

Two decades ago,
Tammie Holmes
was a meth addict.



Arrested. In and out of custody. Living to get high.

A shattered life with shattered dreams.

Then she came to the Mission for help — unfortunately, she left after a few months. It took more life on the streets and a short time in prison before Tammy found recovery. But after her release, she returned to the Mission.

“I knew I had to come back here,” Tammie said. “It’s different than anything else I had ever experienced. I knew that’s where I wanted to be.”

Just a week out of prison, Tammie applied for a job at the Mission. To her surprise, she was hired as a cashier. “It was the first place I applied,” Tammie said. “They asked if I could pass a drug test. I said, “Yes I can! And they gave me a chance.”

Tammie proved to be a hard worker, loyal and a great role model to other clients in recovery. Soon, she was made manager of one of the Mission’s thrift stores.

Today, she celebrates 18 years of employment at the Mission and is the store operations manager overseeing the charity’s four Thrift Depot stores with a combined sales revenue of about \$1 million.

With her endearing smile and contagious laugh, Tammie is often at the forefront of Mission activities that help the homeless, such as Walk a Mile in My Shoes and Street Treats.

It’s a wonderful life she never saw coming.

Daily, she helps addicts in the Mission’s recovery program find hope through work therapy assignments in the thrift stores.

“I love the Mission and the people here,” she said. “Everybody here is like my family. The lives we get to impact make this the best job I have ever had. And I never want to leave.”

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MY FALL GIFT

YES, Rick, please use my gift to help bring new life to struggling neighbors as we head into the holiday season. **Here is my donation of:**

- ☐ **\$21.70** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
- ☐ **\$30.38** to provide **14** meals and other assistance
- ☐ **\$60.76** to provide **28** meals and other assistance
- ☐ \$_____ to provide as many meals and care as possible
- ☐ Please bill my credit card: (please print) ☐ VISA ☐ MC



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

Please mail this completed form and return it with your generous donation. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You may also give online at www.rsgm.org. You will receive a receipt.

the MISSION

FALL ISSUE 2018

Stories of Second Chances

Every Reason to Live

By Jessica



I started doing meth when I was 15 years old.

My dad was a meth cook, so I grew up in that world. It’s what I knew, and for seven years meth ruled my life.

By 22 I was homeless, I’d been in and out of jail, and I’d been ordered by the court on multiple occasions to enter various drug treatment programs. But I would start using while in the programs and get kicked out. Life just seemed hopeless.

“I discovered right away that this place is different.”

It was my probation officer who got me connected with the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, and this place has literally changed my life. I had to detox for three days before I came here, and when I arrived I immediately felt a sense of peace. Everybody was so loving and caring. That’s just something you don’t experience living on the streets.

I discovered right away that this place is different. The other treatment programs just teach you about addiction, the physical part. Here they teach you that God loves you and has a plan for your life. And they provide all kinds of resources to help you pull your life together — to help you find employment and housing and stability.

I’ve never been in as good of a place as I’m in now, mentally and spiritually. I’m at peace with my past and I’m finally beginning to heal. I’d never been able to do that before. When I was on the streets, I didn’t feel like I had any reason to live. Now I know I have every reason to live. One of those reasons is my dad. He’s also quit using meth and now when I call him, we talk about Jesus. It’s amazing!

Soon I will graduate from the program here, and I know I’ll be OK. Because, thanks to the Mission, I am a completely different person today.



**RENO-SPARKS
GOSPEL MISSION**

2115 Timber Way, Reno, NV 89513-5956 | 775-323-0386 | www.rsgm.org



It was an early Thanksgiving at the Mission as University of Nevada, Reno, students pulled together their resources to provide 200 turkey dinners for the homeless and poor.

About 20 students of Juniper Hall, a co-ed dormitory, banded together to give back to those hurting in our community. The students bought the meals with money saved from their college meal plans.

"We have been putting this together for the last two months," said Evan, the dorm's student adviser. "The residents have really put their time and hearts into this."

Rick Redding, the Mission's executive director, said his staff marveled at the group's energy and compassion. "It blew us away," Redding said.

"The creative way they fed 200 people just hit all of our hearts. They could have used these meals for themselves, but instead they thought of helping others. It made for a lot of smiles around here," Redding added.

If you or your group would like to volunteer or donate, please contact **Mariah at (775) 323-0386 ext. 16** or at **mariah@rsgm.org**.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rick Redding

That Feeling in the Air

Thankful for you as we enter the holiday season.



Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

With the holidays just around the corner, I want you to know that this year I'm especially thankful for friends like you. That's because you make possible numerous acts of kindness and special activities during the fall season that we couldn't do without your support.

Next month, for example, we'll host Street Treats, a Halloween-themed event for homeless children and families. The children enjoy candy, face painting, games, and prizes. And their families receive hygiene kits and other household goods.

Then, at Thanksgiving, we'll host a big feast for our neighbors in need. Last year, we served 800 people in one sitting, and it was such a blessing. Our Christmas celebration will feature a similar feast and will also include toys and jackets for the kids.

One of my favorite traditions here at the Mission has come to be known as "Random Acts of Kindness." Our warehouse sits near a low-income neighborhood, where there are several families who, though they aren't homeless, really need help. So, every year, we pull into the neighborhood with a couple of trucks and about 20 volunteers who go door to door, handing out turkeys, apple pies, mashed potatoes — entire holiday meals and even Christmas trees.

Your generosity helps make all this possible, so please continue your support today. And be sure to check out the article on page 3 for information about upcoming volunteer opportunities. Lives are sure to be blessed through your selfless service, including your own!

Your servant,

Please help struggling men, women, and children this fall!

"How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you" (Psalm 31:19).

The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission is filled with men, women, and children who have found safe "refuge" and God's "goodness," thanks to your generosity. As an instrument of God, your faithful support and compassion not only provide food and shelter, you are giving people in need the chance to experience grace, healing, and salvation — transforming lives for all eternity. Thank you for touching so many lives this fall and over the coming holidays.

THE CHANGE I NEEDED By Drew

My name is Drew, and I was raised in a loving family, earned a college degree in art, and worked for The Nature Conservancy. But none of that was enough to keep me from falling into substance abuse and addiction.

You see, growing up I had endured physical and sexual abuse outside of my family. For me, alcohol became a tool to block out the pain, and, over time, that spiraled into using meth and heroin. For a year and a half, I lived on the streets, apathetic toward everything and everyone. I knew I needed to change my life, but I also knew I couldn't do it on my own.

"I was able to finally forgive those in my life who had hurt me."

I tried a few rehab programs without success. Then a counseling center recommended the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. I'd heard about the Mission, but I didn't know all that they did. The moment I arrived at the Mission, it was just a relief. It's really stressful living on the street, and it was a relief to have a safe, welcoming place to go.

The Mission is different from the other programs I tried, mostly because it's Christian-based. Here, it's all about changing from the inside out.



During the recovery program, which includes chapel and Bible studies, I realized that God had forgiven me. And everything changed for me right then and there. I was able to finally forgive those in my life who had hurt me. It was the change I needed.

I'll be graduating from the program in a couple of months, and right now I'm working through the vocational rehab portion, where the Mission is connecting me with all kinds of employers and helping me prepare to re-enter the workforce. The icing on the cake is that I've reconnected with my family. In my darkest time, we had lost touch for a couple years. But now my family is definitely back in the picture.

I am deeply grateful for the Mission and for everyone who helps make their ministry possible.



This holiday season, you or your organization can provide real help for thousands of our hurting neighbors. Check out the opportunities:

DAILY DINNERS

Help serve hundreds of men, women, and children in our dining room. Daily 4:30-6 p.m.

STREET TREATS

A fun Halloween-themed event for homeless children and adults
Event: 2-4 p.m., Oct. 28

THANKSGIVING

Set up: Noon, Nov. 21
Dinner: 4 p.m., Nov. 22

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Event: 1-3 p.m., Dec. 20

CHRISTMAS

Set up: Noon, Dec. 24
Dinner: 4 p.m., Dec. 25

To volunteer, call Mariah
775-323-0386, Ext. 16.
To donate, call Marie
775-323-7999.

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



"Your gifts help provide ... nourishing food, warm clothing, safe shelter, and the promise of God's transforming power."