

CHANGING LIVES

128 YEARS OF SERVICE



WALKING IN VICTORY

DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION

HOW WE'RE SHOWING CHRIST'S LOVE THIS EASTER

CBS4 ANCHOR DOMINIC GARCIA ON WHY THE MISSION MATTERS

Dear Friends,

As we enter into this joyful, yet busy, Easter season, I want you to know how excited I am! As I write this, I am reflecting on our most recent Annual All Staff Meeting. This meeting is the one time of year that we get our staff together for a half-day meeting. During our All Staff Meeting, we have a time of worship, and I share a devotion and talk about the state of the Mission. We then hear from a speaker. This year, we welcomed nationally acclaimed speaker, pastor and author, Steve Cuss, who spoke about managing leadership anxiety. It was a blessing that he could join us!

My favorite part of the day was when we gave some anniversary awards to our staff. We gave 5, 10 and 15-year awards at this meeting. We have given some 20 and 25-year awards in the past, and if all goes as planned, we will award one of our longtime trusted staff members the first 30-year award in our history next year!

I introduced these committed staff members, and they came to the front of the room to receive their awards. I want you to know that I believe all of our employees are very special, just like Tim, who you will read about in this edition of *Changing Lives*. They are committed to God's work here.

This year was special because I had the pleasure of introducing two women staff members who have been here for 15 years, Elvira and Silvia. They are our custodians. They became employees when we acquired The Crossing. I had the great honor to talk about their hearts for serving, their commitment, their cheerful demeanor, and their incredible work ethic. They are known for serving in a very unselfish manner without fanfare or public accolades.

When they came to the front to receive their awards, they each received a standing ovation—a long, loud and happy standing ovation! It made me cry, kind of hard actually. I realized, in that moment, that I work for an organization where our employees give standing ovations to our custodians. Not only do we value the people we serve, but we value the people who do the serving, no matter the job. I think this is the way our resurrected Jesus would want it. It is an honor to work alongside these employees!

Happy Easter,

Brad Meuli
President/CEO



The Most Important Thing You'll Ever Say



Have you ever heard of a "Legacy Love Letter"? It's a way to pass along your values to your loved ones.

IT CAN INCLUDE:

- ▶ *Your personal beliefs and values*
- ▶ *Important life lessons*
- ▶ *Words of encouragement*

Sharing meaningful stories or feelings with your loved ones can be difficult if you weren't raised in a home where that happened often. A Legacy Love Letter can help bridge the gap, and we want to help you get started.

Start your journey today at
DenverRescueMission.org/LegacyGiving.

HEY VOLUNTEERS, WE APPRECIATE YOU!



National Volunteer
Appreciation Week:
April 19-25

Did you know that last year, volunteer hours at the Mission totaled **111,640**? That's equivalent to the work of about 54 full-time employees! Volunteers are our lifeblood at the Mission and a vital part in serving our homeless neighbors.



Are you interested in becoming a volunteer?

Learn more at DenverRescueMission.org/Volunteer.



"Honestly, I don't do a whole lot of talking," said Tim, who is a driver at Harvest Farm, a 100-acre farm and rehabilitation center for men in Wellington. "Sometimes these guys have to vent and get things off of their chest, and sometimes they're just looking for an 'attaboy.'"

He listens to it all, from their frustrations to their triumphs. He finds joy in watching them regain their driver's licenses, get hired for the jobs they wanted and make progress in their journeys of recovery. When he attends the Farm's daily devotion, he listens to the praise reports and prayer requests of men who are going through struggles that hit very close to home.

Tim started smoking and chewing tobacco at the age of eight.

His alcohol use ramped up throughout his teenage years, and when he reached his early twenties, it had started to form a stronghold over his life. "I was chronic," he said. "I couldn't function."

Feelings of fear evolved as Tim's sister, Debbie, watched her brother suffer from a destructive addiction for more than three decades. But she never stopped praying for him, and when she recommended that he move to Colorado to join the New Life Program, to his family's surprise, he listened.

"It had reached the point where it was life or death," Debbie said. "You could tell that he was living an empty way of life, yet God had special plans for his future."

She heard about the faith-based program from her former pastor and neighbor in Arkansas, Dan Spencer, who has now been a chaplain for the program for almost seven years.

When Tim arrived at the Farm in August of 2016, it had been almost 20 years since Dan had seen him. "I saw Tim, and he was shaking," Dan said. "He was eating Tic Tacs because he wanted to smoke. Debbie was crying and Tim's mother was crying, and I said, 'Tim, you're going to make it.'"

During his first couple of months in the program, Tim worked in the kitchen doing dishes, cleaning, preparing food, and cooking as part of the work readiness phase of the program, which helped him keep his mind off of using substances.

"The whole idea of the program is to start changing the way you think, act and behave," Tim said. "Working in the kitchen is what actually made me feel like I'm worth something."

After 13 months of diligently meeting with his chaplain and counselor and surrounding himself with solid peers and a strong community from his church, Tim's family members watched him graduate from the program and walk wholeheartedly into a new life.

"The Farm saved my brother's life," Debbie said.

WALKING IN VICTORY

Tim Hutson is a compassionate, tender-hearted listener. During the first two hours of his day, he listens to God during his time of prayer. As he drives the shuttle every couple of hours to take New Life Program participants to their job interviews, doctor's appointments and other errands, he listens.



From the Desk of a Chaplain

Every time Debbie visited Tim during his time in the program, she saw a transformation. "You could see that God was redeeming and renewing his life. So much of the heaviness and condemnation that he had carried for so many years was lifted," she said.



Dan was a familiar, welcoming face for Tim when he arrived at the Farm and a stable support system during his season of recovery.



Driving the Farm shuttle is Tim's time to connect with program participants. "I really like helping other people with their battles," Tim said. "I get to do that every day."



Throughout his years of battling addiction, Tim tried 30-day detox programs, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and self-help groups. "I never included Jesus into my recovery until I got to Harvest Farm," he said. "When I came here, He took all my withdrawals. Recovery, to me, is Jesus breaking the chains of my addictions and me not hooking myself back up."

As a full-time employee, Tim is a daily encouragement to participants who ride in his shuttle. He is in the process of becoming a Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC), and he has been certified as a Peer Support Specialist, an individual who has lived experience with a substance use disorder and can help others in their journeys of recovery.

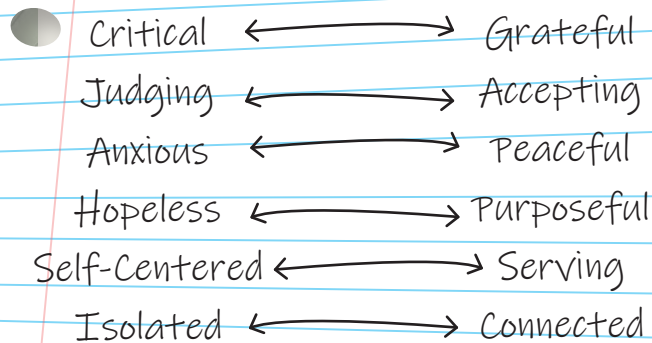
He discovered Faith Church during one of his shuttle runs and has been attending ever since. He plans to attend the Easter service and help cook dinner for the men at the Farm for its annual Easter dinner.

In the thick of the pain that Debbie felt during Tim's addiction, she wrote his name in her Bible next to Psalm 56:13: *For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.*

This Easter, Tim is celebrating almost four years of sobriety. Today, he walks before God in the light of life. Today, he's walking in victory. "Jesus died on the Cross for me. And for you. For us all," he said. "Listen and ask for His help. Real change comes through Jesus." ■



The New Life Program is designed to help participants in a variety of ways, including overcoming destructive habits by maintaining sobriety. When Chaplain Dan Spencer counsels participants, he talks through the following list of traits to determine the progress of their recovery. The left side reflects an addictive mindset and the right side reflects a healthy mindset.



Then, Dan asks participants the following questions:

- ▶ *What can be done to move your thinking from left to right?*
- ▶ *Who helps keep you on track, and how often do you talk to that person?*
- ▶ *What is a spiritual discipline or habit that's helping you grow today?*

These types of engagement techniques are a critical part of our program—helping men move from hopeless to hopeful. "On their best days and their worst days, we're praying for them," Dan said. "The Lord never forsakes them, and neither does the Farm."

Learn more about how we support participants in addiction recovery at DenverRescueMission.org/Blog.

At Denver Rescue Mission, we believe that true healing comes through Jesus. To partner with us in serving others this Easter and help them experience freedom in Christ, give today at DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives.

CELEBRATING **Easter** AT THE MISSION

Jesus died for us, carrying the weight of our pain and suffering and bringing us freedom and salvation. At our annual Easter Banquet, we serve guests in ways that help them understand the power of the Cross and the new life they have in Christ. Here's what's coming up at the Lawrence Street Community Center on Good Friday:



MEALS

We **nourish** through a delicious home-cooked meal made by our team of Mission chefs.



FOOT WASHING

We **refresh** as we wash guests' feet while encouraging and ministering to them.



A PLACE OF WORSHIP

We **share** the gospel at multiple chapel services and serve communion to our guests through our partnership with Volunteers of America.

We **give** new shoes, courtesy of Runner's Roost, and new socks, courtesy of St. Luke's Church, to guests who attend the banquet.



GIFTS

IT'S BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY THAT WE'RE ABLE TO PORTRAY THE GOSPEL IN A TANGIBLE WAY THIS EASTER.

How has covering various stories about the Mission impacted you personally?

Seeing and sharing these stories has been amazing and very eye opening. I've interviewed a number of people being helped by the Mission, and no matter what someone might be going through, there's a common theme: hope. Seeing that positive attitude, despite any obstacles a person might be facing, really puts things into perspective.



Why do you think the stories about the Mission's work are important to cover?

It's a big issue in the metro area, and it's only getting bigger. I think it's easy to turn homelessness into a political issue or a statistic, but it's our job to humanize the story and remind viewers that these are people who truly need help.

Will you share about your experience volunteering at the Mission?

I've been volunteering with the Mission for three years now. All the banquets have become a tradition that I really look forward to. It's been fun to get to know the other volunteers and employees at the Mission. It's such a great group of people.

What has your involvement with the Mission taught you about homelessness?

It's taught me that we're all human, and we're all just trying to navigate this crazy thing called life. Some are having a harder time doing that than others, and one kind act can sure make a difference.

Why is the Mission's work in serving the homeless community important to you?

This is my hometown. It's growing, and big things are happening. The Mission is trying to make sure no one gets left behind.



Dominic Garcia grew up in southwest Denver and attended Colorado State University. He married his college sweetheart, Meghan, and they live in Lakewood with their son, Elliot, and mini Goldendoodle, Vail. You can catch him on weeknights anchoring CBS4 News at 5 p.m. and reporting for the 10 p.m. newscast.

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.


LOCATIONS


Lawrence Street Community Center: Meals, restrooms, showers, laundry, clean drinking water, and access to Mission staff for encouragement and guidance 


Lawrence Street Shelter: Overnight shelter for men and chapel 


Holly Center: Overnight shelter for men assigned weekly and lockers for storage 

The Crossing: Transitional program for families and rehabilitation program for men 

Harvest Farm: Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins 

Fort Collins Rescue Mission: Meals, shelter and programs toward achieving self-sufficiency 

Ministry Outreach Center: Central warehouse facility including food, clothing and furniture distribution 

Administration & Education: Entry point for Mission transitional programs and home to the Mission's administrative and development staff 

48th Street Center: Overnight shelter for men, operated in partnership with the City of Denver 