org to sign up, or mark the box on your return form when you send your gift to provide meals.



The Easter Feast is one of the best outreach opportunities of the year! We'd love to have you join us.



Fill a Deeper Need. Give Life-Changing Easter Meals!

Everything we do to serve people is thoughtfully designed to reach people's deepest, most personal needs.

"We provide services, but there's a deeper need," David says. "There's something underlying that people need."

That underlying need is the grace and love of God. We begin by first meeting people's physical needs. Will you help by giving a gift to provide Easter meals?

Each \$2.02 is enough to provide a complete holiday meal for one person. And every \$2.02 will also give us the chance to share God's love and begin building relationships.

"When those relationships form, that's when questions start getting asked, like 'What's this program all about? What kind of stuff do you guys offer? How can you connect me?'" David says.

Often that happens at outreach events like Easter. And it's your gifts that make those events – those meals – possible!

"If people didn't give, we wouldn't have those outreach events," David says. "I got lucky. My sister knew of this place, she worked here. Other people don't. They don't have that sister, that connection, but they have an event... God being able to work just wouldn't happen without the people that donate."

PLEASE RESPOND BY MARCH 29TH.



What Matters to You?

One of the best ways to continue to change lives even after your death is by remembering Redwood Gospel Missions in your will or estate plan.



Not only will your legacy gift change the lives of people who come to the Mission, but it will show your family how much sharing God's love with the poor and needy matters to you. They may even be encouraged to find their own ways of making a difference.

For more information on legacy giving, contact Jeff Gilman at 707.578.1830.

Give Life-Changing Easter Meals!

Yes, Jeff! I want my poor and needy neighbors to 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 1)
(Address 2)
(City, State ZIP)

An Easter gift of \$202 is enough to provide 100 complete Easter meals!



Give by credit card? Fill out the back of this form, or use postage and payments by donating securely online at rgm.org/newlife

Please send your gift by March 29th to help in time for Easter. You can also give Easter meals at: rgm.org/newlife



REAL CHANGE

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