

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSION



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SEPTEMBER 2022



All Things Work Together for Good.

"Without the Mission, I probably wouldn't be employed . . . I'd probably still be homeless . . . I probably would be doing far more than just drinking." – Chris

Two years ago, Chris spent Thanksgiving homeless and alone. His mom, who he'd been helping to care for, passed away. He was devastated.

In an attempt to ease his grief, he began drinking. His drinking spiraled out of control, impacting everything, and he ended up homeless.

Thankfully, Chris heard about our mobile shower ministry. At the time, Chris didn't know what Redwood Gospel Mission was, he was just thankful to get a hot shower.

"It built me up, because then I could look in a mirror and see what I actually look like," he says.

You Can't Rush Transformation

Chris kept coming every week for nearly five months as our volunteers worked to build relationships with him. One day, while waiting for the shower, Chris told one of the volunteers, Norm, that he was thinking about getting into a recovery program to help with his drinking.

That's when Norm told him about all the services here at the Mission.

Continues inside . . .



Get involved at

srmission.org/fall

How will God use you this fall?



Why does the Mission Matter?

"There's a lot of people that not only need the program, but need a program based on Christ, because a lot of programs out there, they're just not very Christ-oriented. They're more worldly. If they get sober, that's great, but them coming to Christ is way better."
—Chris.

All Things Work Together for Good

(Continued from cover)

Chris was amazed that he could not only work on his addiction, but have the chance to get certified in coffee roasting. Chris filled out an application and he got in!

Who Do You Know Who Needs to Know?

Chris says he never would have come to the Mission if someone hadn't invited him and told him about all the resources available. He went through both our New Life Recovery Program and our Coffee Roasting Certificate Program. He graduated just a few months ago and is working at our coffee cart. If you stop in, he'll make you an awesome latte or americano!

And while Chris is incredibly thankful for his sobriety, to be off the streets and for his job, he's even more grateful for how his relationship with Jesus has grown.

"Even though I might have known God before I

came to the Mission, the Mission really encouraged me to grow in my relationship with Him."

Chris knows he's off the streets and living a life he loves because of the support of people like you.

Blessed to be a Blessing

"My life before the Mission was becoming very hopeless. My life after the Mission has become very blessed," Chris says.

Chris is using that blessing to help others. He's starting a Christ-centered recovery small group in our area and is already involved in ministries at the Mission and his church!

Change Another Life This Fall!

Each \$30.03 you give helps provide meals, shelter, care and access to life-changing recovery and certification programs for one person.



You Matter

Jeff Gilman
Executive Director

We don't often think about all the people who are part of providing us a cup of coffee, do we?

Before we can brew it, it has to be roasted, and before it can be roasted, it has to be processed. Before it can be processed, it has to be grown. Take away one of these steps and the whole thing falls apart.

As I was thinking about that, and thinking about Chris' story, God kept bringing me back to 1 Cor. 12, where Paul writes about the body of Christ and how

every member is important. And that made me think of you.

No matter how you choose to support the Mission, it matters.

Your prayers matter. Your volunteer time matters. Your donations matter. Your gifts matter. They all work together to change lives. And that means not only are you incredibly important, but you aren't alone. In Christ, you are part of a greater body and when we all do our part, God is glorified and lives are changed!

As we head into our busiest season of the year, I find encouragement in that. I hope you do, too.

There's nothing else I'd rather be a part of. I pray that you feel the same way. Together we are saving and changing lives!

It All Started with a Shower



As soon as Lavetha's pastor announced the new mobile ministry partnership, she knew it was something she wanted to be involved in.

"My heart skipped a beat," she remembers. "We've been doing it ever since."

Once a week, when the showers come to their church, Lavetha and her husband, Norman, help by directing people and building relationships with people like Chris.

"We really have a heart for trying to help people," Norman says. "And I can't think of anybody that needs help more than a homeless person."

Every person who showers is also offered prayer, support and spiritual counseling. And if they are interested, we connect them to our other ministries and services so that people can experience long-term transformation like Chris has.

"If you can look and feel better, then you can go out and try and find a job or just better your life in some way. It's the first step," Chris shares.



Norman and Lavetha in front of their church.

By partnering with churches, we're able to offer showers to homeless men and women six days a week at locations in Santa Rosa, Cloverdale, Rohnert Park and Petaluma. If you're interested in getting your church involved, contact: Matt Weatherly at mweatherly@srmission.org or 707.542.4817 x 230

Change a Life this Fall!



If the mobile shower ministry didn't exist, Chris likely wouldn't have heard about the Mission. And if the New Life Recovery Program or Coffee Certification Program weren't ministries offered, he may never have come.

He is an example of how God uses all the different aspects our ministry to work towards a common goal: changing lives. When you give a gift today, that's what you'll help to do.

Each \$30.03 you give will provide a day of care – including meals, shelter, access to recovery programs and more – for one person.

Most important of all, your gift will help share the love of Christ in a variety of ways so that the person you reach has the best chance of being served in a way that speaks to their soul.

God doesn't waste anything done in love. Not one prayer. Not one smile. Not one hot shower. Not one meal. Not one night of shelter. Nothing.

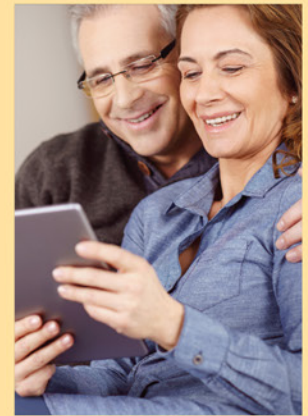
You may not know exactly how your gift will change a life, but you can know that it will.



Fall is the time when many lives are changed!

Let Your Passion Live On

It can be hard to think about what life will look like after you're gone, but you can make sure that your passion for helping others continues! By naming ministries that you are passionate about – like Redwood Gospel Mission – in your will, you can know that you'll continue changing lives.



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



When you send your gift, please include your signed Coat Tags!

You can also give securely online at srmission.org/fall



REAL CHANGE is the newsletter of Redwood Gospel Mission
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The Great Thanksgiving Banquet



Together We'll Feed 4,000!

The Great Thanksgiving Banquet, where we all come together to feed thousands of Sonoma County's neediest people, is the Mission's biggest event of the year. That means it's one of the best opportunities we have to share God's love with people in desperate need.

When: Wednesday, November 23rd

Where: Sonoma County Fairgrounds

We'll be partnering with friends like you as well as local churches and community members to provide delicious holiday meals, dental and medical screenings, haircuts, a winter coat giveaway, children's activities, face-painting, a Gospel message and more!

We'd love to have you join us by giving a gift, volunteering for the event, donating a turkey, praying and signing and returning your Coat Tags.

For more information or to find out how to volunteer, contact Tina Karns at tkarns@srmission.org or go to srmission.org/gtb



Redwood Gospel Coffee: What it is and what it does



Coffee is more than a drink; it's a fruit, it's a reason to gather, it's a worldwide commodity, it's an industry, and it's a vessel for transformation.

Our coffee ministry transforms lives in two ways:

First, our coffee is roasted through our Coffee Certification Program, where men and women like Chris are taught to roast coffee as an employable skill.

Secondly, our raw coffee beans come from direct trade relationships with farmers, ensuring they get a fair price. Every step from bean to brew is focused on changing lives.

Tim completed our Coffee Certification program and now works in the coffee industry.

"I see guys in the program with a new alternative for job opportunities now," he says. "Before, most of the guys that didn't have experience would end up washing dishes, or maybe on a job site doing construction or something. This is another avenue. This is a whole new career."

You can learn more about Redwood Gospel Coffee – and order some to brew at home – at: redwoodgospelcoffee.com.