

CHANGING LIVES

FORT COLLINS RESCUE MISSION & HARVEST FARM



BETTER TOGETHER

*"He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak."
Isaiah 40:29*

**FORT
COLLINS
RESCUE
MISSION**

HARVEST FARM FALL FESTIVAL UPDATE

HOW WE ARE PROTECTING OUR HOMELESS NEIGHBORS DURING COVID-19

Dear Friends,

Wind blows across the wide open landscape of Wyoming unimpeded, and there are many seasons at Harvest Farm, just South of Wyoming, where it feels like this wind is constant. It can be devastating also—in the winter, cold and cutting, and in the summer, blasting and dry. Oftentimes the wind is so constant, so unflagging, that it's an unrelenting threat you cannot escape.

I know many people are feeling that way in quarantine these days. The only way to escape the coronavirus is to stay shut inside your homes, and then there is the news coverage! Throughout this storm, our teams at Fort Collins Rescue Mission and Harvest Farm have been using the past several months to increase our cleaning regiments, build relationships with the men and women we serve and partner in unprecedented ways with other agencies out of the Northside Aztlan Community Center to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

We've made the hard choice to cancel our Fall Festival this year, the first time in 17 years that we won't be able to welcome you to the Farm in the same way. It was a tough decision. Yet when the wind blows hard enough, the wisest move is to anchor everything in place and keep as many people as you can safe. By taking these measures, we hope to weather this storm that everyone's experiencing and come out the other end stronger and even more able to help those who come to our doors.

As believers, as the church, even in our homes, even in our homeless shelters, even in the farmlands close to the border of Wyoming, the Holy Spirit is empowering believers to change lives. We have seen God breathing life into us through you—your encouraging notes, meals from church families, incredibly generous donations, and steady, smiling volunteers. This has helped us then turn our faces to the wind blowing in the streets and shelters where we strive so that "it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Thank you, especially in this time of hardship, for your continued support!

Seth Forwood
Senior Director
Fort Collins Rescue Mission



BETTER TOGETHER

Through the dark times of a pandemic,
hearts for our homeless guests shine bright.



The novel coronavirus has challenged us, as individuals and as a community, in unique and unforeseen ways. For Fort Collins Rescue Mission, it has been a season in which the very protocol for society has been an impossible feat for our guests: stay home.

The past few months have been a time when we have depended on God wholeheartedly for protection, a time when the community has helped keep our doors open, and as our President/CEO Brad Meuli said to encourage staff, "a time for the light of Jesus to shine through all of us."

The Mission worked alongside the City of Fort Collins and other service providers to open the Northside Aztlan Community Center as a temporary shelter, providing boxed meals three times a day and other basic care such as restrooms, showers and medical support. This has allowed us to comply with social distancing guidelines at Fort Collins Rescue Mission as we continued to provide shelter for men and women.

FRONTLINE STAFF HEROES

Stephen Ronquillo

➤ The courage and optimism of Mission staff has made all the difference during a season when fear has become a prevalent reaction. "The natural thing to be is scared right now," said Stephen Ronquillo, emergency services coordinator at the Mission. "These are some trying times for people without any hope."

Stephen is responsible for keeping our facility sanitized and safe during his shifts from 4 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. He assigns guests to beds and provides what they need for the evening, including towels, hygiene products and clothing.

He has been instrumental in encouraging and praying for guests during this time. "I feed them faith, daily," he said. "When you come show up here every day, day in and day out, with the love of Christ, they can feel it."





"They closed everything down because of the virus, so the homeless had nowhere to go, so we came here. They have helped us a lot. We thank God for that."

- Debbie and Joseph
Guests at Fort Collins Rescue Mission
and Northside Aztlan Community Center

COMMUNITY HEROES

Genesis Project

➤ Stephen and the rest of the Mission staff have had the strength to diligently serve largely because of encouragement from the community. Members of Genesis Project, a church located about two miles from the Mission, have boosted staff morale through many acts of kindness, such as providing coffee for weekly meetings, ordering meals to be delivered and sending encouraging notes and cards.

Colleen Conrad, director of children's ministry at Genesis Project, said they wanted to encourage the staff because with the lockdown, they may not have access to the resources they usually do to rejuvenate.

"We have a real heart for the Mission," Colleen said. "They're on a different kind of frontlines than health care workers, but at the same time, it's kind of the same frontline because they're dealing with a vulnerable population who doesn't have access to good health practices when they get sick."

Genesis Project also donated more than 100 homemade masks for Mission guests. "The staff is trying to be as supportive and helpful with all of the needs as they can be," Colleen said. "They love these people."



VOLUNTEER HEROES

David Kimmey

➤ With the opening of the Aztlan Center shelter, our need for volunteers has been greater than ever, but slots have continued to be filled with people like David Kimmey, a senior at Colorado State University, who, during his graduation month, has been volunteering about three times a week.

"When things go badly, the way we respond is probably the most important thing," David said. "The Rescue Mission has been responding in a way that's very true to their mission statement."

David said it's been helpful to be a part of the positive and encouraging environment created by Mission staff and other volunteers. "In a time like this, you have a choice," he said. "You can focus on all the negative sides or you can put your energy toward something positive. I guess you could say I'm helping out at the Rescue Mission, but in many ways, they're helping me."



NUMBERS OF HOPE

Statistics of the novel coronavirus have been flooding the news so we want to take a moment to share some numbers* of hope thanks to your generous support:

14,451

Meals were served at the Northside Aztlan Community Center**

28

New volunteers served meals to Mission guests

87

First-time guests visited Fort Collins Rescue Mission

*Numbers reflect the time frame of 3/13 – 5/31.

**The community center was available as a temporary shelter for guests during COVID-19.

During a season of darkness and uncertainty, the light of Jesus shines bright. We don't know how long the effects of COVID-19 will last, but we know that through the courage of our Mission family, your faithful support and the community at-large, we are better, together.

The ripple effect of COVID-19 left tens of thousands of Coloradans unemployed, and we expect the needs of our homeless neighbors to increase.

Join us in supporting the most vulnerable in our community at FortCollinsRescueMission.org/ChangingLives.

*This story was written in May 2020. With the rapidly changing environment, we realize a lot could have changed by the time this story reached your hands, but we hope you feel inspired by our reflection on this point in time at the Mission.



What is your role as a Change Maker, and what inspired you to start volunteering at the Mission?

I began volunteering weekly as a prayer encourager about two years ago. A woman from our church had a daughter who was experiencing homelessness, and she started volunteering at the Mission and listening to the women share about their days and praying for their needs. I was greatly impacted by her example and by the women's responses to her listening ear and heartfelt prayers. I began to join her each week.

How has your experience being a Change Maker impacted you personally?

I love to hear the women pray for and encourage one another. Often, they are the best encouragers to their peers. They are a great example to me of what it is to be honest, grateful and willing to share.

Is there a particular moment or memory during your time volunteering that stands out to you?

I love celebrating the women's victories! It's especially satisfying to hear when they have found jobs, been approved for housing or met goals. I also love watching them relax, create and find joy when several people from our church have given manicures or hosted a paint party or a winter "shopping" night.

In what other ways has City Park Church partnered with the Mission?

We've partnered through serving meals, donating items, leading church services on site, serving up hot chocolate, music, and conversation outside the Mission, and hosting Saturday events like manicures and paint parties.

Why do you think Fort Collins Rescue Mission matters to our community, especially during these trying times?

Fort Collins Rescue Mission is on the frontlines helping those in economic hardship, which many are experiencing right now. They provide a stable environment for people to land to have their basic needs met, but they are also structured to help people move forward from where they are—to find hope and purpose.

Amy Gilliland is a Change Maker for Fort Collins Rescue Mission. She lives in Fort Collins with her husband of almost 38 years, Brad, and serves alongside him as he pastors City Park Church. She loves interacting with people, studying the Bible and cooking with her adult sons.

LOCATIONS

FORT COLLINS RESCUE MISSION

Meals, shelter and programs toward self-sufficiency



Harvest Farm

Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins



DENVER RESCUE MISSION

Meals, overnight shelter, emergency services, rehabilitation programs, family services, transitional programs and services, permanent housing assistance and clothing distribution



2020 Fall Festival

Canceled

For updates on upcoming events and ways to stay involved, visit HarvestFarm.org.

Every October, we look forward to welcoming you to Harvest Farm at our Annual Fall Festival & Corn Maze. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the event this year.

We are working on plans to connect our beautiful farm with you and your family in some way this fall, so stay tuned!

OUR CORE STRATEGIES



EMERGENCY SERVICES

People are invited inside, off the street where their immediate needs are met and critical relationships are built with Mission staff.



REHABILITATION

Men living with an addiction are equipped with work readiness skills, receive help to overcome destructive habits, find permanent housing, and begin a new life.



TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

Families and individuals in need receive case management, develop life skills and save for permanent housing.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

People struggling in our community receive assistance with food, clothing, furniture, household items and holiday meals.

DENVER RESCUE MISSION IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



316 Jefferson Street • Fort Collins, CO 80524
970.224.4302

