

# the MISSION

Stories of Second Chances

## I'm Brand-new

By Shawn



My name is Shawn and I never set out to be an alcoholic. People don't just wake up one day and decide to give their life over to alcohol. For me, it started 20 years ago, when I got news that my fiancé and my 8-year-old daughter had been killed in a car accident. A big diesel truck crossed over the center divider and rolled right over their car, killing them both instantly.

**“Thanks to you, I’m getting my life back.”**

I was devastated. To escape the pain, I began drinking heavily, and in a short time, I was completely lost to alcohol. I drank every minute I could and my life spiraled out of control. I lost my dream job working for a water company, then I lost my condo and new truck, too. After that I had difficulty holding down any kind of job and ended up living day to day in a motel, drinking my life away.

### A New Day

One day, I woke up in a hospital with no idea how I'd gotten there. Turns out, a couple police officers had found me semi-comatose on the river trail in downtown Reno. When they stopped by the hospital to check on me, one of the officers told me about the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission and said lives were changed there. After I was released from the hospital, I walked straight to the Mission.

I've been here three months and feel so blessed. The staff here have helped me understand the source of my dependency and that God loves me no matter what. With their help, I'm learning how to forgive others and myself, and I'm reclaiming my life. Thanks to the Mission and donors like you, I feel like I'm brand-new!

Thank you  
for helping us  
help thousands  
during the  
recent holidays!

During the 2018 holiday season, we served **over 160,000 hot meals** to our homeless and hurting neighbors; **provided 18,150 nights of safe lodging** for men, women, and children; and **helped thousands** in our community through special events.

From street events to Christmas meals to bringing food to people's doors, you made a huge difference for many in Northern Nevada.

We know 2019 will be another busy year and we look forward to you helping us help others!

If you'd like to volunteer, donate, or know more about us, please visit us at [www.rsgm.org](http://www.rsgm.org).

You can also call Mariah at **775-323-0386 ext. 16**.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Rick Redding

*On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. — Luke 24:1-3*

Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

I love Easter because it reminds me so much of the powerful work God is doing here at the Mission.

Every day, I see men and women who were once “dead” in their addiction. But through Christ, they are coming back to life, and they are not the same person they once were. Because that’s what Christ does. He resurrects people ... He gives them new life!

I see it time and again in the folks who graduate from our program. The mom who was once dead in her addiction, but is now a vibrant woman of God. Or the son, father, or grandpa who was once lost to drugs and alcohol, but is now made new in Christ. These people understand what it means to come out of the tomb.

What a blessing to be a witness to it all, to see the power of Jesus reclaiming and restoring the lives of His children. It’s a blessing, too, to be in partnership with you. Thank you for the selfless sacrifice you make for the sake of those we serve — and for allowing God to work through you to make old lives new.

Your servant,



## Please Give Easter Hope to Hurting People

Tonight, thousands of men, women, and children — many of them right here in the Northern Nevada area — will have no place to call home. For those who have never been homeless, it’s impossible to fully understand the misery and hopelessness that cripples their lives.

But there is hope — the hope of an empty tomb that Jesus left behind when He rose from the dead that first Easter morning. It’s a hope that promises the chance for new life to everyone who believes. And it’s the hope we preach every day to hurting people at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

## SOMETHING INSIDE ME HAS CHANGED

By Amie

**When my kids were taken away from me, I was crushed.** I’d already endured 15 years of violent abuse from my husband, but losing my boys, ages 10 and 12, was worse. Child Protective Services said the kids had witnessed too much violence and placed them in the care of my husband’s grandmother. My husband went to jail.

In hindsight, I should have fought for custody of my children. But I was so beaten down at that point, I had no fight left. I had failed my boys and I just felt empty inside. Until that point, I never drank. But with life crashing in and unsure where to turn, I turned to the bottle to numb the pain. That’s when my mother and sister stopped talking to me. And I knew I was all alone.

**“I didn’t know anything about God, but I knew I needed help.”**

During one of my numerous stints in jail for public drunkenness, someone told me about the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. I didn’t know anything about God, but I knew I needed help, and I felt something telling me to come here. So, I did as soon as I was released. The staff here are amazing. They show you God through



their love, and it’s worked wonders for me. Something inside me has changed and I now have hope that I didn’t have before. I don’t even think about alcohol anymore, and I’ve learned I can pray through the pain and work things out without having to drink.

My boys recently reached out to me on Facebook, and I’m now writing them every week. I’ve also reconnected with my mom and sister, who are being so supportive. As I work toward graduating from the Mission’s program, I’m focused on vocational rehab, so I’ll be able to provide a safe, stable place for my kids and bring them home.

Thank you for supporting the Mission for the sake of someone like me!

## Thank You for Helping Women Like Amie

Amie’s story, featured on this page, is not an isolated account. About 25 percent of single homeless women are homeless due to domestic violence. One study found that nearly all homeless women had experienced severe physical or sexual assault at some point in their life.

**Most homeless women have experienced physical or sexual assault.**

Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission is a safe place where homeless women are truly cared for. A place where their self-esteem and dignity can be restored. A place where they can begin again. And generous friends like you make it all possible.

Thank you for opening your heart to local women when they need help the most!

## Your Gifts Bring New Life to Hurting People

Every gift you give and every prayer you pray for those who are hungry and homeless at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission brings new hope and resurrection life to those who have lost hope for a better life. God is transforming lives through you!

But every day, more struggling people come seeking our help. They need to know there’s a Risen Savior who promises them hope. And they need people like you to help give them a chance for new life in Jesus Christ.

To give your generous gift today, please use the remit slip enclosed, or make your donation online at [www.rsgm.org](http://www.rsgm.org). You may also call us at **775-323-0386**. Thank you for being an Easter friend to those who need your help.





## You Are a Blessing to Homeless Children and Families

Over 1.5 million of our nation's children are homeless each year, according to the National Center on Family Homelessness. That's about one of every 50 kids, and half of these are under 6 years of age.

Here at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, we've had a growing number of children and families come to us for help. We're so thankful friends like you make it possible to care for these families—especially the children, who are under tremendous stress.

Children experiencing homelessness:

- Worry they will have no place safe to sleep.
- Are afraid something bad might happen to their family.
- Have often witnessed or experienced violence in their lives and neighborhoods.

Thank you for providing these little ones with a safe place where they can find peace and comfort in the midst of their suffering.

Help Homeless Children this Easter! Send your gift with the reply slip below. Or give online at [www.rsgm.org](http://www.rsgm.org). Thank you!

Homelessness among aging Americans is on the rise. The median age of the homeless population went from 30 to 50 between 1990 and 2010. Some studies estimate that homelessness among seniors 65 and older will increase by 33 percent by 2020.

— **Jean-Michel Giraud, Executive Director of Friendship Place, Washington, D.C.**

Fifty percent of the homeless population is over the age of 50. These individuals often face additional health and safety risks associated with age. They are more prone to injuries from falls, and may suffer from cognitive impairment, vision or hearing loss, major depression, and chronic conditions like diabetes and arthritis.

— **Social Solutions**

Nowhere in America can a full-time worker earning minimum wage afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment priced at fair market value. Even with two full-time minimum wage earners, decent housing is just barely attainable.

— **The National Center on Family Homelessness**



## MY EASTER GIFT

**YES, Rick,** please use my gift to bring new life to struggling neighbors during the spring. I've enclosed:

- ☐ **\$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

ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, Inc.  
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Reno, NV 89513-5956

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