

# the MISSION

Stories of Second Chances

## Everything Has Changed in Me



When Kristina walked into the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission last December, it didn't feel much like Christmas.

"I was screaming obscenities at my mother," says the married mother of two young girls. "I didn't want to be here. My body and my addiction wanted one last drink, one last hurrah."

"I remember Tammy from the Mission just looked at me gently and said, 'What's wrong, baby?' Then she let me pour my soul out to her, and all my pain and all my hurt just lifted from me. I knew I was in a safe place that could get me where I needed to go with God."

Kristina's dependence on alcohol began 20 years ago, when she started drinking at age 11, mostly to try and fit in with the "cool" crowd. One thing led to another, and by her teens she was lost in her addiction. "Once I started spiraling, I was drinking about a gallon of vodka a day," she says. "I'd been to one treatment center," Kristina continues. "It was an expensive, fancy rehab, but it had nothing to do with God. I knew I needed God."

Kristina came to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission at the urging of her husband and her parents, who have been pillars for her. And while that first day was extremely difficult, she's so glad to be here.

**"I'm stronger than I ever thought I could be."**

"I was broken...lost...tired...sick...hurt," Kristina says. "But now I'm stronger than I ever thought I could be. I feel like every day I wake up wearing the full armor of God. My faith has grown exponentially."

In a few weeks, Kristina will be graduating from our year-long program. She's excited to be back with her family and plans to resume nursing school (she's just six months away from her degree). This is most certainly a Christmas she'll remember always.

"My sickness has turned into brightness, like a fire inside," she says. "Everything has changed in me." Your support has truly been a gift for Kristina, and she is eternally grateful for your selfless generosity!



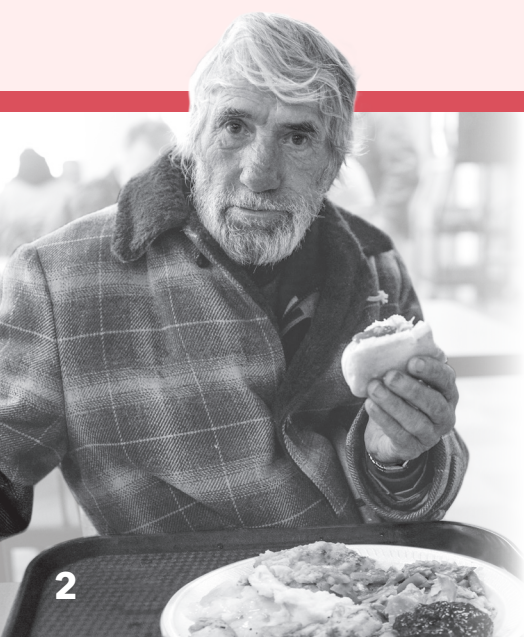
## Christmas is the perfect time for... Random Acts of Kindness



On December 19, a couple of our trucks will make a special detour from their regular routes. Loaded up with holiday food items, Christmas trees, and household essentials, they'll roll into a low-income neighborhood near our warehouse for an annual event we call Random Acts of Kindness.

As quickly as we can get the goods off the truck, about 20 of our volunteers will go door to door, handing out turkeys, pies, potatoes—complete holiday meals and even Christmas trees.

This is only possible because of the generosity of friends like you. Thank you for your continued acts of kindness and for sharing the joy of the season with people in need.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Luis Santoni

## Merry Christmas!

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people..." — Luke 2:10*

Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission,

God has always reached out to the lost and the least. One of the early examples of this is the shepherds in the Christmas story. They were wanderers, with no roof over their heads, and in those times, they were not well-regarded in society.

I love that God chose to work through these lowly shepherds anyway—to do a work *in* them. They were the first to hear about the birth of Jesus, from a heavenly host no less. Then God used them to spread the word about the Christ Child.

Today, God continues to reach out to the lost and the least...right here at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. He's lifting them up, dusting them off, and working miracles in their hearts and lives. Then they carry on as a living testimony to others of God's power and goodness.

Thank you for the important part you play in restoring hope and dignity to our homeless neighbors this holiday season and throughout the year. You are truly a blessing to each and every person we serve. And you're a blessing to me too. Merry Christmas!

Your servant,

Luis Santoni



## Give the Gift of New Life to

It all started on that starry night, when God chose to launch His long-awaited project to reclaim and redeem the world, starting in a humble stable in Bethlehem. That night, God announced peace on Earth and goodwill to all humanity through His Son—our Savior—Jesus Christ.

Today, thanks to caring and compassionate people like you, God continues to offer His peace and goodwill to men, women, and children at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. People who were once enslaved to alcohol, drugs, and unspeakable abuse have found freedom through the King of Kings. Those who've lost their way are now following the One who says, "Follow Me."

# MY EYES HAVE BEEN OPENED

By Robert

My name is Robert, and I began to struggle with addiction following a devastating divorce after 11 years of marriage. I felt lost and like nothing really mattered anymore, and alcohol and drugs were a way to escape the pain.

**“The Mission is a lighthouse in a very dark city...”**

I had a good job as a supervisor with a shipping company. But things eventually got to the point where I would just go home after work and drink. Then my weekends turned into calling in sick Monday...then Tuesday...then Wednesday. It didn't take long till I lost my job. At my lowest point, I found myself homeless and living in a dope house for 45 days.

When I walked into the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission in March, I was welcomed with open arms. The Mission is a lighthouse in a very dark city—just a great place for people who are broken. It reaches out to people like me who feel they are somehow unlovable and unteachable and that this is their station in life. And the Mission is here to say, “No, you can do better than this.”



Through the grace of God and the help of the good people here at the Mission, I have a new outlook on life. They've opened my eyes and helped me see that my old pattern of thinking was destructive and that I don't have to live the way I was living...that there is more out there for me.

I'm forever grateful for the compassion and care I've received here, and mostly for the second chance at life.

*Thank you for opening your heart to bring new hope and new life to people like Robert!*

## Calling All Volunteers

The holiday season brings many opportunities for you or your organization to help care for our hurting neighbors:

### DAILY DINNERS

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

### THANKSGIVING

Set up: Noon, Nov. 27

Dinner: 4 p.m., Nov. 28



### RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Event: 1-3 p.m., Dec. 19

### CHRISTMAS

Set up: Noon, Dec. 24

Dinner: 4 p.m., Dec. 25



**Volunteer today by calling Mariah at 775-323-0386, Ext. 16. Or email: [mariah@rsgm.org](mailto:mariah@rsgm.org)**



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

## Homeless Neighbors

### Please remember those who are homeless this Christmas

Your gifts to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission offers every man, woman, and child who comes through our doors nourishing food, warm clothing, safe shelter—and the promise of God's peace, goodwill, and transforming power. So, this Christmas season, please remember people devastated by homelessness who are seeking hope and a new start.

To donate immediately, please use the enclosed remit slip. You may also give your donation by visiting us online at **[www.rsgm.org](http://www.rsgm.org)** or calling us at **775-323-0386**. Thank you for touching so many lives through your generous giving during the holidays and throughout the year.

**“I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.”**

**— Luke 2:10**





# Stuff a Sock

A Special Way to Help Homeless Neighbors on Christmas Day

This Christmas Day, our tables will be packed with homeless folks stopping by for a festive holiday meal. With your help, they won't leave empty-handed. Follow these instructions to bless a homeless neighbor with a simple but meaningful and useful gift:

**1.** Purchase a pair of tube socks, then place one inside the other.

**2.** Stuff the remainder of the sock with travel-sized items, such as toothpaste, a toothbrush, deodorant, soap, lip balm, antacids, mittens, etc.



**3.** Tie the end of the sock with a ribbon (pink or red for women, blue or green for men).

**4.** Drop off your stuffed sock(s) before December 24 for us to pass along to a homeless guest on Christmas Day.

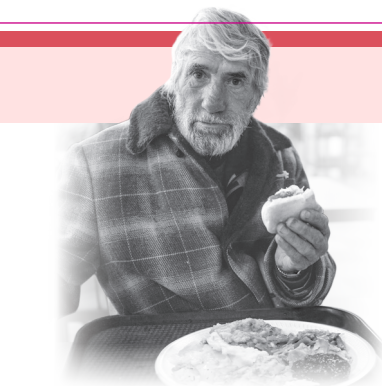
## Clothing & Comfort Needed this Holiday Season

In addition to your financial support, you can also help provide warm clothing for our homeless guests this holiday season. The Mission is currently experiencing a shortage of:

- Winter coats/jackets for men and women
- Warm socks
- Knitted caps
- Blankets
- Gloves
- Thermal and regular underwear
- Comfort kits (soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, etc.)

Your Christmas donation of clothing, comfort items, and stuffed sock(s) can be dropped off at the Mission at 2115 Timber Way, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. (Mon.-Thurs.) and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Fri.).

For more information about donating goods, please call us at 775-323-7999.



## MY CHRISTMAS GIFT

**YES, Luis,** please use my gift to help bring new life to struggling neighbors this Christmas 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



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.