

CHANGING LIVES

FORT COLLINS RESCUE MISSION & HARVEST FARM



THE TIME TO HEAL

“And He shall turn the heart of the fathers
to the children, and the heart of the
children to their fathers...”

– Malachi 4:6

**FORT
COLLINS
RESCUE
MISSION**

YOUR SUPPORT BROUGHT RESTORATION TO THIS FATHER AND SON

THE IMPACT OF OUR VOLUNTEERS THIS EASTER SEASON

LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

You can never underestimate the power of a positive relationship. At Fort Collins Rescue Mission and Harvest Farm, we are all about relationships. We provide more than a meal—more than a warm bed and a place to stay. Because of our love for Jesus and for the people who come to us for help, we reach out to the guests in our shelters and programs and try to develop relationships with them. We ask them to trust us, so that they can take that first really hard step toward making a change.

Not everyone has the courage to move forward, but so many do. Stories like Eric's in this month's newsletter keep us going. Seeing a man get his life back, overcome addiction and restore his relationship with his son inspires us to keep on trying.

In these pandemic times, I am sure that you have found, as I have, that relationships have been harder to hang on to. Many of us have been away from family and friends and felt the loneliness of this time. Many of us have lost family and friends to the virus. These feelings we have of loneliness and despair are not unlike what our guests feel. They have needed us more than ever to keep our heads up and continue to take one step after another as we climb this mountain that is the pandemic.

No matter how difficult, we have continued to try and make a difference in people's lives. We have kept people safe and alive. We have prayed with them. We have tried to share a little bit of ourselves and a whole lot of Jesus with all who come to us for help. This relationship with Jesus is the real deal.

What is one way I know this? Because I see the love of Jesus played out every day in the actions of our staff and volunteers as they unselfishly serve and seek to develop relationships with the guests and participants in our programs. The Mission believes that Jesus rose from the dead on Resurrection Sunday, having died for all of us. He is alive today for us to have a relationship with. This is the most important, life-changing relationship ever.

Happy Easter! I hope you can come volunteer with us soon and see God at work. We covet not only your financial support, but your prayers as well.

God bless,



Brad Meuli
President/CEO



“Harvest Farm is a built-in buffer for families to talk. [During visits], you don't have to just talk about why dad's here. You have animals. You have space. You can walk and talk and start to rebuild the relationship. I think that was key for me—having that ability to spend time with Christian and have him see the progress I was making. That began those steps of restoration for us.”

-Eric, New Life Program graduate



As a young boy, Christian's memories of his father were sparse. He remembers visiting him at a farm up north. He remembers the chickens, the cafeteria, the basketball court, and a two-legged goat named Zonka.

At the age of 10, Christian didn't quite know why his father was there. He didn't know the details about the destructive addiction Eric had gone through—the turmoil that led him to seek help through the New Life Program (NLP), a faith-based rehabilitation program.

“I had no clue what was going on,” Christian said. “It was weird having to share experiences [at the Farm] with somebody I had no connection with. I had to look to other people for a father figure.”

In Eric's 30-year battle with alcoholism, one of his lowest points was in 2005—the night he was charged with driving under the influence—and lost everything as a result. “I ended up losing my job, career, family, marriage, and home,” Eric said. “I can remember saying to myself, ‘If I can't quit with [my family], how can I ever quit without them?’”

Eric experienced many low points in his life after that, including repeated hospital visits and failed suicide attempts. But he also took many steps to attain sobriety through intensive outpatient programs, 30-day rehabilitation programs and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

On January 28, 2013, Eric had his last drink. He joined the NLP a few days later.

“What I needed that those other programs didn't offer was time—time to heal, time to recover and time for a new life. I needed to repair my relationships—especially with my son.”

-Eric

THE TIME TO HEAL

A Story of Restoration Between Father and Son



Eric and his son Christian had a broken relationship for most of Christian's life. During Eric's time in the New Life Program (NLP) at Harvest Farm, his biggest motivation in his addiction recovery was to restore their relationship. As you reflect on the resurrection of Jesus this Easter, know that your support helped this father and son experience the same grace and forgiveness that Christ has given us.

"When I came to Harvest Farm, I felt [like] a failure as a son and a husband, but really as a father," he said. "What I needed that those other programs didn't offer was time—time to heal, time to recover and time for a new life. I needed to repair my relationships—especially with my son."

In addition to focusing on recovery, the Mission's six-to-twelve-month program allows participants to rebuild different aspects of their lives, including their careers, finances, and most importantly, their relationships. "[For Eric], that passion to get his recovery in order was so strong because he knew he had to make his relationships right," said Seth Forwood, senior director of Fort Collins Rescue Mission.

Time seemed to be the very thing that Christian needed, too. It wasn't until he was in high school that he realized Eric was intentionally mending their relationship.

"When I started playing basketball, he would come to my games and try to be involved with my life, so I started to reach out more," Christian said. "I remember when things changed. We went to get ice cream one night. He showed me the necklace. It had his sobriety date on it and the letter 'C' [for Christian]. We talked about what the Farm really was and what he was trying to accomplish in life. From that point forward, we've just had a connection."



Photo credit: Scott Zischke

By that time, Eric had graduated from the program and started working for the Farm. He later transferred to a Mission volunteer coordinator role in Denver to be closer to Christian. "It [was] a motivation for me to try to build a relationship with him and make sure that it stays that way," Christian said.

Christian, now a freshman at Fort Lewis College in Durango, is pursuing a degree in business administration. As he carries on his education, goals and dreams, Eric is now a part of his journey.

"It takes transforming your whole life," Seth said. "It often feels impossible, but people like Eric show an example that even in desperate situations, men can heal and become [the] sons, brothers, coworkers, and fathers they really want to be." ■



"You're investing not in just [my] sobriety," Eric said, "you're investing in Christian's future. You're investing to break that cycle of addiction within a family."

Help restore other families this Easter season by giving today at FortCollinsRescueMission.org/ChangingLives.

THE MISSION in my words




MILES BESMAN

Miles Besman moved to Fort Collins from Billings, Montana. He spent 15 years working in the oil field and currently works as a fuel truck driver. He is passionate about giving back to the community and spends his days off volunteering to help people in need.

I've been volunteering with Fort Collins Rescue Mission for about five months. I just felt that during these extremely hard times, people need help now more than ever. A lot of these guests are in this position through no choice of their own, and they just need a hand up.

I usually volunteer on my days off, so two days and nights per week. I prep and cook the food, do dishes and clean, and serve on the line. I love cooking and enjoy the relationships I've made with the other volunteers and employees. We have a blast back in the kitchen and serving the food! I know the guests are eating very well, and they seem to enjoy the meals. Yesterday, the guests had biscuits and gravy, fried potatoes, scrambled eggs, a cup of yogurt, and hummus or guacamole. The chefs really take pride in what they make for the guests. When we serve food, the guests who walk up and say thank you and how good the food was—every time, I just love it.

OUR
appreciation
—FOR—
volunteers
GROWS & GROWS!

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 18-24. We're so grateful for the ways you've stepped in to serve. We are always in need of volunteers at Fort Collins Rescue Mission and the Blue Spruce Temporary Shelter, where we provide meals and shelter for men in need.

Sign up today at
FortCollinsRescueMission.org/Volunteer.

OUR CORE STRATEGIES

-  EMERGENCY SERVICES
-  REHABILITATION
-  TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS
-  COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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



THOUGHTS?

Send your questions and comments to
Newsletter@DenRescue.org.