I’m going to make it Now

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

Isaiah 41:13 (NIV)
In 2015, my sister and I lost our townhome. I moved four times that year, mostly living with family. But it just wasn't working.
If you asked her several years ago, Joella would have told you she didn’t want to change. “As a teenager, I hit the streets doing drugs and getting into trouble. The streets of Chicago and I had a love-affair like Romeo and Juliet,” she says. “I loved the streets, and they loved me, as long as I was doing the wrong things.”

But Romeo and Juliet doesn’t exactly end well. After all, it is a tragedy.

“My life then was a tragedy,” she continues, describing how at just seven years old, her mother and grandmother both passed away within weeks of each other. “I was looking at them in coffins back to back, and I had a nervous breakdown.” She also was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at just 16 years old, and her depression led her down the dark road of drugs, gang involvement, several attempted suicides, and homelessness.

But her story with the Mission doesn’t start there. She did much of the hard work of overcoming addiction, healing and finding stability before she came to Denver. When she moved here, she lived with one of her sisters in a studio apartment and later in a townhome.

That’s where her trouble began.

Joella loves her family deeply. Even while she struggled on the streets of Chicago, family was always important to her. So when Joella’s sister allowed her adult children to stay in their rented townhome, though it violated the terms of their lease, she was reluctant. When the landlord found out, they were both evicted.

Homeless, she ended up at a shelter downtown for one night. That’s where she learned about the STAR Transitional Program at Denver Rescue Mission. After applying, Joella had to wait three months for a room to be available at The Crossing. Thankfully, she was able to live with family and friends in the meantime, but sleeping on an air mattress in her niece’s living room got old fast.

Exactly three months later, Joella got a call from the Mission that she could come join the program. But she didn’t. Instead, she moved in with another niece who said they needed her help. Joella says she didn’t know how to say no.

For the next year, she was back and forth on the phone with the Mission. “Every time they’d call, I’d decide it wasn’t a good time for me to go to the program,” she explains. “I loved my family so much. There was nothing I wouldn’t do for them. So instead of looking out for myself, I decided to look out for them and not join the program.”
But living at her other niece’s house wasn’t working out either. “I was very overwhelmed,” she says. “There were things I wanted to do for myself, like I wanted to go to school.”

Finally, she decided to make a change and came to the Mission to join the STAR program. “I couldn’t take care of my family anymore,” she says. “I had to learn to take care of me, first. If I’m not taking care of myself, how can I take care of someone else? What love can I give if I don’t love myself?”

After a year and a half of sleeping on an air mattress in someone else’s house, she walked into her one-room unit at The Crossing and said “Thank you God!” She finally had a place to call her own, if only for a couple years in the program.

The STAR program is enabling Joella to focus on learning important skills like managing her finances, being prepared to rent an apartment when she graduates and building healthy boundaries in her relationships with family and friends. Her case manager, Donna, says she has come a long way since entering the program, and she looks forward to seeing her continue to grow.

Currently, Joella is a student at the Community College of Aurora taking classes to get her Certificate for Addiction Counseling. She wants to use her years of experience and her new education to help others who have struggled with addiction like she did. And she looks forward to giving back someday, helping others who enroll in programs at Denver Rescue Mission.

Joella’s life is completely different now than it was even just a year ago, and it’s all thanks to you. Because of donors like you, we’re able to offer these life-changing transitional programs to people who are experiencing homelessness. Thank you for helping Joella and so many more like her find hope and meaning through Denver Rescue Mission. “I just feel free, and I’m so grateful that God opened this door for me,” she says excitedly. “I’m going to make it now because of Denver Rescue Mission.”

Look for more encouraging stories, news and updates on our Facebook page:
Facebook.com/DenverRescue

Your gifts make a difference!
Help change lives today.

Go online to DenverRescueMission.org/Donate or use the enclosed envelope to donate now!
Dear Friends,

Levi Lusko, the author of *Through the Eyes of a Lion*, writes these words: “God is not scared of what you are scared of.” These words are a great encouragement to me. Sometimes when I wake up in the middle of the night, thinking about the challenges we face at the Mission or my own personal challenges, I think of these simple words.

Since I first came to work here, I have said that *God is in control of our work at the Mission*. We are completely reliant on God for his provision, for his hand to be on us, guiding us as we try to share his love with people who come to us for help. We know Denver Rescue Mission would not exist had it not been for Jesus’ act of love for us some 2,000 years ago, and his continued love for us each day.

To the people who come to Denver Rescue Mission for help, these words are an encouragement as well. Stated another way, God assures them that even in the most difficult times of their life—when they are broken, when they do not know where to turn and when they find themselves at the Mission’s door—they can rely on Jesus. They can say, as this month’s *Changing Lives* is titled, “I’m going to make it now!”

We are all about hope, gratitude, and compassion at the Mission. But more than anything, we are about sharing the love of Jesus. He changes lives. He is the one who can help you make it every day!

We cannot do this work without you. You are appreciated, loved and prayed for as supporters of God’s work here. Thank you for partnering with us as we trust God for his guidance.

God Bless,

Brad Meuli
President/CEO

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**Are you ready to shop ‘til you drop for a good cause?**

The 12th annual Shopping Extravaganza is happening Saturday, September 16, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Outlets at Castle Rock.

Tickets cost $30 and include special discounts, lunch, a dessert bar, entertainment, and live music! But the best part is, $20 from every ticket sold will help provide meals and critical services to the homeless in our community through Denver Rescue Mission. Purchase tickets online at [OutletsAtCastleRock.com](http://OutletsAtCastleRock.com).

Remember to select Denver Rescue Mission as your charity!

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**Get Ready for the 15th Annual Harvest Farm Fall Festival!**

Have you been to the Mission’s Fall Festival at Harvest Farm? If not, you’re missing out on hay wagon rides, a corn maze, a petting zoo, and lots of fun for you and your family! Come enjoy fun activities, tasty food and more.

The Festival is open Friday through Sunday throughout the month of October.

Learn more and buy your tickets online at [HarvestFarm.net/Fall-Festival](http://HarvestFarm.net/Fall-Festival).
Volunteer Spotlight

Ash has been volunteering at the Mission for three years. He fixes bikes for the kids whose parents are in the STAR Transitional Program and helps serve lunch at the Lawrence Street Community Center. “It makes me feel grateful and more appreciative for all the ways I have been blessed. It’s a privilege to serve as the arms and legs (and compassion) of Jesus in this tiny way,” Ash said. We are so grateful to have Ash on our volunteer team!

Learn more about how you can join people like Ash by volunteering at DenverRescueMission.org/Volunteer.

Statistics

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New Interactive Timeline!

125 years is a long time, and you can see how lives have been changed over the last one and a quarter centuries by visiting our new interactive, digital timeline! Just imagine all the ways you could join the story by volunteering and supporting the Mission today! Simply visit DenverRescueMission.org/Timeline to get started.

Denver Rescue Mission Outreaches

Lawrence Street Community Center
Meals, restrooms, showers, washing machines and dryers, clean drinking water, and access to Mission staff for encouragement and guidance

Lawrence Street Shelter
Overnight shelter for men, chapel and health clinic

Champa House
Residential facility offering long-term help toward self-sufficiency to single mothers with dependent children

Harvest Farm
Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins

Fort Collins Rescue Mission
Meals, shelter and transitional programs

The Crossing
Transitional program for families and rehabilitation program for men

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

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

Family Services
Transitional program, assistance for permanent housing, and mentoring

Changing Lives is the monthly news publication of Denver Rescue Mission.

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