

ISSUE

November  
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# Mission Focus

## Our Mission Statement

We exist to serve Christ and our community by addressing the physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, and social well-being of all those whom God brings to our doors.

## Our Core Values

We pledge to: Reflect Christ in all we do. Love in practical, tangible ways. Be good stewards of God's resources.

## Our Guiding Beliefs

All people are created by God, deserving dignity and respect. Pure religion is to reach out to the homeless and the loveless. The Holy Spirit has the power to change lives.

Follow Us On



*Rendition of the First Thanksgiving*

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[www.FairbanksRescueMission.org](http://www.FairbanksRescueMission.org)

## Tax Collectors and Sinners

*"As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick." ~ Matthew 9:9-12*

This Thanksgiving many "tax collectors" and sinners will show up at the Rescue Mission for the day's meal. I'm not sure who is coming to eat but I am sure they will be served by sinners, that is, our staff and volunteers.

Too often when we think about the homeless and less fortunate we automatically stamp them as criminals, dishonest, uneducated, or as flat out sinners. Maybe we think they deserve their circumstances or we suggest their situation is a direct result of sin in their lives. That may or may not be true, but regardless, we at the Mission are called to love them.

Many will show up this Thanksgiving wearing their bad decisions and circumstances like a sandwich board or a badge of shame. At this point in my life the bad decisions I've made are not as obvious to all, but trust me, I've made plenty. Even though I and the rest of

the staff have our issues tucked neatly away out of sight, we can't pretend they don't exist nor do we have the right to look down on others. We must realize we all have brokenness in our lives and are in need of healing that only the Doctor can bring.

Every day we meet people with various backgrounds, situations, and reasons for needing our

services. I don't want to sound trite but our goal truly is to love them the way Jesus does. Jesus went to Matthew the man, the tax collector, the sinner and said, "Want to hang out with me?" Matthew was a man trapped in his lifestyle and Jesus was painting a picture of what God's forgiveness and love looks like. Jesus showed Matthew that he hadn't traveled outside of God's jurisdiction and for a despised tax collector that must have been life changing. Jesus connected with Matthew on a deep level. He met him at his wound. Jesus showed Matthew that he was more than his conduct. He showed him, like He has with so many of us, God's grace and mercy.

So, this Thanksgiving be Jesus to someone. You are invited to the Rescue Mission to spend time with tax collectors and sinners and while you are here make time for the people that are coming here for the meal. ✝



## Because You Gave

### September Numbers

4882 MEALS  
Were served

2400 BED NIGHTS  
Were provided:  
1739 for MEN  
571 for WOMEN  
90 for CHILDREN

Thank You to our  
Volunteers for  
779.5 hours!

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### Send an email to :

[trish@fairbanksrescuemission.org](mailto:trish@fairbanksrescuemission.org)

Your email address will be kept confidential. Please place "e-Newsletter" in the subject line and list your name and mailing address in the body.



## Executive Director Greeting

*From the desk of Rodney Gaskins*

## "A Clearer View of Hope"

*"Let me take you on a tour of the Mission."*



People's picture of homelessness is often distorted by the images seen in ads and on TV. These, sometimes grim, depictions may be true of other places, but it's not what you'll see here at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission. We find that when people are given a tour of the Mission their impression of the people we serve changes dramatically. Many people know who we are and what services we provide but are unacquainted with who we serve. A tour allows them to see homelessness first hand through their own eyes, and in a new way. We're proud of our work, our facility, and our residents and we love giving tours. As staff, it's our opportunity to share what God is doing here.

So let me take you on a tour of the Mission.

When you drive through the front gate you'll see the building with its illuminated glass cross imbedded

into the brick work and the well-kept grounds. Already your perception of the Rescue Mission is changing. This isn't, as you might have expected, an overused, dark and dreary structure that spent its youthful years as something else. You enter the building through the center administration entrance and are met by a bright entryway and a cheerful greeting. You inform the receptionist you are here to take a tour and one of the staff stops what they're doing to take you around.

We began by telling you how Dennis and Mary Wise donated this beautiful 41,000 square foot building that we moved into in 2001. Our new building can house 140 men and 60 women. We relate that the Fairbanks Rescue Mission was started by a few Christian men and incorporated in 1974. We let you know that we are primarily



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donor funded and give you a few statistics.

As we enter the men's side you notice a young man who is unwilling to make eye contact. Maybe he feels ashamed and doesn't want anyone to see him here . . . like this. However, your warm smile changes all of that for him. He returns your smile with an appreciative smile and head nod. You nod back.

RODNEY AND EDGAR WITH ONE MILLIONTH POUND BALE.



The tour continues down the hall to the Recycling Center, our converted 1000 square foot garage. You observe how clean and orderly the place is and your attention is drawn to the men and women working diligently. You're pleasantly surprised by the sense of accomplishment they're displaying as they work. You assume it stems from the gratitude that comes from someone receiving a second chance and knowing they are contributing to the community. Your heart is warmed.

We follow our noses to the Mission's kitchen. There, you see a group of community volunteers giving their free time to serve

their neighbors who have fallen on hard times. As we leave the kitchen one of the volunteers who comes here once a week to bake goodies, hands you a chocolate chip cookie, fresh out of the oven. You taste the cookie and compliment the baker.

We continue into the Veteran's area and there you observe a group of military veterans holding their morning meeting. You notice the different generations that are represented in the circle. You wonder to yourself how someone who served this great country could end up at a shelter. Then you notice the resolve in their faces and the camaraderie of the group and your concerns are eased and you remember a friend who could benefit from such a group.

We walk through the women's side and enter the "mom's dorm." A young mother sits on the floor reading to her little boy while rocking a sleeping infant in her lap. She looks up from her book and greets you with the exhausted, but warm smile only a mother of little ones can give.

You see her strength and wish you could do more.

We return back to the administration offices. You're processing - trying to allow your mind to catch up with what your eyes have just witnessed. You look for words to express the depth of what you feel but can only muster, "I didn't expect all of this, there's a lot going on here." You thank your guide and leave.

As you get in your car and drive off, your mind is consumed by the images and people you just saw. You see a man standing on the corner and you want to yell out to him, "Go down to the Rescue Mission. They can help you." You realize you've seen him standing there with his sign many times, but he looks different to you today. He's wearing the same clothes, has the same sign, and even has the same expression. You wonder what's different, and then you realize; he's not different, you are. Your tour of the Mission has allowed God to give you corrective vision surgery and what you see now . . . is hope. ➡



VOLUNTEERS IN THE KITCHEN AT THANKSGIVING

## Our Wish List

*The Mission is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are greatly appreciated and are tax-deductible.*

### KITCHEN & THANKSGIVING NEEDS

Turkeys  
Hams  
Instant Mashed Potatoes  
Canned Sweet Potatoes  
Canned Green Beans  
French's Onion Rings  
Mushroom Soup  
Olives  
Pickles  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Broccoli  
Bell Peppers  
Onions  
Celery  
Frozen Vegetables  
Rolls  
Butter  
Kool Whip  
Desserts

Grits  
Pancake Mix  
Butter  
Syrup  
Eggs  
Bacon  
Sausage

### CHRISTMAS GIFT BAG NEEDS

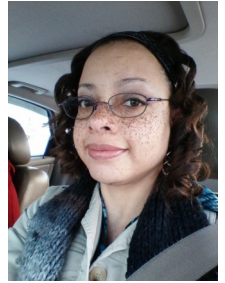
Colognes  
Toothbrushes  
Toothpaste  
Razors  
Shaving Cream  
Shampoo  
Conditioner  
Deodorant  
Warm gloves  
Hats  
Scarves  
Socks  
Candy

# Road to the Mission

By: Michelle Harpole

Like many people, Christiana came to Alaska for a new start. She selected Fairbanks because of a prophetic word.

Christiana and her sister's troubled childhoods were spent moving between foster care, an adoptive family and her birth family – her mom and dad getting together and separating repeatedly. Not a complainer, she says that time was “definitely challenging but I survived.” She not only survived poverty and living in the projects, she became determined to move beyond and have a real career. Without family support – in fact the opposite of support – she worked part time and with the encouragement of her church obtained a bachelor's degree. Then, working fulltime, she achieved a Master's Degree in Business Administration.



CHRISTIANA  
ROBINSON

Unable to extricate herself from the control and manipulation she was experiencing in Tennessee she came to Fairbanks in January of 2012, hoping for the chance to redefine herself. It hasn't been easy. Health problems and depression have made it rough going. She came to the Mission in November of 2012 and is healing. She had a good job at Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health and was paying off debts and saving to rent a place. Then she lost her job as the agency disintegrated in September of this year. Her degree was concentrated in accounting and her dream is to own her own bookkeeping business.

Christiana has learned a lot in Fairbanks. She said her pastor, Gabriel Cross, has wisdom and counsel that is helping her to heal. He's also helped her to see her own gifting and to use her gifts. She knows she'd be on the street if not for the Mission. She's grateful for the shelter, food, and support and for the lessons in humility, discipline, thankfulness and empathy she's received here.

She gives all the glory to God for taking care of her through the Mission which has helped her like she's always imagined a family might help, giving her safety and assurance and continuing to see her through. ✚

With your support we are able to make a difference in the lives of many. Thank you so very much and God bless you.

- ☐ Provides food and shelter for 1 person for 1 day
- ☐ Provides food and shelter for 1 parent & 2 children for 1 day
- ☐ Provides food and shelter for 1 person for 1 week
- ☐ Other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU!

You can select a specific amount to be withdrawn automatically from your credit card by joining the KOOL (Keep On Our Lights) Club:

- ☐ \$100/month for water/sewer
- ☐ \$150/month for electric
- ☐ \$250/month for fuel
- ☐ Other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donation Amount \$

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
MasterCard or Visa Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date 3-digit auth. code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorizing Signature