

NOVEMBER 2026

CHANGING LIVES

FORT COLLINS RESCUE MISSION

A Place at The Table

FORT
COLLINS
RESCUE
MISSION



Dear Friends,

In Luke Chapter 14, Jesus says this, “*But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.*”

Each year the Mission puts on a Thanksgiving banquet for our guests. We want each guest to feel special, to be known and to feel valued and loved. The holidays are really hard for the guests we serve. They can be a reminder of what others have that they do not. So, we do a Thanksgiving banquet with all the great food that defines the holiday. That food is prepared and served with love.

The truth is that we do this not only during the holidays, but every single day. I would like to share why we do it.

First, it is impossible to make the best decisions about your life when you are hungry. I don't know about you, but when I get hungry, I get hangry! That combination of anger and hunger. That is absolutely not when I am able to make the best decisions or deal with significant challenges. First, I need to eat, to quell the hunger. The same is true for our guests. You cannot think about leaving homelessness, getting a job or getting help with your addiction when you are hungry or not sure when or if you will eat again.

Second, we have a tag line we use that is “Hope Starts Here.” I love that! The truth is often hope starts with a meal, then a conversation, then the beginning of a long journey out of homelessness.

Third, we do this because Jesus told us to. In the scripture above Jesus commands His followers to invite the poor, the sick, those who cannot repay, to your banquet. Jesus says we will be blessed as we become a blessing.

You are an important part of this ministry. We could not feed the hungry without you! Thank you for partnering with us and helping us provide meals for those who are hungry and opening the door to ministry and a pathway out of homelessness!

Grace and peace,

Dennis Van Kampen | President/CEO



A Place at The Table

For Wayne, a Thanksgiving meal became more than a full plate. After years of loss and loneliness, gathering around a table reminded him what it felt like to belong—and that he wasn't alone.

The plate in front of Wayne was full. As he looked at each of his favorites, he was amazed and reminded of his childhood.

“I felt like a king. I haven't eaten like that since I was a kid,” he recalled. “It was exactly like it was. I couldn't believe it.”

Before he left, Wayne made sure to thank everyone who had helped make the meal possible—Fort Collins Rescue Mission staff who organized the banquet, First Presbyterian Church who hosted the meal and volunteers and donors who truly made it all possible.

“What a treat! It was delicious, and there were tons of it. Thanksgiving was heaven,” he said.



But the meal meant more to Wayne than the food itself.

After losing his mother, father, brothers, and ultimately his wife, Wayne began drinking heavily. Eventually, he lost his job and his housing. At one point, he was

sleeping in his truck or outside, unsure of what would come next.

So, when he sat down for the Thanksgiving meal with the Mission last year, he was reminded of what it felt like to be valued, cared for and loved.

“I had no one until I met the staff of Fort Collins Rescue Mission,” he said. **“It was a happy time. It was like family.”**

And Mission staff kept showing up for him as he struggled with his health and searched for his path out of homelessness.

When Wayne experienced a serious fall, staff helped him get medical care. When he needed clothing and hygiene items, they helped him get what he needed. And when he was having difficult days, they offered a listening ear.

Those moments motivated him to keep going.

A Place to Count On

For someone experiencing homelessness, a meal is often the first touchpoint they have with us. And that first impression matters.

So, if the plate speaks first, what does our plate say?

**We were expecting you | We prepared this for you
You are worth our best effort**



Wayne has experienced that care firsthand: **“The food is delicious. They treat us as we should be.”**

“After years of serving meals at the

Mission, I have come to believe that the most important thing we provide is not food. It is consistency,” Steven Kreis, Senior Director of Food Services, said.

Consistency has been especially meaningful during a year when almost everything else has changed.

After a fire forced the closure of our shelter on Jefferson Street last August, guests and staff have moved through several temporary locations and adapted to new routines.

Paula Ordaz, Director of Fort Collins Rescue Mission, describes the past year in these words: **“constant change, resilient and community.”**

Even in the middle of so much change, she watched her team rally and help guests continue to move forward by maintaining or finding employment, engaging with case management and finding housing.

A Place to Gather Again

This Thanksgiving, FCRM is still in a season of transition—but a new chapter is coming.

The new Homeless Resolution Center, opening early 2027, will give guests a place to rest, share meals, build community, and receive support to help them on their path out of homelessness. After a year of constant change, it will provide something guests and staff have been missing: a home base.

“I think everyone is looking forward to finding a home again,” Paula said.

For Wayne, he is working toward housing alongside his case manager and thinking about what comes next—a life where he can work, dream and have a true community.

“The staff has really helped me. I'm trying, and they just took me in under their arm.”



**This Thanksgiving,
help put more
than food on the table.**

Scan to Give!

Give today at FortCollinsRescueMission.org/ChangingLives

THE MISSION in my words



Paula Stearns

Paula is a longtime Fort Collins volunteer, donor and advocate who has been involved in efforts to address homelessness for about 10 years, including supporting FCRM and the new Homeless Resolution Center.

What has stood out to you about Fort Collins Rescue Mission?

I think we all want to do better for our community, and there are different ways to do it. I like being part of community organizations and meeting people. At FCRM, it's the people and how they express themselves and how they talk in the community. I trust the people at the Mission. I've also been impressed with how forward-thinking the Mission is. They're thinking five or 10 years ahead.

What are you looking forward to about the new Homeless Resolution Center?

It's state of the art. It's not just, "Let's build a shelter." They're designing it with architects who understand the mental, emotional and social needs related to helping a person get back on their feet.

What would you say to someone who wants to get involved?

It's okay to start small. I think tours are important so people can come and really see the place. Any way that you can help people who are homeless—interact. I don't think people should hesitate to give. There are a lot of ways but I think it helps to hear people who have been involved say it's easy.

“We all want to do better for our community.”



Construction is Almost Done: New Homeless Resolution Center

Exterior paint is complete | Flooring is complete
Kitchen is complete | Finishing touches are ongoing

Follow our progress

FortCollinsRescueMission.org/MoreThan



OUR CORE STRATEGIES



PREVENTION

Helping stop homelessness before it starts



EMERGENCY SERVICES

Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable



RECOVERY

Equipping men through a life-changing program

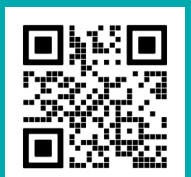


TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

Transitioning people into stability



December 8



ColoradoGives.org/DenverRescueMission

LOCATIONS

Fort Collins Rescue Mission | Denver Rescue Mission

DENVER RESCUE MISSION
IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



MISSION
MEMBER
CERTIFIED EXCELLENT



316 Jefferson Street | Fort Collins, CO 80524
970.224.4302

