

THE CROSSING

RENO-SPARKS GOSPEL MISSION, INC
Sharing and Caring in Northern Nevada since 1963

EASTER ISSUE 2009

Every day I got closer to drinking myself to death . . . *and I didn't even care*

My name is Timothy, and coming to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission is the best thing that has ever happened to me. Alcohol was my downfall. I tried quitting a hundred times, but without God in my life I never had any success. If I'd known the Lord sooner I would have avoided a lot of pain — both for me and for my family.

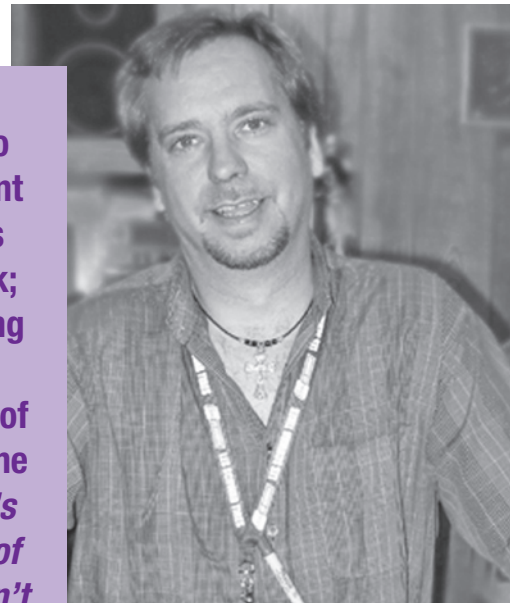
Because of my addiction, I lived on the streets and under bridges. A typical night would be to drink until I pass out, then eventually wake up to yet another bottle of vodka. I would hide in the bushes to avoid the police. I had no friends. I was isolated and withdrawn. All that time, I was drinking myself to death and I didn't even care.

I have so many to thank for my recovery

I thank God He directed my steps to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission where I'm finally getting my life together. Not only am I making progress, I'm also being trusted. I think the Mission has had more faith in me than I've had in myself. Just a year ago I would sit in front of the Mission's thrift store drunk; now I'm managing the store and helping all kinds of people in the name of Jesus. *If that's not an example of God at work I don't know what is.*

Today I have hope. I feel the love of Christ.

“Just a year ago I would sit in front of the Mission's thrift store drunk; now I'm managing the store and helping all kinds of people in the name of Jesus. *If that's not an example of God at work I don't know what is.*”



The staff here is teaching me how to live as a Christian man. My life used to feel like a graveyard. At this moment I feel the resurrection power of Jesus in my life. I have so many people to thank for my recovery, and at the top of the list is *you* who give your money and your service to the Mission. Your personal acts of kindness mean so much. God bless you at this Easter season . . . and thank you again for keeping the Mission doors open for someone like me.

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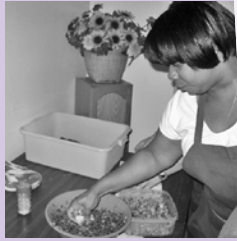
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From homemade breads and soups to entrees and desserts, women from the Gospel Mission are getting a kitchen education from future "top chefs" from the Carson City High School Culinary Arts Program.



Every month, the students conduct the training at the Mission's women's house, which has a full commercial kitchen and equipment.

"We have all of this beautiful cooking stuff but no one knew how to use it," said Tammy Treadwell, women's services coordinator for the Mission. "Now, we walk through the kitchen and we're like, 'Yeah, I know how to use that.' It's been an awesome experience for all of us."

Aside from creative dishes, the culinary students also provide educational advice for purchasing food products in grocery stores.



Easter Breakfast

The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission invites the community to its annual Easter morning "Bible and Breakfast" service beginning at 8 a.m. Sunday, April 12 at the Mission, 355 Record St., Reno.

Join us as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with a beautiful time of singing and prayer. Following the service, we'll serve a hearty breakfast of eggs, bacon and pancakes to all in attendance.

Singles, couples and families are invited to attend this free event. For details about the Easter Service and meal call (775) 239-0485.



An Encouraging Word from Rick Redding



I don't think I've ever been so excited about what God is doing at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. *Let me give you some examples.* We've just graduated seven men and women from our recovery program. Four had been scheduled to receive hard-core drug sentences prior to coming to the Mission. *(When I told the judge these four had put their lives together and were graduating he just about flipped.)* His response was the same when I told him of the success of two women he was going to sentence for their use of meth. The judge was ready to put them all away. But because he believes in the work of Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission he gave them all a second chance.

The judge showed up at graduation

Tell me if this is not God at work. To show his support for our program the judge — the longest seated judge in Nevada history — even came to our graduation. You can imagine the joy on the faces of these four individuals who now saw the judge under different — and certainly happier — circumstances.

Do you see why we're excited? Something else. We've chosen not to participate in the economic recession. We're too busy seeing God at work. We're enthusiastic about your continued support which allows us to do what God asks us to do. We spend our time praying, not worrying. We take our issues to the Lord, *not to the stock exchange.*

Now it's almost Easter. For scores of our residents old things are passing away and all things are becoming new. What's passing away?

- Alcoholism is drying up
- Drug addiction is a thing of the past
- Prostitutes are being made virginal through the forgiveness of Christ
- Relationships with parents, spouses and children are being restored
- The chain of abuse is being broken

And it's only because of a loving God and the faithful stewardship of a donor like you that we can announce these spiritual victories. You're helping us provide healing for the broken hearted, the spiritually bankrupt and those who've given up hope. It's been said that the best place for a resurrection is in a graveyard. Thank you for giving your "resurrection" gift all year long — and especially at this Easter season. God bless you for caring so much.

Your servant,

Rick Redding, Executive Director

"It's been said that the best place for a resurrection is in a graveyard. Thank you for giving your 'resurrection' gift all year long — and especially at this Easter season."

2009 Promises to be a Banner Year at the Reno-Sparks Gospel

The entire Mission staff thanks you for your overwhelming support of this ministry of rescue during the past several months. It would be an understatement to remind ourselves that these are challenging economic times. *Unprecedented, would be a more appropriate word.*

But as tough as it is for many during these days of uncertainty, it's even more difficult for the men and women who are streaming through our doors this Easter season. These are the homeless, the ex-offenders, the addicted and the lost. The good news is that those who choose to make positive changes in their lives are finding new hope, new opportunities and a new life when they decide to walk with their Savior and Lord.



From a life of desperation . . . to a life more abundant with Jesus Christ



My name is Kim. The worst day of my life was when I was babysitting my granddaughter while I was high. While I was there in the house *she died of sudden infant death syndrome*, but I was too spaced out to know what was going on. There she was. Lifeless. Crack cocaine was more important to me than my own flesh and blood.

If anyone needed the Lord in her life I was that person. Because of my ongoing crimes, the court mandated me to come to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission for 13 months. This was my last option. It was either prison or the Mission. Praise God I chose this place that is rescuing my soul through the power of a resurrected Jesus.

No longer do I steal and live with paranoia

I've already told you the worst day of my life. The *best* day of my life was when I came to the realization that Jesus died for my sins so that I could have eternal life. Kim's life no longer is about using drugs or stealing from stores while I was high. I no longer live with internal chaos, paranoia and what seemed like



"My life is no longer about using drugs or stealing from stores while I was high. I no longer live with internal chaos, paranoia and what seemed like insanity."

insanity. Today, I turn my problems over to God. I pray. I read his Word, and I do my best to apply the Bible's message to my life.

I'm so grateful that I've been given a second chance. I could never become clean and sober on my own. It's taking the grace of God, the staff at the Mission and the sacrificial donations of a friend

such as you to give me hope and a new direction. This Easter is special for me because I serve a risen Lord. I can't forget the past . . . but I am more than hopeful for my better future. Thank you for your part in my recovery.

Mission . . . thank you in advance for your generous support

"... as tough as it is for many during these days of uncertainty, it's even more difficult for the men and women who are streaming through our doors during the Easter season."

God bless you for giving from a loving heart

Even though you may be feeling the pain of the uncertainty of your investments, you continue to reach out to others who are hungry, homeless and without a friend. And we simply cannot thank you enough for your ongoing generosity.

To keep on reaching out to people such as Timothy and Kim with a generous Easter love gift, please use the remit form enclosed or call us at **775-323-0386**. You may also show your support by donating online at **www.rsgm.org**. Thank you for being a friend to the poor and needy in our community during the Easter season and throughout the year.

Designed to create awareness about the plight of the homeless, the Mission's first "Walk a Mile in My Shoes" mini-walk-a-thon is scheduled for **9 a.m. Saturday, March 7**.

Walkers of all ages are invited to participate in the event, which will start at Wingfield Park in downtown Reno and end one mile later at the Gospel Mission, 355 Record St.

Entry fees will be used to support the Mission's continuing outreach to the homeless of Northern Nevada.

"People always say to gain empathy you should walk a mile in someone's shoes," said Rick Redding, Executive Director. "Here's their chance. We're going to walk a mile in the cold and along the sidewalks and streets that our homeless walk every day.

"Maybe even for a second we can experience what they go through."

For more information or to register, please visit the Mission's website at **www.rsgm.org** or call us at **323-0386, Ext. 16**.

Thrift Stores

- **Thrift Depot Kietzke**
630 Gentry Way (at Kietzke)
Reno – 775-825-4424
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Reno**
575 E. Fourth St. (at Elko)
Reno – 775-786-4499
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Sparks**
640 Greenbrae Dr., #160
(Greenbrae Shopping Center)
Sparks – 775-331-5020
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot North Hills**
1075 North Hills Blvd.
(Raley's Shopping Center)
Reno – 775-677-2266
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Prater**
1450 E. Prater Way
(Hacienda Plaza Shopping Center)
Sparks – 775-331-5528
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Sun Valley**
5105 Sun Valley Blvd., Ste. 200,
Sun Valley (at First Avenue
next to Dollar Loan Center).
775-674-6444
9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat.

Holiday Wrap Up

With the economy in full recession, thousands of poor and hurting men, women and children flocked to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission during the holiday season seeking help with food, clothing, shelter and other necessities.

The Mission served more than 25,000 meals between Thanksgiving and Christmas alone, while helping hundreds more with food assistance from its community pantry.

“We’re definitely seeing a spike in people seeking help,” said Rick Redding, Executive Director. “On one

hand it breaks your heart to see so many hurting people and families. But on the other hand, we feel grateful that we’re in a position to help them. If we have something they need, we give it to them.”

With the help of 30 volunteers and the entire Reno Bighorns NBA basketball team, **the Mission served more than 1,000 meals and gave away about 600 winter jackets** and hundreds of knitted hats and scarves during its traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

“This is so wonderful,” said one young woman, holding her infant daughter as she ate her turkey dinner. “This makes me feel normal again, even if it’s just for a little while.”



The Mission served more than 25,000 meals between Thanksgiving and Christmas.



Thank you volunteers and the Reno Bighorns!

The Mission also teamed up with LifeChurch of Reno to pass out about 100 frozen turkeys and side dishes to low-income families during the annual “Random Acts of Kindness” event.

At press time, Mission staff and volunteers were gearing up to serve similar numbers during the Christmas dinner, which also features wrapped presents for children.

But while the holiday season is now a memory, Redding said the need continues on.

“Unfortunately, the need is there every single day,” he said. “Our work never stops.”



My Easter Gift

YES, Rick, I’m happy to do my part to help provide hope and healing for the addicted, the homeless and the lost at this Easter season.

- Please bill my credit card:
 VISA MC AMEX DISCOVER

Here’s my best gift of:

- \$20.50** to provide **10 meals** and other assistance
 \$30.75 to provide **15 meals** and other assistance
 \$61.50 to provide **30 meals** and other assistance
 \$_____ to provide **as many meals and as much care as possible**



ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____
 NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY / STATE / ZIP _____
 EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, Inc.
 P.O. Box 5956
 Reno, NV 89513-5956

Please use this completed form and return it with your Easter donation, or donate online at www.rsgm.org. Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.