

How Can We Not?

In 2019, we saw a dire need to offer a safe shelter for women. Together, with generous friends like you, we took a step of faith to build one. And God blessed it. We ended up being able to open our new Women's Shelter in record time and have since helped over 500 women experiencing homelessness.

As we look around and see more need, how can we not keep growing?

So many of our neighbors are still hurting. So many men, women and children are still struggling to survive on the streets. There are opportunities for us to help more people. And that's what I believe we're called to do this year. That's why the Mission needs to grow again.

Growth goes beyond providing more beds and more plates of food. It's about the trusting relationships that can form over a meal. It's about providing the opportunities to connect to housing support, counseling, recovery programs, job-training and other life-changing services after someone knows they'll have safe shelter each night.

God has blessed us with the opportunity to grow again. I pray you'll be a part of this growth that can lead to lasting change for our neighbors in need!

In Christ,

Duke Paulson, Executive Director

Please Join Your Neighbors in Prayer . . .

Your prayers make a difference, and our guests know that. Here are a few of the things that Jocelyn and some of our other guests have specifically asked for prayer over.

Please join your neighbors in prayer for . . .



. . . continued stability for me and my family. And for God's continued blessings so I can pay forward the kindness I've received at the Mission to someone else who is struggling. – Jocelyn



. . . my son. Pray that God would keep him safe and out of addiction. Pray for the healing and restoration of my relationships with my children and for the strength to forgive my mom. – CeCe



. . . a good, livable wage job, daycare and housing as I get ready to graduate from the Mission's recovery program. And for the peace and presence of God throughout the transition. – Donnielle



Your gift today can help tranform and restore more lives in the new year!

Be a Part of Lasting Change!

Growth is often tied in to the idea of knocking down walls, pouring a new foundation and making a building larger.

But that's just one part of it.

For us, growth also means helping more people in the most meaningful way that will lead to lasting change. That's the kind of growth your support at the start of this new year will help make possible.

Together, we can expand to serve more of our neighbors while offering a place where someone can feel loved and valued.

Together, we can offer more opportunity for our neighbors in need to escape homelessness not just for a night, but for life.

Your support and prayers are critical in making that happen.

Will you help change more lives in a lasting way by sending your first gift of 2022 today?

Every dollar you give will help change a life! Please give as generously as possible.

You can help change more lives in 2022. Give now at trm.org!

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.

Homeless & Without Hope to Housed & Hopeful!

Jocelyn joined the army shortly after high school and served at Fort Lewis.

After serving our country, Jocelyn got married and had two beautiful kids. She thought she had found her happily-ever-after.

But life took an unexpected turn when her family lost their home due to a natural disaster. Soon after, Jocelyn's husband left her and the kids.

Even though she was devastated, Jocelyn knew she had to pull through for the sake of her children. And she did! Jocelyn got a great job working at a long-term care facility. Things were looking up again.

Then, COVID-19 hit. The pandemic caused a wave of cut backs at her job. She was one of the employees that was laid off.

Suddenly, her little family was in the midst of crisis once again. With no income to afford rent, they lost their housing.

"I was like, 'Oh my gosh, what am I going to do at this point?'" Jocelyn remembers. "I didn't want to be on the streets with my kids, but I didn't know where to go."

She began calling around . . .

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"I wish I could go to the people who donate to the Mission and personally say, 'Thank you for helping me and my kids get to where we're at now. You made a difference in someone's life.'" – Jocelyn



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Homeless & Without Hope to Housed & Hopeful!

... to find out what resources were available.

One of her calls was to the Tacoma Rescue Mission. Relief washed over her as the staff member on the other end of the line told her that there was a room available for them.

"I never knew that something like the Mission and the programs there existed," she shares. "Once we were there at the Mission, honestly, I could finally lay my head down and not worry."

Jocelyn and her kids moved into our Family Shelter, which was built 11 years ago when the Mission expanded to serve families.

"It felt good to have a safe place to stay where everyone was there to support you. It was the stepping stone I needed to get to where I wanted to be," Jocelyn shares gratefully.

While Jocelyn's kids were getting tutoring, mentoring and playing with other kids in our Youth Program, she was able to take advantage of our Career Development Programs.

Our Youth and Career Development Programs were crucial in helping Jocelyn get back on her feet. Programs that were added as the Mission grew in the past decade to better serve more of our hurting neighbors.

"I'd been applying for jobs before I got into the shelter. I hadn't heard anything back," Jocelyn explains. *"The first thing Maye, one of the staff, did was review my resume and help me refine it. Those little changes made a big difference."*

With those tweaks to her resume and other support, Jocelyn was able to get an interview and a job!

"I'm just very thankful that the Mission was there for me. It's gotten us to where we're at now. We have our own place and I have a steady job," Jocelyn shares.

"When we were at the Mission, there were people there to help you along the way," she continues. ***"That's what I needed, that's what a lot of people still need."***

If friends like you hadn't helped the Mission grow. If you hadn't helped us serve more of our neighbors in need. If you hadn't helped us add programs to better help individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Jocelyn's family would still be struggling.

Your gift today will help us continue growing to help transform and restore more lives!



Will you give a gift today to help change the lives of more individuals and families like Jocelyn's?

What a powerful way to kick off the new year!

We Need to Keep Growing

As Jocelyn's story shows, the effects of the pandemic are still impacting many of our neighbors, and will continue to. That's just one of the reasons why the Mission's continued growth is so urgent.

One of the areas we're focusing on this year is expanding our Men's Shelter. And expanding it in a way that is compassionate and brings more dignity to our vulnerable guests.

That means recognizing and overcoming the limitations and challenges with our current shelter.



Meeting the Increasing Need in Our Community

"Before the pandemic, our daily capacity in our Men's Shelter was 129 men and up to 200 during the cold, winter months. The pandemic forced us to cut our capacity in half to allow for social distancing all while the need increased," Luis, our Senior Director of Operations, explains.

"The Men's Shelter expansion will give us the opportunity to almost double our pre-pandemic capacity to provide shelter, resources and care to men experiencing homelessness."



Providing More Accessible and Dignified Shelter

In the last several years, we're seeing more men over 60 in need of shelter. **Our current set-up of bunkbeds is very difficult for older people and people with mobility issues to access.**

We're hoping to replace the bunkbeds with a safer, more accessible and more dignified option. These new sleeping spaces will have steps instead of a ladder, personal storage, phone charging stations and more privacy.

Offering More Than a Bed

Expansion is more than adding beds. **It's about making sure we meet the needs of our vulnerable neighbors in the most loving, Christ-honoring way possible.**

"This expansion will improve how we serve people, bringing more safety, more intentional and relational care and more dignity to our guests," Luis shares.

Your gift at the start of 2022 will help change more lives and share God's love!

Looking to Other Communities as an Example

While the Tacoma Rescue Mission is unique in our calling and location, with our own unique set of values and purpose, we are connected with other missions and shelters around the country and often look to them to see what they are doing to care for the people experiencing homelessness in their communities. In fact, we got the idea for our new bed system from our friends at the Everett Gospel Mission.

"This model of shelter beds offers a personal space for each person seeking refuge from the streets. It provides an enclosed area where they have a safe place to sleep, a locker, a charging station for their electronics, separation from others and it provides the same amount of beds without the added stressor of someone needing to climb on your bed in order to get to theirs in traditional bunk beds," Duke, our Executive Director, explains.

But it's going to take more than adding beds to serve our unique population. That's become even more evident in the past several years as we've seen an increase in men and women over 60 who are experiencing chronic homelessness.

It Takes a Village . . .

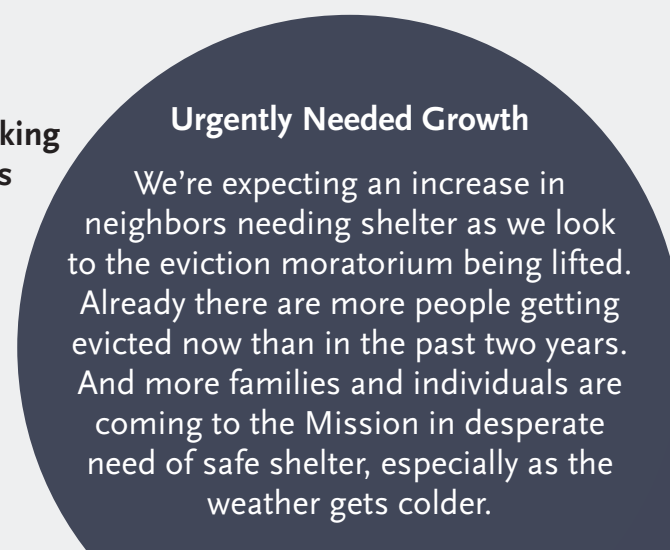
As we've explored ways to serve this unique demographic, we've looked to the example of Community First Village in Austin, Texas. A 51-acre master planned community that offers affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for men and women coming out of chronic homelessness. You can learn more at: mlf.org/community-first.



"The approach of the short-term shelter stay – helping get people back on their feet – doesn't always work for our neighbors who are elderly and chronically homeless," Duke explains.

"As we strive to serve more people and a more diverse population of our neighbors experiencing homelessness AND do it well, we are looking to the Community First Village as a model that serves our neighbors with dignity, support and in relationship."

We haven't decided on all our areas of expansion just yet, but we're gathering ideas so that we can continue to serve our neighbors in the most dignified, sustainable way. And that takes all of us working together as partners to care for the people God brings to us – whether that's in Everett, Austin or here in Pierce County.



Urgently Needed Growth

We're expecting an increase in neighbors needing shelter as we look to the eviction moratorium being lifted. Already there are more people getting evicted now than in the past two years. And more families and individuals are coming to the Mission in desperate need of safe shelter, especially as the weather gets colder.