

OCTOBER 2026

CHANGING LIVES

134 YEARS OF SERVICE

DIGNITY
Restored



DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION



Dear Friends,

When rock star Jon Bon Jovi donated money to and toured a homeless shelter in New Jersey a few years ago, it became a national news story. I remember the staff at the Mission I was serving asking, "What if a huge star toured our Mission and supported us?"

The truth is we have someone more important than Bon Jovi who enters our Mission every night. In Matthew 25, we are told when we welcome in the stranger, when we feed the hungry, when we care for the sick, when we give clothes to those in need, in a mysterious way we are doing this to and for Jesus. According to this, every person who walks through our doors each night is a representation of Jesus.

I suspect that before Bon Jovi arrived, the staff of the shelter spent hours cleaning, fixing broken items, making sure everything shined and smelled wonderful. After all, a rock star was coming through. How much more should we do for the guests who represent Jesus coming in our shelter every night? Should they not get the same, if not better, treatment and facilities than a rock star? I am pretty sure that if we knew that Jesus Himself was literally going to walk into our shelter, we would make sure it was perfect, safe and dignified.

As you will read in this newsletter, Abel speaks of the staff he encountered, of the way they cared for him and treated him. They were a huge part of Abel's success. I believe this is because our staff are living and working from their faith. They understand that God's work through them is because of God's work in them.

Whether it is in how we treat our guests, the kind of facilities we operate or the plans we have for the future, the common thread is this: Every single person we serve is made in the image of God and deserves respect, dignity, safety, and help.

As we look forward to the future of our ministry—how we work, what we say yes or no to, what our facilities new and old need to become—the lens we will look through is this: If Jesus were to walk through our door tonight would this be good enough for Him? Matthew 25 says Jesus does walk through our doors each night, so if the answer is no, then we know we need to do better.

Thank you for your partnership. Life change like Abel's would not be possible without your prayers and financial support.

Grace and peace,

Dennis Van Kampen | President/CEO

THE MISSION in my words



Kathie J is a longtime Denver radio and TV personality who is currently on-air with KOSI 101.1 FM and The Kathie J Show podcast. Last November, she had the opportunity to interview Abel and hear more about his remarkable journey of recovery.



Kathie J

How did you first get involved with Denver Rescue Mission?

Growing up in Denver, I always knew about the Jesus Saves location. I served food there over the years, volunteering with schools and Girl Scouts. Every time I visit, I meet someone new who has a wonderful success story. Abel is one of my favorite success stories!

What part of Abel's story impacted you the most?

That he was aware he wasn't just saving his own life but future generations, like his son. Something that surprised me was how honest he was about his addiction and how dark it got for him. After hearing Abel's story, I hope people take away that everyone deserves a second chance and sometimes people take it and learn to fly.

Why is it important for you to support the Mission?

Denver Rescue Mission is a vital part of the Denver community. They provide thousands of meals every week and they do it with a smile. Their programs make people stronger and give hope. I will always help and support Denver Rescue Mission.

"Everyone deserves a second chance, and sometimes people take it and learn to fly."

Watch their interview



FINDING SOLID GROUND

Abel grew up in a military family, moving from place to place

throughout his childhood, including time in Colorado Springs. But as an adult, he found himself stuck in a different kind of cycle—one shaped by addiction.

For 24 years, Abel believed he needed to stay in a constant high just to get through life. Along the way, he endured one life-threatening crisis after another. Within four years, he survived a stroke following a prison stay, sepsis and an overdose.

"Talk about the obvious signs of being on the wrong path," Abel said.

But to Abel, the greatest sign wasn't everything he had been through. It was the fact that he had survived it all.

"There was that grace from God that kept me here," he said. "It was time. It was time to stop."

Abel knew he needed a new path, so when his mom suggested Denver Rescue Mission's New Life Program, his response was simple: "Bingo, let's do it. I'm ready."

Abel was determined to begin a new chapter. He knew it wouldn't be without its challenges, including waiting for a space to open in the New Life Program.

In the meantime, Abel stayed at the Mission's shelters, where he received nutritious meals, a safe place to sleep, showers,

case management, and the stability he needed to take his next steps.

"The shelters were great—I'm not going to lie," Abel said.

But what impacted Abel most wasn't just having his basic needs met. It was the people.

"You know what was so amazing? They didn't know I was going into the New Life Program, but the staff—they're so intuitive and so engaged," he said.

Before Abel ever shared his plans, multiple staff members independently encouraged him to consider the New Life Program, believing he would be a great fit.

Their encouragement affirmed that they saw not just where Abel was, but who he could become.

DIGNITY *Restored*

AFTER DECADES OF ADDICTION AND NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES, ABEL CHOSE A NEW PATH THROUGH DENVER RESCUE MISSION'S NEW LIFE PROGRAM. TODAY, HE IS A GRADUATE, REUNITED WITH HIS FAMILY AND BUILDING A STABLE FUTURE THROUGH STEADY EMPLOYMENT.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

*W*hen Abel arrived at The Crossing for the New Life Program, he was ready to embrace every opportunity to build a different life.

One of those opportunities came through Back on My Feet, a nonprofit partner of The Crossing, when he was invited to be part of the relay version of the Colfax Marathon.

Abel began training three mornings a week, meeting his teammates at 5 a.m.

The early mornings were about far more than preparing for a race. They gave Abel the structure and consistency he had been missing for years.

"You know what I needed? That discipline," Abel said. "I needed to start building and cultivating new behaviors so that I can be stable and maintain a new life."

Each run became another step toward rebuilding not only his physical health, but his confidence and sense of purpose. By race day, Abel completed his four-mile relay leg at a 10-minute-mile pace.

But one moment stands out to him.

"I remember such a special moment, not so much when I handed the baton, but waiting on Larry, one of my peers there," he recalled. "He is a great ally in my sobriety and in my community with Denver Rescue Mission, and when he came and gave me that baton, it was some type of transition, right there."

The baton represented more than a race. It represented the life Abel was building—one step, one choice and one day at a time.



A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

his work readiness portion of the program at the Ministry Outreach Center (MOC). Each day he helped members of the community find food, clothing, hygiene items, and more through the free Client Services store.

While helping others in need, he too found a renewed sense of purpose and belonging.

"You meet so many other community members and hear

As Abel continued his journey through the New Life Program, he completed

so many stories," he said. "In helping others, I was really helping myself."

From there, Abel enrolled in CrossPurpose, a partner organization that helps participants develop the skills they need to succeed in a new career. There, he earned an electrician certification, gaining practical skills and renewed confidence as he prepared for life after the Mission.

Equipped with new skills, restored confidence and hope for the future, Abel moved to Texas to reunite with his family for the first time in decades.

"Oh my goodness, the dignity that they have restored in

me," Abel said, reflecting on the counseling and support he received. "I'm so ready. I have a 25-year-old son, and I haven't been sober for 24 years. He gave me a 2-year-old granddaughter, so I got to go show them this version of me."



HOPE THAT LASTS

Through the New Life Program, Abel found more than a place to stay. He found people who believed in him, opportunities to grow and the support he needed to rebuild his life.

The Mission didn't simply change Abel's circumstances—it helped him rediscover the person he was created to be, restore his dignity and build a different future.

And now, Abel wants others to know that recovery is possible.

"Don't give up, don't give in to the addiction. There is hope, and there is an answer; there is healing, and there is recovery."

"I have been sober since February 11, 2025, and I am genuinely grateful for the support and grace of God that has been sufficient for me."

Your support helps restore dignity, create opportunity and give people like Abel the chance to build a new future. Donate today at DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives



Scan to Give!

GATHER YOUR GROUP & JOIN TEAM THANKSGIVING!

Help us fill the pantry by November 2nd!



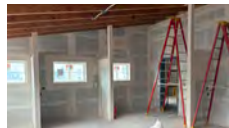
Set up a drive with your church, school, neighborhood, or family.

Sign up to drop off your non-perishable food donations and frozen turkeys at DenverRescueMission.org/TeamThanksgiving



THE FUTURE IS TAKING SHAPE

Construction is underway on our Homeless Resolution Center in Fort Collins, set to open in early 2027!



See the latest progress and learn how you can help our neighbors in Northern Colorado move toward lasting stability.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



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



LOCATIONS

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

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IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



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