

# CHANGING LIVES

FORT COLLINS RESCUE MISSION & HARVEST FARM

A HOME FOR THE

# Holidays

**FORT  
COLLINS  
RESCUE  
MISSION**

HOW A CATASTROPHIC EVENT CHANGED ONE MAN'S LIFE

MEET OUR SENIOR DIRECTOR

*"Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."*

Psalm 51:12

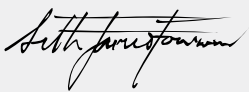
Dear Friends,

Where is your safe place? As threats storm into our lives like this pandemic, uncertainty in our society, or the coming harsh winter weather, sometimes the only thing that brings some relief is the ability to close a door to the looming problems and sink into our favorite chair or slide between the sheets of our bed for rest. Imagine having no doors to close out the larger world, no favorite chair for comfort, or no bed of your own for rest. How much more grim would it be to navigate the difficulties of your life?

Stories like the one you'll read about make me so grateful to work at Fort Collins Rescue Mission (FCRM), where the combined efforts of great staff like Desiree and an incredibly resilient guest like Michael work to create a safe place. As Desiree says, it is more than just a safe place. Poverty can simply be a financial situation, but it can also intersect with relational poverty, spiritual poverty and occupational poverty. Michael's story testifies to what can happen with your donations: vulnerable people have a safe place to rest; the lost are found; the weak become strong; the exiled find a place to belong.

We know that ultimately our safe place—our home—is in Christ, and we will use every tool, resource and service we have at the Mission to bring that peace and love to those we serve. Sometimes that's a smile and a meal, and other times, it's connection to a home, career or community. I am so grateful for your support so that we can remain firm in our calling to be the hands and feet of Christ to those on the margins, in the shadows and on the streets of Fort Collins. Thank you for your generosity and kindness.

God Bless,



Seth Forwood  
Senior Director  
Fort Collins Rescue Mission



# A HOME FOR THE Holidays

**FOR MICHAEL, A 54-YEAR-OLD  
TRANSPLANT FROM FLORIDA, THE  
SNOWY WINTERS OF NORTHERN  
COLORADO WERE AN AGONIZING  
ADJUSTMENT—ESPECIALLY THE  
WINTERS WHEN HE DIDN'T HAVE A HOME.**



"Snow and cold were just four-letter words to me before," Michael said.

On a frigid night in October 2019, Desiree Anthony, emergency services and community outreach coordinator at Fort Collins Rescue Mission, saw Michael trudging through the snow with his walker to attend the Mission's chapel service. She couldn't help but notice his desperate need for help.

"I made note of him and talked to him after [the service]," Desiree said. "He just captured my heart from the beginning. He was super jazzed to listen to God's word."

Michael started telling Desiree his story—the reason he was paralyzed; the cause of his traumatic brain injury.

The accident happened in Port St. Lucie, Florida in 1997. Michael was on his way to play golf—an outlet from his nine-to-five job at his father-in-law's insurance agency—when a woman in the car behind him lapsed into a diabetic coma and rear-ended his car. He totaled the



## WARM A HEART HOLIDAY DRIVE

GIVE THE GIFT OF WARMTH THIS HOLIDAY SEASON  
BY DONATING NEW WINTER CLOTHING FOR MEN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.  
OUR GOAL IS TO COLLECT A RANGE OF SIZES IN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

WINTER COAT | BOOTS | STOCKING HAT | GLOVES | THERMAL UNDERWEAR (TOP AND BOTTOM)



WE ARE ACCEPTING DONATIONS UNTIL DECEMBER 20.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[FORTCOLLINSRESCUEMISSION.ORG/WARMAHEART.](https://fortcollinsrescuemission.org/warmaheart)





*ABOVE: Desiree's role at the Mission is focused on connecting people to resources and helping them exit the shelter system. "Letting [people] know that somebody cares is a huge part of my job," she said.*

*LEFT: Last year, Michael spent Christmas at the Mission and enjoyed a holiday meal. "I didn't freeze to death because of the Mission," he said.*

truck in front of him and hit his head, hard.

After 12 hours of brain surgery and a month in a coma, Michael miraculously survived, but his entire world soon turned upside down. He and his wife got a divorce and he wasn't able to work, so he depended on disability income insurance and was forced to sell his house. Then, he moved to Colorado in 2004.

The next 15 years marked a volatile season for Michael. "I was living in an RV with no heat," he said. "[My landlord] wasn't making enough out of me so he kicked me out. He called me and said, 'Get out! Get out of my place!', and he dropped me off at [the Mission]."

Soon after his arrival, Desiree started working with Michael to restore the pieces of his life that were drastically affected by the accident and its aftermath. She took him to the DMV to get his ID and Social Security card, and she helped him apply for ADA accessible housing.

To Desiree and Michael's relief, he was chosen for a Non-Elderly Disabled Voucher, which requires him to pay only 30 percent of his income on rent.

Desiree helped Michael move to his new home in Fort Collins in October 2020, but her support and persistence didn't end there. She worked with Michael's Medicaid care coordinator to ensure that he receives the best possible care and hired a housekeeper to clean and buy groceries. She helped him get living room

furniture and a television and connected him to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to eventually get trained for a job.

"Most people who find themselves on the street are lacking not just in housing, but in life skills, community and support," she said. "You really have to make sure that they're set up for the long haul."

Michael has made a choice to walk by faith and maintain a positive mindset in the midst of his physical and mental struggles. **"THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF NEGATIVE THINKING HAS NO BOTTOM," HE SAID. "IT'S KIND OF LIKE A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK. YOU HAVE TO CONCENTRATE ON THAT ONE LITTLE NEEDLE OF POSITIVITY FOR YOUR OWN VICTORIES."**

And Michael has had many victories. After decades of using only a wheelchair, he taught himself how to use a walker. "He's really an impressive human being," Desiree said. "I saw him pushing himself to walk. His will to live through everything he's been through and his faith in God were significant contributors."

Michael now feels fully settled in to his apartment, just in time for the holidays. To him, one of the best parts about having a home is that he knows his belongings are safe. "When every piece of clothing I had used to be hanging on my walker," Michael said, "having a place is everything."

**YOUR GIFTS ARE PROVIDING LIFE-SAVING RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE LIKE MICHAEL.**

**JOIN OUR FIGHT TO HELP BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN HOMELESSNESS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY AT**

**[FORTCOLLINSRESCUEMISSION.ORG/CHANGINGLIVES](http://FORTCOLLINSRESCUEMISSION.ORG/CHANGINGLIVES).**

## Meet Senior Director Seth Forwood



### Will you share about your journey at the Mission?

During the summer of 2005 before I graduated from CSU, I lived in one of the dorms at Harvest Farm as an intern. By working alongside the men in the Farm's New Life Program, I discovered two things: a reinvigorated personal faith supported by this community where the only prerequisite is acknowledging your brokenness, and that by either nature or nurture, I have an affinity for those who are on the margins of society. After that summer, I came back to work as a cashier at the Fall Festival and later became a part-time volunteer coordinator and part-time instructor. I then became an education coordinator (and beekeeper on the side) and later the director of Harvest Farm before stepping into the role of senior director of Fort Collins Rescue Mission and Harvest Farm.

### What are you hoping to accomplish in your new role?

One goal is to create a community within our staff that capitalizes on sharing our strengths and weaknesses to support each other, much like Paul describes the Body of Christ. Another goal is to establish collaboration with other service providers. While we will continue to preserve the uniqueness of our programs and work, the more resources we can bring to participants and guests through collaboration with medical, mental health, municipal, and county partnerships, the better. Harvest Farm and Fort Collins Rescue Mission are often the last hope for people who come through our doors, and it is both a great privilege and a challenge to meet them at their physical and spiritual points of need.

### How is the Mission serving the homeless community in response to COVID-19 and how can the community support its efforts?

One exciting example of a newly-forged partnership is our ability to provide socially distanced overnight shelter to up to 150 men at a temporary shelter on Blue Spruce Drive this winter. This will triple our current capacity and provide a much safer space as we continue to soldier through this pandemic together. Your donations keep our doors open for everyone who needs our help. Volunteers are also vital. Also, please pray for us during the cloud of uncertainty that has come along with this pandemic.

### Why are you passionate about the Mission's work in breaking the cycle of homelessness in the Northern Colorado community?

Working for the Mission is not a job—it is a calling. I can't imagine myself anywhere else. To offer hope to our guests and program participants when they can't find hope for themselves; to see dignity in the exiled and forgotten; to share the love we have been given by our good God—is there anything better? Not for me at least.

## 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



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Join us in serving guests in need.

Sign up today at  
[FortCollinsRescueMission.org/Volunteer](https://FortCollinsRescueMission.org/Volunteer).

## 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:



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970.224.4302

