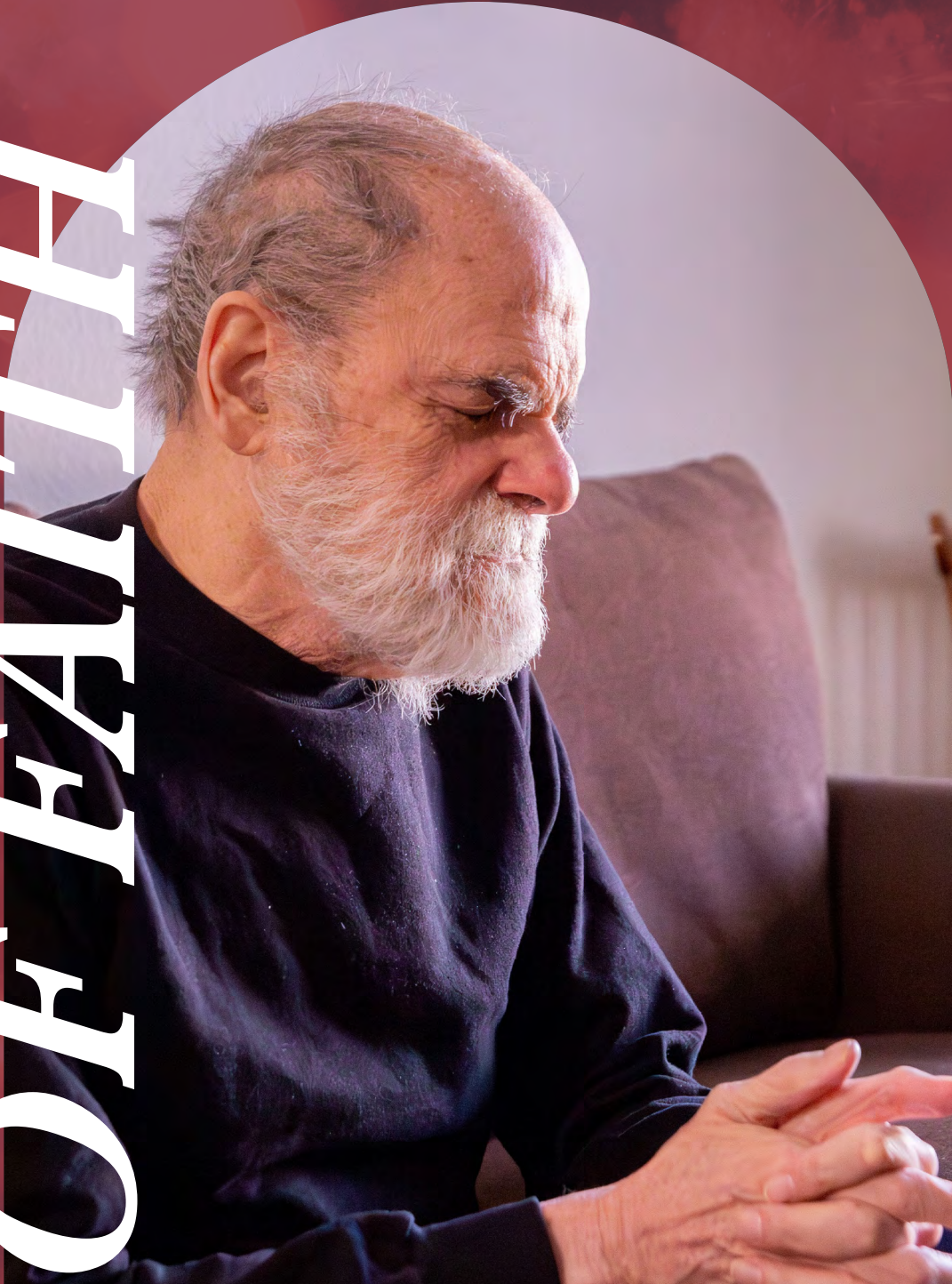


# CHANGING LIVES

133 YEARS OF SERVICE

# VISION OF FAITH



**“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for  
and assurance about what we do not see.”**

**Hebrews 11:1**

## Dear Friends,



From time to time, we get asked the question why: "Why do you serve that population?" "Why do you do what you do?" "Why do you serve people the way you do?" I believe answering the why questions are the most important questions any organization can answer. Why do we do what we do, for those we do it for?

Our why at Denver Rescue Mission is simple to explain and difficult to live out. Our why is simply because we are followers of Jesus and believe we should do what He said to do, try to live the way He lived on earth and follow scripture.

Scripture is full of verses that communicate God's heart for the poor and his requirements for those of us who are Christians. Some of the literally hundreds of Bible verses are found in Matthew 25. Jesus is speaking and He says that in some very mysterious way when we feed the hungry, give the thirsty something to drink, invite the stranger in, give clothes to those in need, care for the sick, and visit those in prison, we are doing that for Him, for Jesus.

I find it interesting that Jesus did not qualify or put conditions on which hungry we feed. He simply says someone or even anyone who is hungry, anyone who is a stranger, anyone

who is sick. One way I have found to challenge myself is to consider these questions:

"I was hungry and you \_\_\_\_\_"

"I was a stranger and you \_\_\_\_\_"

"I was sick and you \_\_\_\_\_"

"I needed clothes and you \_\_\_\_\_"

In Matthew 25 Jesus is clear we have a choice. We can choose to find a reason not to help someone or we can help them. Whichever choice we make, we are in some way choosing how we serve Jesus.

So this is our why, our answer to all the questions. We serve whom we serve and do what we do for Jesus. I cannot think of a better reason for Denver Rescue Mission to exist.

Because of you our work is possible. We could not do this without you. Thank you for partnering with us as we serve Jesus and those He loves.

Dennis Van Kampen | President/CEO

## THE MISSION in my words



**Marlene has been involved with the Mission for 17 years as a donor, volunteer and Goodheart Society member.**

### Marlene Azada

#### **What initially inspired you to get involved with the Mission?**

I've lived in Colorado for a long time, so I remember seeing the Jesus Saves sign. When I was in college, my mom used to go down to the shelters and she would just talk with people and get to know them. I started going with her and she had a really big influence on me in that regard.

#### **What made you want to leave a legacy through the Goodheart Society?**

My daughter passed away, so I don't have anyone to will my stuff to, and now I'm divorced as well. I thought, "Who can I leave my estate to? The Mission. At least I know it'll be helping those who need the help." It really gives me joy

because we should be helping each other. I go back to my mom who said, "It's always better to give than to receive, because you actually get more out of it."

#### **Do you have any favorite memories from your time at the Mission?**

I was a stepmom, and one day, I was like, "Can we go through some of our things and bring it down to The Crossing?" We got there and were shown the Youth Center. My stepson started to tear up. We get back to the house and he goes, "Marlene, do you have a bunch of boxes? I want to give more of my stuff to The Crossing." He literally filled up 12 boxes and had to see that to experience that we are very fortunate, and others aren't as much.



# VISION OF FAITH

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Born blind, James has overcome many challenges in his life, including homelessness. Through unwavering faith and support from the Mission's Complex Case Management team, he has found stability, housing and purpose.

James was born blind.

When asked, 'If you could see anything, what would you want to see?'

His response was:

**“There really isn't anything I'd want to see, because I think it's really special that the first thing I'll see is Jesus' face.”**

This moment and many other acts of unwavering faith have inspired several staff and guests at Denver Rescue Mission who have interacted with James, even brought them to tears. Because James' faith—despite the trials he has endured throughout his entire life—is apparent as soon as you meet him.

“I feel that my story can help others. There are people out there who are hurting. There are people out there who are lost. They feel like there's no hope,” James said. “And I'm here to say, if you put your faith in the Lord, there's always hope, and He will never let you down.”

James learned early on in his life that God had a special purpose for him. He learned braille at age five, became a Christian at age six and went to a special school for the blind, which taught him how to get around independently. Despite the challenges, he credits his faith for his ability to stay positive.

“God doesn't make junk, and I've been blessed throughout my life for a lot of people who taught me different things, in terms of blindness, and how to succeed,” James said. “I had a lot of really special teachers who gave me encouragement and I had friends who were inspirational.”

Throughout his life, James built community through his church and the blindness community. But eventually he experienced six months of homelessness, on the streets during the cold of Colorado winter.

“Having a disability makes being homeless a lot more challenging. I've been robbed, I've been assaulted. You are worried that if you have a blanket, someone's going to come up and take it,” he recalled.



That's what led him to Denver Rescue Mission. He graduated from the New Life Program in 2018 and ended up moving to Illinois for his significant other. But two weeks before his wedding, his fiancé called it off. From there, his only plan was to come back to Denver and come to the Mission because he knew that was the place to get him where he needed to be. With the Mission's newly established Complex Case Management team, James was able to quickly go from shelter to the Bridge program at The Crossing. "I really was blessed to have Madelyn and Campbell, and we became really, really close," he said.

**"I'm just so glad that they have this kind of a program because it is more intensive, and it kind of has to be, because a lot of people have different disabilities, and they have more needs that [the Complex Case team] has the resources and the ability to give people."**

The new Complex Case team at the Mission began last year with the City of Denver. The idea was to work with men and women who have high acuity needs that make it a significant challenge for them to find support anywhere else. "We are helping the

most difficult-to-house," said Deb Butte, Senior Director of Homelessness Resolution. "And we are motivated with the results in just this short amount of time." So much so, that the City recognized that success by renewing our contract for the coming year.

Associate Director of the Complex Case Team, Madelyn St Clair, said, "The most common barriers we see are with different mobility concerns such as wheelchair bound due to an amputation, traumatic brain injuries and those disabilities co-occurring with mental health concerns. As you can imagine, someone experiencing homelessness with a life-altering disability faces a lot more challenges accessing case management and housing, so our team is hands-on specifically for these people."

With the help of Campbell Fix, Complex Case Manager, James was able to get back on Medicaid and food stamps, get a birth certificate, apply for housing, connect with other resources in the city, and receive emotional and spiritual support. "Campbell and I would pray regularly, and that made a big difference to me, to have somebody that I felt close enough to and felt in a safe space emotionally to where I could pray."

Within five months, James was housed in an independent facility and connected with Developmental Pathways, which helps





James with cooking, laundry, shopping, and more. "I just thank the Lord that I'm here. I mean, I'm not on the street," James said. "I'm grateful that I have my sense of independence. I'm grateful that I'm able to be in a place where I have my sense of worth. That God has reaffirmed for me, that 'yes, you are important,' that 'yes, you matter to people,' but most importantly, 'you matter to me.'"

Madelyn reflects on the transformation she has seen James go through since coming to the Mission, and despite all the physical obstacles his faith in the Lord is what inspires her the most.

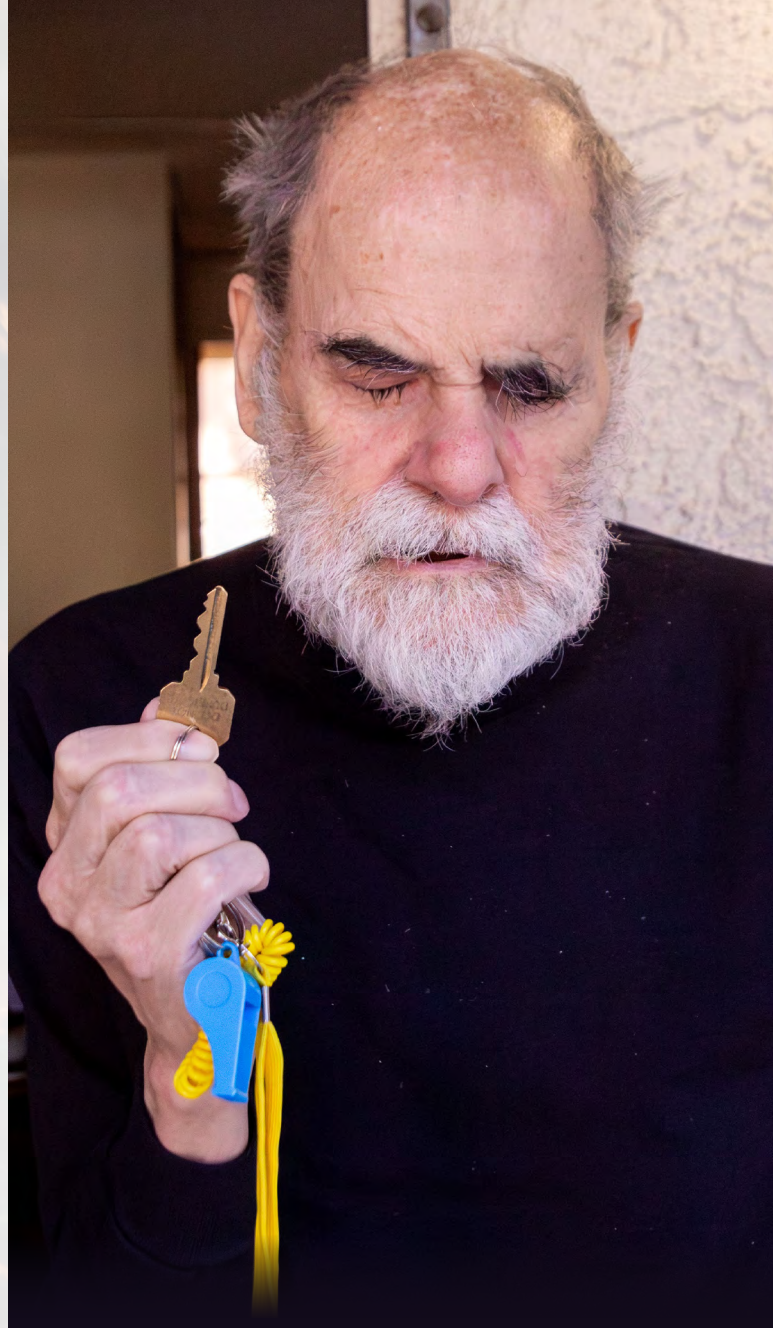
"I feel like we have all learned so much from James and his faith he has in Christ," she said. "His first day in the shelter system to now, even though there have been hardships, I'm just continuing to see more and more stability and independence."

Now James is working towards maintaining his health and housing, staying active in his church and potentially becoming a worship drummer again, mentoring others who are blind, and giving back to the Mission.

"I wasn't expecting the level of support I got, simply because I know that because of my disability, it would take somebody who was willing to invest the time and have the expertise," he said. "Because of my faith and the people who God put in my path, even though you go through trials and tribulations, you just need to keep strong to your faith."

We can all learn a little something from James.

**"God is never going to put you in a situation that you can't deal with. He's never going to give you something you can't handle."**



**In just 9 months,**  
our Complex Case team worked  
with over **100 people**  
and helped **39 get housed**

Help more people like James find a more stable solution to end homelessness in their lives at [DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives](https://DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives)



*Scan to Give!*



# What are high acuity needs?



These guests may need help remembering an appointment, getting to an appointment, understanding what they are being asked to do by a housing provider in the community, responding to mail, or returning a phone call, as they struggle following tasks to completion or independently.

## Complex Case Common Barriers

- Mobility Concerns
- Chronic Physical Disabilities
- Cognitive Impairment
- Developmental Disabilities



Learn more about our Complex Case team at [DenverRescueMission.org/ComplexCase](https://DenverRescueMission.org/ComplexCase)



To help spread the warmth this winter, visit [CBSDenver.com/SpreadTheWarmth](https://CBSDenver.com/SpreadTheWarmth)

### OUR CORE STRATEGIES



#### EMERGENCY SERVICES

Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable



#### REHABILITATION

Equipping men through a life-changing program



#### TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

Transitioning people into stability



#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Providing essential needs for daily life



Volunteer With Us



**LOCATIONS** Lawrence Street Shelter | Lawrence Street Community Center | The Crossing | Ministry Outreach Center | Holly Center Administration & Education | 48th Avenue Center | Harvest Farm | Fort Collins Rescue Mission

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