

# the MISSION

## Stories of Second Chances

### Singing a Different Tune



**My name is James, and I didn't come to the Mission for shelter or food or clothes.** I simply came here because I needed to get off drugs.

As a touring musician, I made pretty good money and had everything I needed. But I also had constant access to drugs. I didn't even have to buy them because when you're in a band, people just give you stuff. Meth was my drug of choice, and it became a regular part of my life.

**“I learned my mom and dad had both passed away, and my wife had taken her own life.”**

Once, when I was on the road for an extended tour, I got a break and decided to return to my hometown to surprise my wife and my parents. When I arrived, I learned my mom and dad had both passed away, and my wife had taken her own life. The news really messed me up and pushed me further into my addiction.

At my lowest point, I holed up in a hotel room for two

and a half months. All I did was use drugs. Drugs and women, anything to ease the pain. Finally, fearing I was going to die in that hotel room, I put the needle down, called the police, and asked for help. They directed me to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, and I haven't been the same since.

My early days at the Mission were a bit rough. But as I got to know the staff ... well, everybody here is just really awesome. They do everything they can to lift you up. It's not an easy recovery program; you have to be serious about it. But it's been so worth it. I've been clean for 14 months, and before coming here, I don't think I was ever clean for more than two months. I've got a certain peace now because I feel like I can beat the addiction.

The Bible classes and weekly chapel have a lot to do with that peace. I've been reading the Bible, studying it, listening to Christian music all day — everything here centers around Christ. And it all has me singing a different tune. Life is truly amazing now, and I appreciate every little thing about it. I appreciate you, too, for caring enough to help someone like me.





It's time again for our annual **"Christmas in July"** dinner and party that feeds and brings hope to more than 500 men, women, and children on the streets of Northern Nevada.

The event was designed to remind the community that hunger and homelessness are year-round concerns.

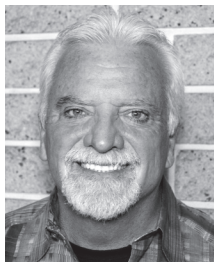
"We feed and care for folks in December and July and in every weather condition," said Rick Redding, the Mission's executive director. "It's non-stop."

This year's festivities begin at **4 p.m., Wednesday, July 25**, at the Mission, 355 Record Street in Reno.

Everyone in attendance will be treated to a turkey meal with the trimmings. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on hand to provide some holiday cheer.

We need volunteers for this festive event to help serve meals and pass out gifts, hygiene items, and clothing to uplift the hurting in our community.

**Call Mariah** at **775-323-0386, ext. 16**, to donate to the event, help cover some costs, or sign up now before all the volunteer openings are taken!



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Rick Redding**

That Feeling in the Air

**What began as a simple ministry to help people get sober has become an incredible blessing ... and you are to thank!**

Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

As we celebrate our 55th year serving the community, I am deeply grateful for the impact you have made. What began as a simple ministry to help people get sober has become an incredible blessing — one that is transforming hearts and helping people live the life God intended. And you are to thank!

Through your support, we are able to house 150 homeless people every night. Another 80 men and women are benefiting from our recovery program. And we're serving 1,500 meals per day, making us the number one supplier of food to struggling people across the Northern Nevada area.

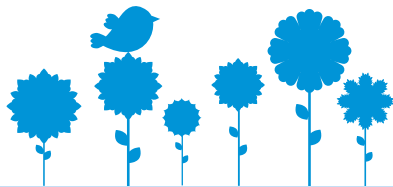
But more than the work and the numbers, we're celebrating the many lives being transformed at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission through the power of Christ. People who are being changed from the inside out.

For their sake, I hope you will continue your support during the summer months, one of our most challenging times of the year. In addition to the day-to-day care we provide, we're also working to protect homeless people from the scorching desert sun — reaching out with sunscreen, lip balm, hats, and thousands of bottles of water every month.

On top of that, we're seeing a surge in newly homeless people, which is largely due to the housing crisis. Challenging times indeed. But with friends like you on our side, we will never stop. So grateful you are standing with us!

Your servant,

Rick Redding



## DISCOVERING THE TRUE MEANING OF LOVE AND LIFE By Cassandra

**I've never felt so much hate directed straight at me.** Growing up, the other kids at school would pick on me every day because my clothes were old and dirty and I smelled dirty. What they didn't know was that my mom spent all our money supporting her meth addiction. We had no water. No electricity. And I was pretty much on my own.

Without any friends, I became a loner who trusted no one. Eventually, I followed in my mother's footsteps, turning to meth and PCP to help ease my pain. But things only got worse. At 16, I got into an abusive relationship that resulted in a baby. And before long, my daughter was taken from me because of my addiction. That's when I started selling drugs to support my habit.

**"I felt a peace come over me and I just knew I was safe here."**

For several years, I was homeless and getting into all kinds of trouble. But life caught up to me and I found myself looking at five to 10 years in prison for credit card fraud. They told me I could go to prison or to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. I chose the Mission.

When I arrived, I was feeling lost, hopeless, empty. But there was so much love here, which was completely foreign to me. I felt



a peace come over me and I just knew I was safe here. It was amazing to have so much support and encouragement all around me, and to get to know God. Before the Mission, I knew of God, but I didn't care to know him. Now, I have a relationship with Christ that has really transformed who I am.

I was recently able to restore my relationship with my grandmother, who has custody of my daughter, now 7. I hope to visit them both soon. And next week, I graduate from the recovery program and will become a "big sister" to the women just entering the program.

I'm so grateful for people like you who support the Mission. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't have discovered the true meaning of love ... the true meaning of life. God bless you!

Support your community while finding **tax-free treasures!**

New and gently used furniture, electronics, appliances, clothing, and many, many other bargains are at our four convenient locations!

**Thrift Depot Kietzke (Reno)**  
630 Gentry Way (at Kietzke)  
775-825-4424

**Thrift Depot Reno**  
575 E. Fourth St. (at Elko)  
775-786-4499

**Thrift Depot North Hills (Reno)**  
1075 North Hills Blvd., Suite 360 (Raley's Shopping Center)  
775-677-2266

**Thrift Depot Sparks**  
640 Greenbrae Dr. (Greenbrae Shopping Center)  
775-331-5020

**All stores are open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday - Saturday.**



## Summertime Blues — Needs Rise, but Donations Fall

This is one of the most challenging times of the year at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. Throughout the summer months, we experience a significant increase in the number of homeless people who come to the Mission for help. Men, women, and children who are desperate for real help and hope.

At the same time, donations to the Mission decline during summertime, as many of our supporters head out of town to visit family and friends.

Hopefully, you will get a chance to get away for a little rest and relaxation in the weeks ahead. But we encourage you to please remember the homeless and hurting folks who will be here at the

Mission this summer by sending a special gift today.

### Changed Hearts, Changed Lives ...

Your generous gift today will go a long way to touch the lives of people like James (page 1) and Cassandra (page 3). They came here in their darkest hour only to be received with love, grace, and dignity. And because friends like you care, their future is brimming with hope.

Be sure to read their stories, then please take a moment to send your summer gift today using the included reply slip. You may also give online at **www.rsgm.org**. Thank you!

**"Remember the homeless and hurting folks who will be here at the Mission this summer."**



# Some people are summed up by one name . . .

Cher. Prince. Beyonce. Madonna.



## Around the Mission, it's Mama.

Oh, Tammy Treadwell is her real name, but the role of mother is her job as she brings stability and love to the hundreds of women who have come to the Mission over the past decade.

Tammy's smile will light up a room — but her toughness will straighten it out.

**“A mother who unconditionally loved them.”**

“I love these women,” says Tammy, women's services coordinator. “But sometimes loving them means telling them no and setting them on the right path.”

Tammy knows from experience.

Addicted to meth and in desperate need for a new way of life, a beaten Tammy sought help from the Mission in 2004. She had lost everything and was looking for a place to stay the night.

Instead, she found a home and a family. “I was beat up. I was tore up. I was dead inside,” she remembers. “At the Mission I found hope. I found peace. I found love. I found life.”

After graduating the intensive year-long addiction recovery program, she was initially hired as the vehicle dispatcher, coordinating Mission vans and trucks during their daily routes around Northern Nevada.

But at night, Tammy helped the women in the recovery program — and quickly became known as “Mama” to the dozens of women who never had a positive role model in their life. A shoulder to cry on.

A mother who unconditionally loved them.

“When I was hired here nine years ago, I came to Tammy for some advice,” said Tim Mikes, the Mission chaplain. “She told me, ‘Just love them. All that entails, just love them!’ I will never forget that.”

*That's our Mama.*

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## MY SUMMER GIFT

**YES, Rick,** please use my gift to help bring new life to struggling neighbors during the summer. **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 care as possible
- ☐ Please bill my credit card: (please print)    ☐ VISA    ☐ MC

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 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](http://www.rsgm.org). You will receive a receipt.