

CHANGING LIVES

134 YEARS OF SERVICE



Kitchen xoxo
Crew xoxo



Im Grateful for
family and my
Program
Steve V.

Everyone I have met,
from participants to
staff, have been simply
amazing! It's a breath
of fresh air being
here! ❤️

GREATFUL
FOR community
where we fill each
others cups, so
everyone has what
they need.



A PLACE AT THE TABLE



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 Thanksgiving banquets 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 Thanksgiving banquets 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, three times a day. As you will read, that equates to over one million meals a year. We may be the biggest restaurant in the region! But that is what we do. 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



Laura has supported the Mission for five years through Banc of California with annual donations and volunteering at the Turkey Toss.

Pictured: Laura (third from the left) volunteering at DRM's Turkey Toss.



Laura Mendez

What inspired you to get involved with Denver Rescue Mission?

For the past three years, I've joined my Banc of California colleagues for the Mission's Turkey Toss. What keeps me coming back is the Mission's consistency. People know they can count on a meal and a place to turn for support, giving them a foundation to focus on their next steps. I'm also grateful to work for Banc of California, which shares that commitment and supports the Mission's important work in the Denver community.

Why is giving back, especially during the holiday season, important to you?

I grew up with a single parent, and so I know what it's like for money to be tight and you're struggling to get

by. I know what it's like to go without, so anything we can do to make the holidays a little brighter for others is important to me. That's a big part of why I do this.

What would you say to encourage someone to get involved with the Turkey Drive?

You're not just collecting turkeys, you're feeding families. What may seem like a small act to you can make a big difference to someone else—and even change a life.

"We're not just collecting turkeys, but that turkey is going to feed a family. It's going to change lives."

A PLACE AT THE TABLE



At Denver Rescue Mission, a meal is often the first touchpoint someone has 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

More Than a Meal

At the Mission, a meal doesn't just fill a belly, satisfy a craving or offer temporary nourishment.

For someone who has experienced homelessness, knowing where the next meal will come from isn't always guaranteed. But at the Mission, guests can know that when they come through our doors, there will be food and there will be people ready to welcome them.

"After years of serving meals at Denver Rescue 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.

Here, a meal can:

STEADY THE BODY

A full meal helps restore physical and mental strength. When someone is hungry, it clouds everything. Being fed can help someone think clearly, work efficiently and take steps forward.

"The food is delicious; they treat us as we should be." - Wayne, Shelter Guest

RESTORE THE RHYTHM

Meals served at consistent times, 365 days a year, can give structure to a day. That consistency helps establish routine and begins to build trust.

"The fact that I knew that I always had a place to sleep with my things stowed away safely, three meals a day and my own little space and bed was so helpful to me and gave me the space to get my bearings." - David, Shelter Guest

REBUILD TRUST

When someone knows they can come through the doors and receive a meal, they're learning something bigger: they can count on us.

OPEN THE DOOR

A meal can't solve homelessness on its own. But it can create a foundation for conversations, relationships, recovery, housing, and hope.

A meal says, "You can eat today."

Consistency says, "You can count on us tomorrow."



What Meals Mean to Families

When you think about Denver Rescue Mission serving meals, you might picture them being served to men in our shelters. While that's a big part of what we do, we're also preparing meals each day for children, women and families.

For a parent in our Bridge program or Family Shelter rooms at The Crossing, having regular meals means they don't have to wonder how they'll feed their children that day.

"When me and my kids found out that you could pretty much eat until you're full, that just was amazing," Jaime, a single mom, said while in the Bridge program at The Crossing. "I cried and I



prayed, 'Thank you Lord for giving us this place.' I felt relieved, grateful and at peace knowing that someone was willing to help me."

Now, she and her family are in housing.

And as we continue to help more children and families at The Crossing, our Food

Services team is preparing to meet their needs in an even more intentional way: a dedicated kids' menu.

With a chef dedicated to preparing kids' meals, this menu will offer simple, kid-friendly options that ensure each child knows the meal was made for them, too.

If Our Plates Could Talk

Just like every meal is made up of many ingredients, dignity is often found in the details of every meal and every interaction at the Mission.

Each chef and Food Services team member isn't simply putting food on plates; they're constantly figuring out how to turn what the Mission receives into something **safe, nutritious and worthy of the person receiving it.**

That includes paying attention to individual needs, like guests with documented allergies, medical dietary needs or religious food restrictions.

And now, instead of preparing plates ahead of time, we're moving toward preparing each plate for the guest, right in front of them. Guests can ask for something to be left off their plate, giving them a small but meaningful choice in what they eat.

"That little bit of control over even something as simple as their meal provides more dignity," Steven said.



Good Stewards

Our staff are constantly balancing safety, quality, dignity, and resourcefulness—finding creative ways to use good food while making sure every meal meets the Mission's standards.

The food we receive may come from grocery stores, restaurants, trucking companies, individual donors, and others. And sometimes, the journey doesn't end at the Mission.

With over 40 partner organizations in the community receiving food from us, we are helping to ensure that everyone in the community has access to food and minimal goes to waste.

Our Chefs Get Creative

For example, when the Mission received 12 pallets of donated tomatoes, our chef team had to figure out how to put them to good use.

Their answer? Something guests ask for all the time: Ketchup.

**1,123,775
MEALS SERVED
LAST YEAR**

CREATE

Making meals of what we're given into something worthy of the person receiving it

SHARE

Helping feed the community by giving food to partner organizations

COMPOST + RECYCLE

Eliminating waste by sustainably disposing of food that can't be served

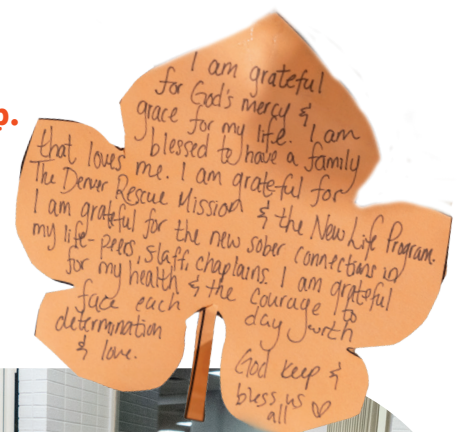
It Takes a Team to Make Thanksgiving

A meal doesn't happen because of one person.

It takes chefs who prepare it, volunteers who serve it, donors who provide it, partners who help make it possible, and a community that believes everyone deserves a place at the table.

"It felt like I had an abundance of everything for Thanksgiving. Everything was so good and everybody sat there as a family. We haven't been able to do that for a long time," LaDasmine, a single dad, said while in the Bridge program.

"That day kind of brought hope to everybody, even my kids, to see that we can still have a family meal together."



**THIS THANKSGIVING, HELP
PUT MORE THAN FOOD ON
THE TABLE. GIVE TODAY AT
[DENVERRESCUEMISSION.ORG/
CHANGINGLIVES](http://DENVERRESCUEMISSION.ORG/CHANGINGLIVES)**



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GIVE A Meal & Hope

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Tune in to hear stories from our guests on
Thursday, November 12

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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

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

DENVER RESCUE MISSION
IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



MISSION
MEMBER
CERTIFIED EXCELLENT



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