

THE CROSSING

Sharing and Caring in Northern Nevada since 1963

Thank God I'm Free . . . *I am finally free*

My name is Evelyn. My misery is gone. My 30+ years of using meth and pills are in the past. My negative attitude on life has disappeared. For so long, it was all about me and doing what I thought was fun. In the end there was nothing *fun* about it at all. I took my kids down the wrong path. I damaged my heart and I destroyed my livelihood. I used to be a caregiver . . . *but I was never able to take care of myself.* That's because God was not in my life. I thought I was unfixable. But I no longer feel that way . . . because God, this Mission and your generosity have all helped me see myself in a new light: I'm now free, clean and heading in the right direction. It took me so long to see the light. But today, I live in that light, and it's a life I've never known until now.

In the past, peace was nowhere to be found

I used to wake up looking for my next fix. Now when I rise, I thank God I'm alive. I praise His name. I go to our morning devotions, where I start my day focused on God and his love. In the past, the word *peace* was not in my vocabulary.

"I can't thank you enough for your donations and support."

Today, I sense God's presence and peace during my every waking hour.

I know I still have a long way to go. That's why I say *I'm in the middle of my transformation.* But as long as I remain faithful to God and to His Word, I know I'll keep becoming the person He wants me to be. Thank you for all you do for me. At this Thanksgiving season, I've never been more grateful.

Your friend, *Evelyn*



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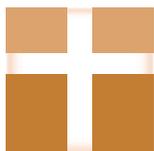


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**RENO-SPARKS
GOSPEL MISSION
INC**

Holiday volunteers and donations needed!

Can you or your organization provide assistance for the thousands of poor and needy during the upcoming holidays? We have many opportunities and needs to uplift our community.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Street Treats: (a fun Halloween-themed event for the homeless), 2-4 p.m., Oct. 27

Thanksgiving: Setup - 9:30 a.m., Nov. 27 and Lunch - 11:00 a.m., Nov. 28

Random Acts of Kindness: 1-3 p.m., Dec. 18

Christmas: Setup - Noon, Dec. 24 and Lunch - 11:00 a.m., Dec. 25

FOOD NEEDED

- Turkeys (fresh/frozen)
- Hams
- Coffee (ground/whole bean)
- Canned goods
- Whole pies
- Plastic knives/forks/spoons
- Baked cookies and other goodies

DONATIONS NEEDED

- New, unwrapped toys for all ages
- Winter coats/jackets for men and women
- Warm socks
- Knitted caps and ski masks
- Blankets
- Gloves
- Thermal and regular underwear
- Hygiene kits (soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, etc.)

To volunteer, call **Tammy** at **775-323-0386, Ext. 16**. To donate, call **775-323-7999**.

For more information and updates, please visit us at [facebook.com/renomission](https://www.facebook.com/renomission) or www.rsgm.org.

An Encouraging Word from Rick Redding

Dear Friend of Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

It has all the outward appearances of Anywhere, USA. Families are sitting together enjoying a wonderful meal. Kids are laughing (with pie all over their faces), and just about everyone is smiling. It's one of those special occasions when we serve the homeless, neglected, abused and the lost a dinner with all the trimmings. *What a way to celebrate Thanksgiving.*

I remember my earliest Thanksgivings as a child. I can still smell the turkey, the mashed potatoes and the pies being baked in the oven. Perhaps those are some of your memories as well. Unfortunately, most of our guests have not enjoyed that privilege. And today they are homeless, addicted, out of work and running short on hope. Many live in nearby hotels; others are guests at the Mission. That's why we do our best to create a warm, family atmosphere each person will long remember.

Thank you for making Thanksgiving so special for our friends

Our guests thank us with words, handshakes, hugs and smiles. And when the meal is over, many just hang around to talk to us — which is often the best part of the celebration. But all this doesn't just happen. Because of your generosity, we're able to prepare those 120 turkeys, peel mounds of potatoes and bake more pies than most of us will see in a lifetime. In just a few weeks, what I've just written will take place again at the Mission, as it does each year. Because I know you care, I want to thank you in advance for sharing so much of yourself with the neediest of all. God bless you.

Your servant,

Rick Redding, Executive Director



“Because of your generosity, we're able to prepare those 120 turkeys, peel mounds of potatoes and bake more pies than most of us will see in a lifetime.”



Thank you for reaching out to the poor and homeless . . . and

Our Mission guests come through our doors filled with regret, fear and anxiety. They are hungry, often sick and without decent clothing. Countless numbers have spent too many days living on our streets. But when they come to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, they suddenly find themselves in a new, supportive environment. We remind them God loves them *and so do we*. The four words, *this too shall pass*, are often the most comforting words our guests have ever heard. As they embrace the love of Jesus, they begin to understand God has never given up on them.

The light of God begins to shine in their eyes

As our friends reflect on who they were and how far they've come, a light comes to their eyes — the light of a God who loves them and has a plan for their lives. They learn no problem is too great for God. They also learn they'll

God is real . . .

and to think I once thought He didn't exist

My name is Robert. When I came to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, I didn't believe in God. I had made myself a god in a drug-infested world. But it was a world of running from the police, always watching my back and being so frightened at times I didn't dare leave my Las Vegas home.

I started sniffing gas and smoking pot at 9 years of age. At 14 I bought a car, took off the plates and ended up with \$10,000 in traffic tickets. Car insurance? Well, I never bothered with that. Because of my abuse of drugs, I should have been dead. To be honest, I've been high my whole life. But what about that God I never believed in? Well, that's not the case anymore. I know there's a God and I know he has a plan for my life. If God can turn my life around, he can rearrange the heart and soul of anyone.

Thank you for providing a place for me

I know it will soon be Thanksgiving . . . but I don't need a special day to be thankful. I have so many people to thank for my recovery. God is real — so He's the first one I want to thank. Then there's the

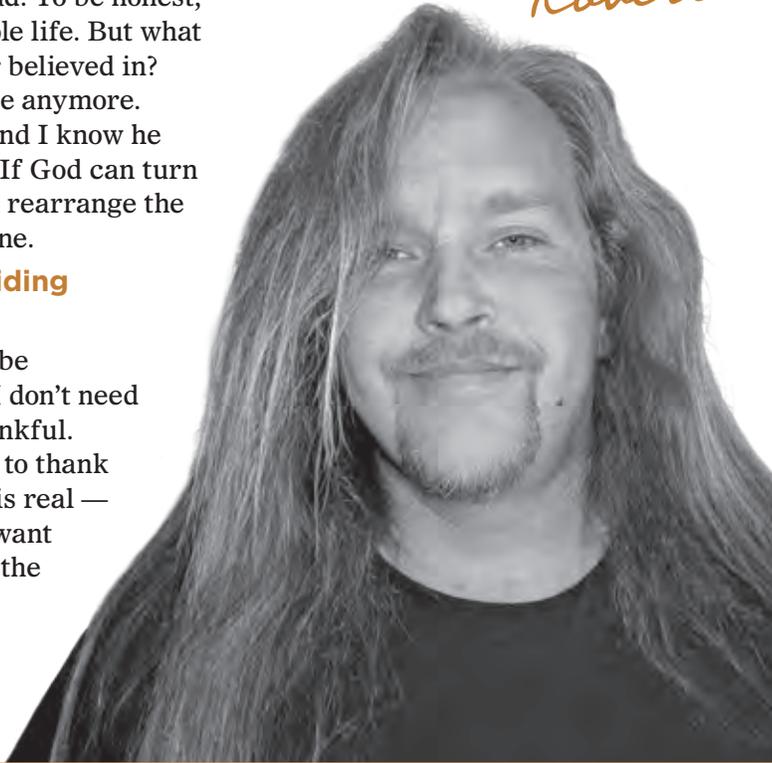
God bless you for your compassion.

staff here at the Mission. I don't even want to think where I'd be today without their support. I also want to express my gratitude to you for your donations that provide me with food, shelter, clothes and the opportunity to be in a place that's positive and caring.

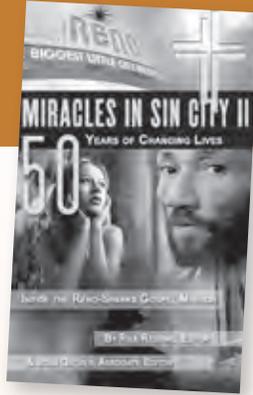
I'll soon be ready to go back to my old trade as an iron worker. If you ever feel like praying for me, I'll accept all the prayers I can get.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Robert



Miracles in Sin City



Does God still perform miracles?

Find out in *Miracles in Sin City II*, an inside look

at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission's work with the addicted and homeless. Celebrating the Mission's 50th Anniversary, the book recounts the stories of 50 men and women who came to Sin City for luck — and found life instead.

The book is a follow up to the 1981 work by Rev. Howard Cooper, one of the Mission's early leaders.

Told in their own words, the stories describe often shocking and brutal lives of addiction, abuse, dysfunction and despair.

"To protect my daughter, I had to get her away from me. The son of a monster was afraid of himself," wrote Jason, a former college football player raised in an abusive home. "How can God love a man like me?"

Many, like Jason, hit rock bottom — then discovered the true rock that would change their lives.

Jesus.

"It's an inspirational book about what happens when a man or woman gives their life to Christ," said Rick Redding, Mission executive director. "You read their stories and you think, 'No way can they escape that situation.' And over and over they do.

"Some people say God doesn't do miracles anymore. I say look at those at the Mission and you'll see miracles in Sin City."

The Mission is giving free copies to every donation of \$100 or more made through the PayPal donation button on the Mission's website at www.rsgm.org.

Thank you for your ongoing support of this ministry of rescue

never have to face a challenging situation alone again — unless they choose to reject the love of a God who cares.

However, none of these miracles would happen, were it not for your prayers and faithful giving to this ministry of rescue. Thank you for all you've done in days past. But hunger and homelessness are everyday occurrences . . . so we come to you again, asking you for your generous support. To give your gift, please use the enclosed remit slip, or you can make your donation online at www.rsgm.org. Thank you for being a friend to those who come to the Mission during the Thanksgiving season and throughout the year.

"The four words, *this too shall pass*, are often the most comforting words our guests have ever heard."

YOUTH MISSION TRIP

They fed the poor along the river. Walked the streets with the homeless. Prayed with men and women in a recovery program. Served hundreds of meals.

It was a busy week for the 10 junior high students and adult leaders who spent their 2013 Youth Mission Trip at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. The students and leaders, all from LifeChurch in Reno, were the first group to go through the Mission's new youth mission experience program.



"The kids didn't come to the Mission to work with homeless people. They came to work with people," said Shane Redding, a youth pastor intern at LifeChurch. "The week has been a process of humanizing the less fortunate.

"They thought all homeless and addicts were crazy and dangerous. They realize now that these people are human just like them."



The group interacted with those recovering from drugs and alcohol and attended the program's raucous graduation ceremony with 250 others. The students — three boys, three girls and their leaders — prepared more than 120 hygiene kits for the needy and passed out 100 sandwiches to the poor along the Truckee River in downtown Reno.

They also walked around Reno with two homeless men who had agreed to show them a glimpse of life on the streets. The students then barbecued hot dogs for customers at the Mission's thrift stores — collecting tips to buy needed items and gifts for their two homeless escorts.

"These kids worked hard," said Paul Parent, Mission food services manager. "They served hundreds and hundreds of meals and they seemed to get more energy with each meal they served. They even prayed with our homeless clients. They were incredible."



5252 Ministries at Mission

Sammie Smimmo is on a mission to visit 52 homeless shelters in 52 weeks.

Fittingly, Reno was stop 21.

Sammie and her assistant Kathy Gava from 5252 Ministries stayed at the Mission's home for women, led a chapel service, served meals to the homeless, attended classes and interacted with the Mission program clients.

In between, they prayed and ministered to the homeless outside the Mission.

"We received so many blessings from the people we met," Smimmo said.

She rated the Mission a "10" for all its work with the homeless and needy in Northern Nevada. "There are several other places that help the homeless there," she wrote in her blog, "but, definitely, the Reno-Sparks Gospel Rescue Mission is outstanding."

Follow Sammie's road trip at www.5252ministries.blogspot.com.



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MY THANKSGIVING GIFT

YES, Rick, you can count on my continued support for this ministry of rescue.

Here is my donation 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

Please bill my credit card: (please print) VISA MC

ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME ON ACCOUNT _____ SIGNATURE _____

NAME _____

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 generous Thanksgiving donation in the envelope provided. Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You may also share your compassion online at www.rsgm.org. You will receive a receipt.