

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSIONS



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How Meals Saved Kelly's Life

Kelly didn't know it, but before she came to the Mission, her family often wondered when she'd take her last breath.

"I was very emaciated," she says. "My hair was falling out and I weighed 100 pounds."

100 pounds was not a healthy weight for Kelly. Nothing about her life was healthy and it hadn't been for a long time.

Kelly began drinking when she was around 18, but for years she kept it under control. Then, when her beloved husband died, the grief was too much to bear.

"It was just like a bomb went off," Kelly remembers. "There was such grief, and I tried to shove it down with vodka and beer."

As the months went on, Kelly drank more and ate less. She lost her job and was evicted . . .

(Continues inside)

"In the beginning I don't remember a whole lot of stuff . . . But I remember the meals. The meals were great." – Kelly



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MISSIONS

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How Meals Saved Kelly's Life



(Continued from cover)

... from her house, which is how she ended up coming to our door.

Radical Hospitality

Only hoping for a safe place to sleep, Kelly was blown away by how she was treated.

"They would bring this food, and I'd be like, 'Wow!'" she remembers. "It helped me realize that there were people that really, really wanted me to be ok."

Each meal Kelly ate strengthened her body and mind, helping her realize she wanted to change her life. Within two weeks, she was in our New Life Program.

"Before, I believed in God, in Jesus, but I didn't have a relationship with them," Kelly says.

Today she does. Not only does she have a relationship with Jesus, she is finding ways to share His love with others by volunteering, telling her story, and going back to school!

"It's hard to even express how much the Mission has changed my life," Kelly says.

Kelly graduated from the Mission's program in 2023 and last May earned a certificate in Drug and Alcohol Counseling. She's also reconnected with her family and when her daughter moved back to the area, they even decided to move in together!

Happy, Healthy and Healed

"I'm grandmother and I'm allowed to be around my grandson, I'm not sure I would have that relationship with him or my daughter if I hadn't gotten sober," Kelly says. "I cannot thank or uplift the Mission more. I know it's saved my life."

"I'm not 100 pounds anymore. . . I am happy and healthy."

"I live with my daughter, which is amazing. . . Our family is back. It's still sad there's empty seats, but our family's back to laughing at Christmas." – Kelly



Each \$2.02 Christmas meal you give can save and change a life like Kelly's!

62 Years of the Light

“And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!” – Matthew 2:9b-10 (NLT)



Jeff Gilman
Executive Director

There's an iconic light in the Christmas story – the star of Bethlehem. That light is so powerful that it draws the Magi from miles away and brings them all the way to the feet of Jesus.

At the Mission, we have a light that draws people, too. It's our "Jesus Saves" light on the corner of our campus on 6th St.

Day or night, that neon light is always on, shining as bright as we can get it. It draws our poor and needy neighbors to us. Here, we can love them, serve them, and ultimately point them to their Savior.

We've had that light for 62 years. We're known for it. So much so that when it's obvious someone is in need, they are often pointed towards our light.

"Just go to Railroad Square and walk towards the bright neon light," people say. "That's where you'll find the help you need."

My prayer has always been that people won't just find help when they follow our light. Instead, I pray that they'll meet the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.

Your prayers and support makes that possible.

Merry Christmas!



The Perfect Christmas Cup: Redwood Gospel Coffee



All our coffee is artisanally-roasted in the Mission's Coffee Certification Program. This program provides men and women in recovery with the critical skills and confidence they need to enter the work world again.



The Redwood Gospel Café serves hand-crafted coffee, tea and house-made pastries that we've heard are some of the best in town!

If you haven't been to our recently opened Café, at 1821 Piner Street, the holidays are the perfect time!

Open 7:30am-2pm Tuesday through Saturday, it's the perfect place to meet a friend or have a business meeting.

"I had a business meeting in the café," Kelli, one of our donors, says. "I ordered a white chocolate americano. It was strong, sweet and delicious, just like I like it."

"The pastries are amazing!" Kris, who was with Kelli, says.

If you can't stop by, don't worry – you can still enjoy our artisanal roasted coffee right at home! You can order for yourself at redwoodgospelcoffee.com. It also makes great gifts!

No matter if you have it in our café, at home or in your church, you're not just enjoying some of the best coffee you can get. You're also supporting job training through the Mission's Coffee Certification Program and ensuring coffee farmers in poverty-stricken countries get a fair price.

We hope to serve you soon!

Find out more at: RedwoodGospelCoffee.com

Christmas **Wishlist**



As part of our Christmas celebration, we want to make sure that every one of our overnight guests and recovery program participants gets their very own stocking, and you can help!

Fill a stocking with the following items:

- **Crew Socks**
(men's or women's)
- **Beanies**
(adult sizes)
- **Razor**
- **Shave Cream**
(men)
- **Manicure Set**
(women)
- **Candy**
- **Power Banks**
(for cell phones)
- **\$10 Gift Cards**
(fast food, coffee)



Spread **Christmas Joy!**



Because we believe that the Christmas season – and a healthy life – is all about relationships, we wanted to help you connect to our guests and the transformations you're making possible every day.

Enclosed are two Redwood Gospel Missions Christmas ornaments.

Sign your name on the green one and then send it back to the Mission with your gift to provide Christmas meals by Dec. 22nd. Your personal touch will show our guests that someone cares about them and is praying for them this holiday season.

The red one is for you to keep as a thank you for all you do. It's also a reminder to pray for the men, women and

Our Gift for You.

Detach this ornament and hang it on your tree as a reminder to pray for your neighbors in need this Christmas.



Your Gift for Your Neighbors in Need.

Detach this ornament, sign your first name on the back, and send it with your gift by Dec. 22nd to encourage our guests this holiday season!



children at the Mission, as well as our poor and needy neighbors who are on the streets this Christmas.

Sign and send the green ornament back by December 22nd.
The red one is for you to keep!

Give Christmas Meals!

If Kelly hadn't come to the Mission, she wouldn't be alive. If friends like you hadn't provided amazing meals, she wouldn't be living a new life.

That's because every \$2.02 meal you give doesn't just provide a plate of food. It provides a hot, nourishing meal that not only tastes delicious but shows them what guests in your home would feel.

That they are loved. That their life matters.

That they are worth the cost of the time and money spent to prepare a nice meal.

As Kelly said, she doesn't remember much over the first few days she was at the Mission – that's how sick she was. But she does remember those meals. That's radical hospitality!

Radical hospitality is going above and beyond, just like Jesus did for us, to show people that they are loved. Radical hospitality changes lives.

We want each of the 400 meals we serve daily to show God's abundant love. We want lives to be saved and changed! Will you help by sending a gift?

Each \$2.02 you give provides one meal!

*To help in time for Christmas,
please respond by December 22nd!!*

GIVE CHRISTMAS MEALS!

Yes, Jeff! I will provide life-changing meals for my poor and needy neighbors this Christmas! I'm sending a key partner gift of:

☐ \$_____ to help as much as possible.
☐ My signed green ornament is also enclosed.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State ZIP _____

A key partner gift of \$202 provides 100 meals!

PLEASE RESPOND BY DEC. 22ND.

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

*You can also give securely online
to at rgm.org/joy*



When people are really hurting a great meal is one of the best ways to show God's love!

The Gift that Keeps Giving

If you're looking for another way to continue sharing God's love this Christmas season, consider naming Redwood Gospel Missions in your will or estate plan. When you do, you'll know that you are giving the gift of new life not only today but into the future.



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



REAL CHANGE

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