

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSIONS

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MARCH 2026



"I may not have been homeless, but my heart was yearning for something to fill me, and that was God." – John

The Easter Moment That Changed Everything

John was just a child when his life began to unravel.

"I was five years old when I was abandoned," he says.

What followed were years marked by instability and pain. Thrown into the foster care system early, John began using alcohol and drugs at a very young age. When asked to describe his life before coming to the Mission, he doesn't hesitate.

"Turmoil," he says. "There was no peace."

Looking back, John sees what was missing.

"Everything was about myself and not about giving or even receiving," he explains. "Since Christ it's different. It's way better."

After trying multiple programs without lasting change, John reached a breaking point.

"I had gotten to a point in my life where I needed change," he says. "And the only way I was going to get change that would stick with me was through God and Christ."

(Continues inside)

The Easter Moment That Changed Everything

(Continued from cover...)

An Easter Turning Point

In March of 2018, John entered Redwood Gospel Missions' New Life Program. Just three days later, he helped serve at the Mission's Easter outreach, offering meals, care and dignity.

"I got to serve people their dinner plates," John recalls. "I got to hand out coats... help line up people for face painting and haircuts."

As the day went on, something unexpected happened.

"Getting to see the smile on their face when they got a plate of hot food," he says, stayed with him. And when the event ended, his emotions caught him off guard.

"When we were done that night with the event I had tears running down my face of joy," John says. "Tears of joy, not tears of sadness."

Walking back to the Mission, an older "program brother" noticed.

"He explained to me that that's Christ working in you," John remembers. "And what you did today was you got a glimpse of it."

That Easter moment changed everything.

"And it was what changed my life, was that day there, that Easter banquet or benefit we did," John says. "And I dove into the program even more."

A Life Redirected

From that point forward, John committed himself fully to recovery, faith and service.

"I dove into volunteering, anything I could, every aspect, to give back," he says. "And it's the greatest feeling I've ever had."

Today, John has eight years of sobriety — something he had never experienced before.

He now leads the Redwood Gospel Mission's Mobile Shower Ministry, building relationships with people living on the streets.

"We know each other and we spend time getting to know each other," John says. "I work on the one thing that nobody else does and that's the relationship side."

When asked where he believes he would be without the Mission, John is clear.

"Either back in prison or dead."

And to the donors who made that Easter moment possible, he says simply:

"Thank you. You changed my life."

Each \$2.02 you give can help create another Easter moment that changes a life.

"That's what changed my life, was that day there, that Easter banquet." – John



Jeff Gilman
Executive Director

Alive Because He is Risen

Every Easter, I find myself drawn again to the simple, powerful truth at the center of our faith: Jesus Christ is alive.

The Resurrection is God's declaration that death does not win. Hopelessness does not get the final word. When Christ walked out of the tomb, He conquered death once and for all — and He continues to bring life where there once was none.

Scripture reminds us that Jesus didn't come to make bad people good. He came to make dead people alive.

That is the story of Easter. And it is the story we see unfolding every day at the Mission.

That's why Easter is at the core of my faith.

Because Christ is risen, no one is beyond hope. No life is too broken. No story is finished. God is still bringing life — quietly, powerfully, faithfully.

As we celebrate Easter, my prayer is that you would be reminded of this truth as well: because He lives, we can live differently.

With hope.

With confidence.

With joy.

Thank you for walking alongside us and being part of what God is doing.

Give \$2.02 Easter Meals



No one comes to Easter hungry because things are going well.

Many of our neighbors arrive worn down, isolated and unsure if anyone sees them or cares. Hunger has a way of shrinking hope, making it harder to think clearly, harder to believe life can change, harder to imagine new beginnings.

That's why Easter meals matter so much.

A meal does more than fill a stomach. It restores strength. It communicates dignity. It creates a moment where someone can pause, feel safe and experience care that reflects God's love.

For people like John — whose life began to change at an Easter Feast — that one meal became the opening God used to do something far greater. And stories like his continue because friends like you step in.

Will you help provide meals and care this Easter?

Your gift helps nourish bodies, restore dignity and open hearts to hope and new life.

This Easter season, your generosity helps make sure no one is turned away hungry and that every guest is reminded they are loved, valued and worthy.

Thank you for your generosity!

Give Life-Changing Easter Meals!

Yes, Jeff! I want to help provide meals and care for my poor and needy neighbors this Easter season! 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: _____

Each \$2.02 you give provides a meal and care for one person!

Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Redwood Gospel MISSIONS
PO Box 493
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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

*You can also give meals securely at:
rgm.org/newlife*



Each \$2.02 you give can help create an Easter moment that changes a life.

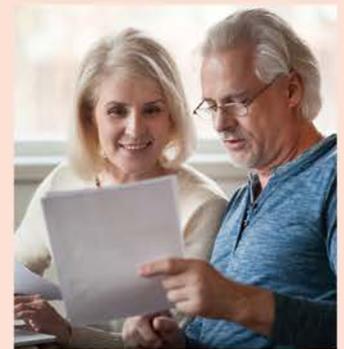
Leave a Lasting Legacy of Hope



Have you considered including **Redwood Gospel Missions** in your will or estate plans?

A legacy gift is a meaningful way to ensure that hope, care and new life continue to be offered to men, women and families who come to the Mission — today and for generations to come. It's also a powerful way to reflect your faith and show your loved ones how deeply sharing God's love with those in need matters to you.

If you'd like to learn more about legacy giving, please contact Jeff Gilman at 707.578.1830. He would be honored to talk with you.



REAL CHANGE is the newsletter of Redwood Gospel Missions
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Easter Blessing Bags



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

One simple way you can help our guests experience that love is by creating **Easter Blessing Bags** for our Easter Feast.

Each bag is a tangible reminder that someone is seen, cared for and not forgotten. Making a bag is easy. Just grab a large Ziplock bag and include:

- \$10 gift card (fast food, coffee, movie theater, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Flashlight
- Sunglasses
- Optional - candy & beef jerky

Once your bags are complete, seal them and drop them off by March 29 at:

Ukiah: 150 Luce Ave. Mon-Fri 7am-1pm

Santa Rosa: Ministry Support Office at 2447 Summerfield Rd. Mon-Fri 8am-1pm, 2pm-5pm

Thank you for being part of how Easter love is shared this season.



Your kindness helps turn Easter into a moment of dignity, encouragement and hope, one bag at a time.

For more information about our Easter Feast and Blessing Bags - including bulk purchasing options - visit rgm.org/easter2026.

Volunteer at the Easter Feast!



Looking for a meaningful way to serve this Easter?

Redwood Gospel Missions invites you to volunteer alongside us during one of the most important days of the year.

As a volunteer, you can help serve meals, greet guests, seat individuals, offer a friendly smile and pray with men and women who ask for it. Your presence can help make Easter a moment of hope for someone in need.

If you're ready to step in and be part of what God is doing this Easter, we would love to have you serve with us.

You can either check the box on your reply form, or you can contact Tina Karns: 707-578-1830 X 314 or tkarns@rgm.org for more information, go to <https://www.rgm.org/easter2026/>



We'll be hosting Easter Feasts at all three of our locations!

Program Spotlight: Mobile Shower Ministry



"Every time the shower drives up, I almost cry," says Kieawnie. "It's just the moment to see God's hand work."

When the Redwood Gospel Missions' Mobile Shower Ministry began partnering with Kieawnie's church and her non-profit, the Bethany Project, no one knew what to expect. But the impact became clear almost immediately.

"We have had people from Thursday's outreach start going and attending church on Sundays," she says.

As the ministry grew, it became a consistent place of connection.

One guest told her that this was the first place they felt seen. Another told her, *"I haven't been to church in 10 years and I haven't been comfortable to go anywhere else but here."*

"They started coming every week," Kieawnie explains. "Making connections and relationships and feeling like they have a place to go."

For her, the heart of the change was dignity.

"It's that first line to restoring somebody's dignity," she says. "Providing them a meal and allowing them to take a shower. And they come out feeling restored and then they're ready to begin to have conversation."

What began as a simple outreach quickly grew into something far deeper.

By meeting a basic need with care and consistency, the Mobile Shower Ministry is doing more than providing hygiene. It is creating space for trust, community and spiritual openness. People return not just for a shower, but because they know they will be welcomed, remembered and treated with respect.

Because of friends like you, dignity is being restored, relationships are forming and lives are being changed through the Mobile Shower Ministry.