



A Message from Duke . . .

## Nourishing the Whole Person

Every human being has the need for relationship. For those of us who have a strong support system of loving family and good friends. We don't always feel this need, because it's already met.

But when you're experiencing homelessness, many times all of that is stripped away, and you're left with a gaping hole in your heart that longs to be filled.

Thanks to generous friends like you, our vulnerable guests receive the care, connection, healing, and more needed to help fill that hole. And often those meaningful connections begin over a meal. Together, we say to our neighbors in need, "You are cared for. You are loved. We are genuinely interested in who you are and your story."

When that happens, lives are changed. People begin to have hope and the love of Jesus is demonstrated in some of the most profound ways I've ever seen.

You are an essential part of that, and I couldn't be more grateful for you.

In Christ,

Duke Paulson, Executive Director



## Please Join us in Prayer

As you may already know, **the holiday season is when we see an increase in individuals and families coming to the Mission in dire need.**

Please pray for . . .

- **God's Provision.** That there will be an abundance of food for our neighbors who are hungry, homeless, and hurting.
- **Transformation and Restoration.** That every individual and family who comes to the Mission this holiday season will experience deep healing, unconditional love AND the new life that God offers each of us.



Each \$2.38 meal you give can be the start of a new life for someone in dire need! How many meals will you give?

## Feed a Hungry Neighbor This Holiday Season

As the holidays get closer, memories rush in of hot, home-cooked meals. Spending cold days snuggled under blankets at home. And gathering with friends and family.

For the families and individuals experiencing homelessness in our community, those memories are often too painful to keep.

**The holiday season can feel especially lonely, sad, and isolating for our neighbors in need.**

Plus, the weather is getting colder and wetter, putting them in real danger.

YOU can help save and change lives.

**Each \$2.38 you give provides a hot, home-cooked meal this holiday season. Each meal will nourish a hungry neighbor – body and soul – and show them that they aren't alone.**

Meals are often what bring people to the Mission for the first time. So, **each meal can also be a vital gateway to the other life-changing services that the Mission offers!**

You never know whose life your gift of a meal will help transform. **Every gift matters.**

**Give life-changing meals now at [trm.org/HolidayMeals](http://trm.org/HolidayMeals)**

## HELP. HOPE. HEALING.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TACOMA RESCUE MISSION

### OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

The entire staff of The Tacoma Rescue Mission pledges to do everything possible to help the hurting and homeless. It was our commitment when our work began in 1912, and it continues to drive us. We pledge to bring help, hope, and healing to as many people as possible by providing food, shelter, clothing, education, job training, work opportunities, transitional housing, and other programs.

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HELP. HOPE. HEALING.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TACOMA RESCUE MISSION | SEPT 2021

## Off the Streets & Into a New Life.

Living alone under the 509 bridge, **Jeff found himself desperate to escape the streets. But he didn't know how to turn his life around.**

*"You wake up in the morning and think, 'Okay, what do I do?' You don't know where or when you'll be able to use the bathroom or shower. You're just out there wandering,"* Jeff shares.

As the days and nights dragged on, **he felt like everyone had lost hope in him. And he was quickly losing hope in himself, too.**

*"People could tell I was homeless because I had my backpack, I hadn't shaved, and my hair was long,"* Jeff explains. **"I felt totally alone. I mean, I felt like scum. I just walked around with my head down."**

*"It was humiliating and shameful. It just felt like there was no way out of that,"* he emotionally adds.

Although living on the street made his feelings of shame, loneliness and worthlessness much heavier, they didn't start there.

**As a child, Jeff was abused. No one ever helped him face that trauma. For years, it ate away at him . . .**

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***"I was homeless. Just a total wreck. But, when I got my first meal at the Mission, I felt like I still mattered. Someone was actually taking the time to cook for me. It felt really good."*** – Jeff

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## Off the Streets & Into a New Life.

*"I just never felt good enough. I never felt worthy. I had no sense of self. I lived in constant fear,"* Jeff says sadly.

*"I turned to drugs and alcohol just to seek relief and feel safe. Then it just got worse and worse."*

It got so bad that Jeff lost his home and his family. His relationships with his wife and children were badly impacted.

Jeff spiraled out of control. He even ended up being sentenced to prison after robbing a bank.

After he got out of prison, he had nowhere to go and no one to turn to. His children didn't even know him anymore.

So, Jeff found himself living on the streets.

He felt completely alone and worthless — and he was hungry. So hungry.

*"You're out there starving and so you just want some food,"* he remembers. *"You just don't know where it's going to come from."*

But then, God led Jeff to the Mission, where he was offered a bed for the night and a hot, home-cooked meal.

*"Having a meal, something warm. It's more than comforting,"* Jeff shares. *"It makes you think, 'I at least have something good to eat.' It takes away from the badness, the grayness."*

After staying a few nights, and enjoying some more hot meals, Jeff decided to join the Mission's New Life Recovery Program.

Through our recovery program, Jeff was able to face his addiction and past trauma head on. He's now 10 months sober!

On top of that, Jeff's relationship with God is closer than ever. He has supportive relationships with mentors, sponsors, and friends. AND has a job he loves!

*"God and the Mission have taken what society would deem — and what I thought of — as just a lifeless, pathetic drunk who had just ruined his life, and changed me into a decent, caring, loving, responsible man and father,"* Jeff passionately shares.

*"I have a chance to be a dad today. I can work again. I go to church,"* Jeff continues. *"The biggest thing the Mission gave me is hope. Then it gave me the tools to live a decent, respectable life. The Mission pulled me out of the muck and the mire. They just opened their arms, just like Jesus does, and said, 'Come in.'"*

The generosity of friends like you helped Jeff step into a whole new life. Will you help another hurting and hungry neighbor?

**Every \$2.38 meal you give matters, because each meal you give can help change a life like Jeff's!**

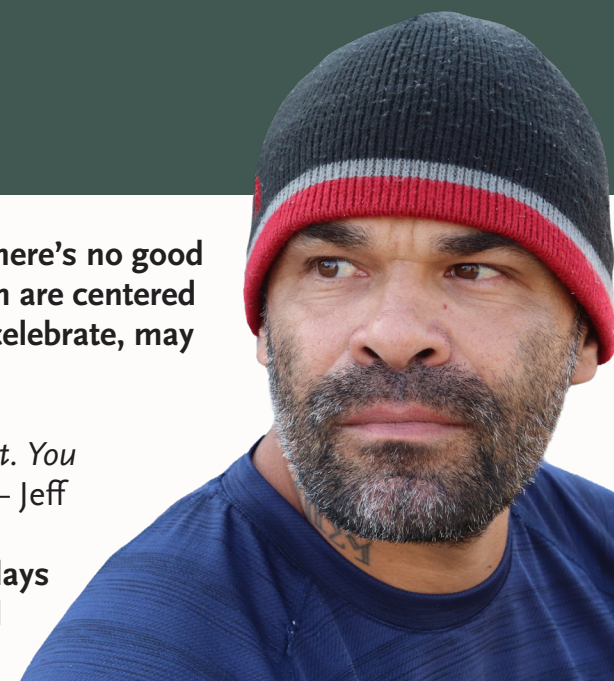


## Homeless During the Holidays

After experiencing homelessness himself, Jeff knows **there's no good time to be living on the streets. But the holidays, which are centered around food, family and gathering in warm homes to celebrate, may be the worst of all.**

*"The holidays are when you think about the past the most. You think about your family and of when things were better." — Jeff*

Many of our guests have shared how difficult the holidays are for them. And how a good holiday meal — prepared and served with love — can make all the difference!



*"I stopped believing in the joy of the holidays. When we were homeless, I had no money to give my children anything. Everyone else was getting together with family around a big dinner, I was worrying about how we were going to eat. The meals and safety at the Mission felt like love. It felt like a warm hug." — Nieisha*

*"The holidays were a depressing time. Not being with my family was the hardest. It's so important people can come here, get a meal for the holidays, and be around other people who care. It keeps you in touch with your humanity. You can begin to visualize what it will be like to have holidays with your family again. It points you in the right direction." — Clint*



*"It was hard to think about holidays coming up when we were homeless. We were just trying to survive. It was amazing when we got to the Mission to see the kindness of the community. Just seeing the looks on the parents' faces when their kids get the things they weren't able to give them. Even something as simple as food." — Michelle*

# 5

## Special Ways to Get Involved

The holidays are the perfect time to get more involved at the Mission! Here are a few ways you can help change the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors and make a lasting difference.

### 1

### Help with our Holiday Turkey Drive

Our goal is to collect 1,500 turkeys this holiday season. You can help us reach, or even surpass, that goal by donating turkeys yourself OR host a turkey drive at your workplace, church, or school!

### 2

### Serve Meals on Thanksgiving

You can come on your own OR volunteer with your family and friends. Either way you'll play a vital role in helping our hurting neighbors feel loved and cared for this holiday.

### 3

### Volunteer at our Christmas Shopping Days

At our Christmas Shopping Days, guests at the Mission select gifts for their loved ones. Choosing among items donated by friends like you! Volunteer as a greeter, gift wrapper, or shopping assistant.

### 4

### Donate Cold Weather Essentials

As temps continue to drop, our neighbors will be in dire need of coats, socks, blankets, sleeping bags, and other articles of warmth. By donating these essential items, you can help save a life.

### 5

### Go out with our Search & Rescue Team

As a volunteer with our Search & Rescue Street Ministry, you'll meet our hurting neighbors right where they're at. Offering survival essentials, conversation, and life-changing resources.

### Want to get involved?

Sign-up to become a volunteer at [trm.org/volunteer](http://trm.org/volunteer). Please email [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org) to inquire about special volunteer opportunities.

You can bring donations of food and items to our Downtown Campus, located at: 425 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA 98402



## Verse of the Month

*"Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." — Luke 3:11 (NIV)*

Each \$2.38 holiday meal you give can open the door to other vital, life-changing services. Helping our hurting neighbors step into a new life!