

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSION



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SEPTEMBER 2020

Maria Came for Thanksgiving and Found Jesus.

She and her family were introduced to Jesus years ago – in fact, they met Him at the Great Thanksgiving Banquet! Through the banquet they also got connected to a wonderful church, Iglesia Cristiana Misión.

They attended for a while, but then life happened. They got busy and stopped going regularly. Then they stopped going altogether.

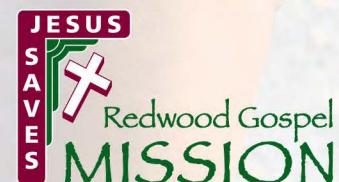
Tragedy Struck

Months, then years went by. Then a close family member became gravely ill and was in the hospital for months. Maria scrambled to care for her family, be there for her sick loved one and continue to pay the bills – all on her own.

“I had to work more and sometimes leave my kids, my younger ones, with family members,” she says. “We were struggling day-by-day, paying rent and paying bills and all that.”

But then, by God’s grace, Maria and her husband were reunited! With Thanksgiving just around the corner, they decided to do what they had done before – come to the Mission for a food box so their family would be able to eat a holiday meal . . .

(Continued inside ...)



Two Thanksgiving Meals Changed Maria's Life

Thanksgiving meals provided by friends like you reminded Maria and her family of the most important thing in life.

Get involved at srmission.org/fall

Imagine how God will use the meals you provide this Thanksgiving!

Two Thanksgiving Meals Changed Maria's Life



Thanks to the generosity of friends like you, Maria and her family will be getting a meal again this year.

(Continued from cover)

When Maria came to pick up the food box, she saw Fernando, the Mission's Hispanic Partner Relations Manager, and the pastor of the church she had attended. Lina, his wife, was there too and their eyes lit up when they saw Maria.

Right then and there, over the food box, as they reconnected, Maria decided she and her family would go back to church.

"As soon as we came back, a lot of things started changing. There were a lot of blessings," Maria says.

Maria and her family know without a doubt that God works through the Thanksgiving Banquet and the meals provided by friends like you to draw them into His family – and to bring them back if they've wandered away.

The First Time Maria Met Jesus

"It happened to us a long time ago, too," she explains. "When we came, when we accepted Jesus, you can just see a lot of people accepting Jesus by hearing His Word and because of everybody that is just there ready to help. It's wonderful. It's something that needs to be there. There are people out there that don't know about Jesus. And through this banquet, they get to know Jesus. They get to know how Jesus loves them."

So even though we won't be having the same fairground feast we usually do, we know that God will still use the meals you provide to change lives because He's always used Thanksgiving food boxes, as well.

Each \$1.87 you give will help provide one Thanksgiving meal! \$11.22 will help feed a family of six!



God is in the Midst...



Jeff Gilman
Executive Director

As I've walked around the Mission lately and talked to our staff, there's something that has blown me away that I just have to share with you:

God has worked in people's lives in incredible ways that I knew nothing about until after He had already changed their lives! It's been a reminder to me that even in the mist of the continued pandemic, ministry persists.

God is still at work and there are countless — yes, countless — reasons to be thankful.

It reminds me of Habakkuk 1:5, *"Look at the nations and watch — and be utterly amazed. For I am going*

to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."

Even though this verse was likely written in the 7th century, B.C. before Jesus walked on the earth, it is still true for us today.

God is doing things that we don't see. He is at work in the midst of the pain, suffering, chaos and uncertainty. He's so at work that even if He told us what He was doing ahead of time, it would be so miraculous that we'd stumble over ourselves trying to believe it.

And He is likely working through us at this very moment, even if we don't realize it! I don't know about you, but I find great comfort in that.

Medical Partnership Thriving



It's no secret that being homeless is hard on your health. In fact, two years ago the Mission was one of the places that was high on the list of 911 calls. But thanks to a partnership with St. Joseph Medical Center, those emergency calls have gone way down.

Now, guests and our homeless neighbors can get medical care right on site through a Mobile Health Clinic.

"Through the mobile clinic itself, we serve the underserved," says Jessica, Medical Assistant at St. Joseph's.

"We go to places where people don't have insurance. We go to places where people don't have the means to get care otherwise. I've never in my life had a job like this one where we were able to serve as much as we are. It's a very rewarding feeling!"



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Joseph's Mobile Medical Clinic was in six locations (including the Mission). Now they are in 12 and continuing to expand.

Give \$1.87 Thanksgiving Meals!



We know this year's Thanksgiving won't look like this photo from last year. But a generous gift today can help provide Thanksgiving meals for those who need them most.

Just because this Thanksgiving will look a little different doesn't make it any less important. In fact, it might even be more important. Which means your support is vital in reaching our poor and needy neighbors in a meaningful way.

Let's do everything we can to make sure that poor and needy people in our community get the food they so desperately need! Will you help by sending a gift to provide Thanksgiving meals?

Every \$1.87 you give will help feed one person – some meals will be served to people enrolled in recovery programs at the Mission. Some will be given to our homeless neighbors in take-out

boxes, and some will be packaged as boxes full of Thanksgiving food for needy families like Maria's.

But even though they'll look different, it's the heart behind every single meal that truly matters. Each and every meal you provide will be an example of compassion and God's love. That's how lives will be changed!

"The donations received for this event go to people who need it most so that they can have what they need for food and hear the word of the Lord," Maria says.

Each \$1.87 feeds 1 person. \$11.22 helps feed an entire family of six!

Give Thanksgiving Meals!


Yes, Jeff! I will help provide Thanksgiving meals! I'm sending a leadership gift of:

☐ \$_____ to help as much as possible.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State ZIP _____

Please make your check payable to Redwood Gospel Mission and return this response card in the enclosed envelope.

Each \$1.87 you give helps provide 100 delicious Thanksgiving meals.



1021 Priory Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 578.1830

Redwood Gospel Mission

Giving by credit card? Fill out the back of this form, or save postage and processing by donating securely online at srmmission.org/fall



Please rush your gift in the envelope today! You can also give securely online at srmmission.org/fall

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The Blessing of Food Boxes



As Maria's story shows, we've always given out food boxes. But this year, because we aren't able to do the Great Thanksgiving Banquet in the same way, we're aiming to provide as many food boxes as possible. That's why your gifts are so important!

Once we get all the food, it will be divided up so that poor and needy families can still enjoy a great holiday meal – in their own homes. Different sizes of boxes help ensure families of all sizes have enough for Thanksgiving dinner – and leftovers too!

“That basket, it helps so much because, let me tell you, I've known people that don't have food to eat. They have gone days without eating, and then they get a big box with the turkey, the vegetables, everything, you know?” Maria says. “Families can cook for that night... They have their food to celebrate that day. It's wonderful.”

Food Boxes Include Items Like:

- 1 6 oz Box Stuffing Mix**
- 1 6 oz box cornbread mix**
- 1 29 oz can cut sweet potatoes**
- 2 14-15 oz canned green beans/ corn**
- 2 .67 oz packets gravy mix**
- 1 14 oz can of cranberry sauce**
- 1 21 oz can of apple pie filling or 2 15 oz cans of pumpkin pie filling**
- 1 10 oz bag of mini marshmallows**

You can find out the other ways your gift of \$1.87 meals will be used on page 4!



Showers Become Priceless During Pandemic

The Mobile Shower Ministry has been operating for 5 years. But when the pandemic hit, God began using this ministry even more. The need for daily showers immediately went up, and within seven days the shower ministry expanded to eight locations!

"The shower ministries are really life changing for the people," says Grace, a shower volunteer from Bayside Church.

"It gives them the opportunity to feel like they are now equal to anybody else walking down the street who just had a shower. In other words, it gives them hope."

"We try to make it a ministry instead of just a shower," she continues. *"We want them to also have an opportunity to learn the Word. We've had about 10 people become part of the church, and their lives have totally been changed in every way, so it's great."*

Want to Volunteer?

We love having you serve in person, and while there are fewer opportunities this year, we still have some!

Contact Eric Sangervasi at esangervasi@srmission.org or 707.578.1830 for more information