

# STORIES of HOPE

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## A Heart of Thanksgiving

Dennis wants to share how your support changed his life!



### DON'T MISS...

- 2** Our Thanksgiving Campaign has begun!
- 3** "Now I know God is there"
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# Anticipating This New Season with Thanksgiving



## A Message from JAY RIEMERSMA

Here at Gateway Mission, preparations for our busy fall season are already underway.

Outside, the weather is starting to cool. But inside our doors, it's still warm and inviting as **we get ready for the many men, women and children who will come to us during the months leading up to Thanksgiving.** It's a blessing to be able to welcome them here at the Mission, and it's possible thanks to the generosity of friends like you.

As I think about this time of the year, I'm reminded of the words of Ecclesiastes 3:1: *"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."*

Each time someone comes to the Mission for help, their season changes. They leave a time of pain and struggle that they may not have anticipated and certainly didn't desire –

and they **choose** a season of support and recovery. **I truly believe this is God's hand at work through your partnership in this life-giving ministry.**

Now, as we prepare to serve thousands of meals in the coming months, I ask you to pray for every struggling man and woman who finds a seat at our tables. Pray that if the time is right for a new season in their life, God will make it known and see it through.

Thank you. I'm thankful for you now, and always.

Jay Riemersma  
Executive Director

## YOU'RE MAKING GOALS AND DREAMS POSSIBLE...



*"My biggest challenge before coming to the Mission was learning how to love myself when I felt like the world didn't need me... But the Mission showed me God is on my side."*

*"Hopefully, one day I'll look at God and He'll say, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.' I want to live the rest of my life helping people how I can."*



At the Mission, hopes and dreams are born – because thanks to the support of friends like you, men and women in our recovery program can believe that a brighter future is possible.

To find out more about how you're helping transform lives and fulfill dreams, visit **hopefoundhere.org.**

Thank you for believing that everyone deserves the opportunity to build a better, more fulfilling life!

Join Our  
2023 *Thanksgiving* CAMPAIGN

# Thousands of Meals Needed this Thanksgiving Season

This Thanksgiving, countless guests will gather at our tables. Many are alone... longing to overcome homelessness and poverty... wishing they could reunite with their families for the holidays.

**For just \$2.43, YOU can provide a meal** to nourish their bodies and lift their spirits. Your gift surrounds hurting people with loving care that leads to a better life through:

-  Safe, welcoming shelter
-  Warm clothing, coats & shoes
-  Classes & job training
-  God's life-changing love

**Please help our neighbors in need this holiday season!** Send your 2023 Thanksgiving Campaign gift today using the enclosed reply card and envelope OR online at **hopefoundhere.org.**



*Scan to see how you can offer a helping hand this fall!*

# “In all the pain and mistakes, I felt like God wasn’t there... **Now I know He is.**”



All his life, Dennis craved stability, but it never seemed possible. **“I hated being around home, as a kid. My father was an alcoholic... he would get drunk and break things, screaming that he was going to kill himself.”**

When Dennis went to live with his grandparents, he thought he’d found safety. But their death only four years later left him alone again, reeling from the loss of his fiercest protectors.

By age 14 Dennis had begun drinking in an attempt to numb his pain, and drug use followed shortly after. At 16 – feeling unwanted by his teachers – he dropped out of school.

**Try as he might, he couldn’t establish a foundation.** He married his girlfriend after the birth of their son, hoping to build a family. That dream died when he discovered she’d been having an affair with his brother. And the final blow came when he found out that he wasn’t his son’s biological father.

**“I’d lost all trust in all my friends and I was filled with hate toward my brother.”** His drinking and drug use became worse than ever and, at his lowest point, suicide seemed like the only way out.

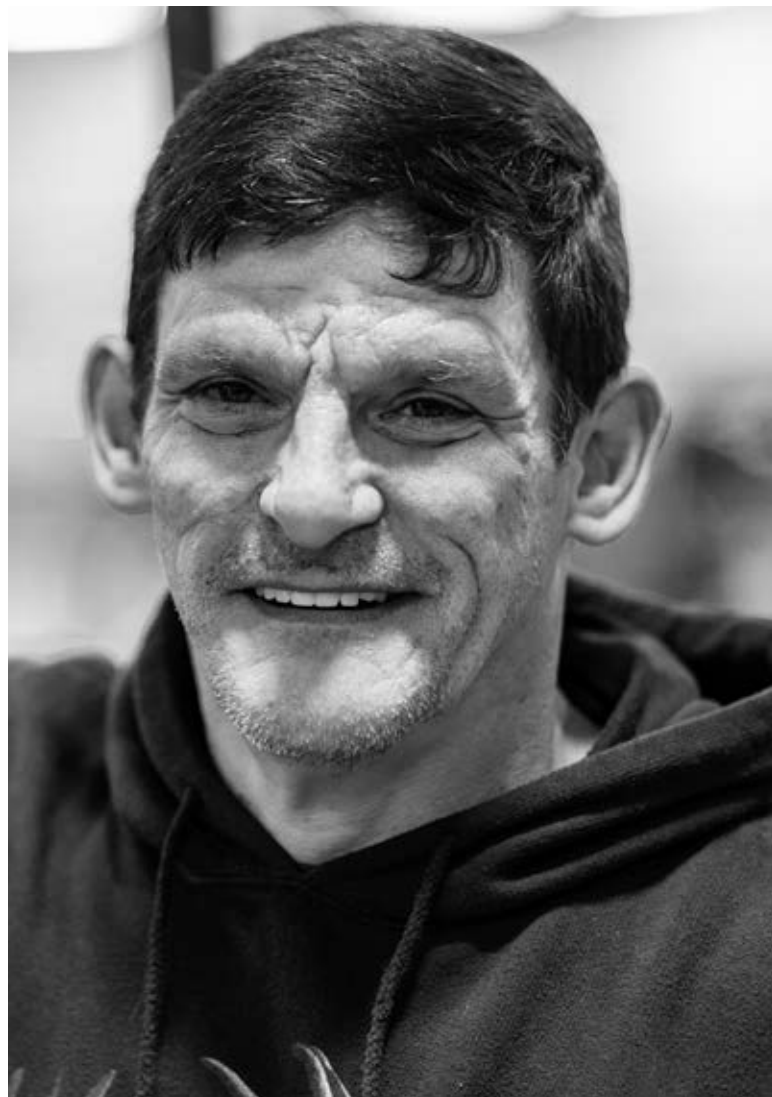
The memory of his mother inspired him to try one last time to turn his life around. At the advice of a friend, he turned to the Mission.

From day one, welcomed with open arms, Dennis felt his life turning around. **“When I first got there and started the program it felt like somebody put a nice, warm blanket around me.”**

In the Mission’s Gateway program for men and women, Dennis’s days were filled with Bible study, counseling, recovery classes and vocational training through his work in the Mission’s warehouse. And his heart was filled by a deepening relationship with God.

Today, having earned his forklift license, he looks forward to completing his program and beginning his career. “I believe in myself and I feel joy in my life, happiness!”

**Dennis is filled with thanksgiving for God’s redeeming love in his life – and your incredible generosity and support!** “The Mission helped me grow closer to Christ and heal from years past. I wake up every day with a smile because I feel like I have a purpose, my life is not a waste.”



**“I was broken and so tired of being alone...”**



# Chapel Changes Lives

*“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” - Psalm 119:105*

Attending chapel at the Mission can be a major turning point in the life of someone who has lost all hope. After struggling with homelessness, addiction, abuse or other heartbreak, many find it difficult to trust God. **Chapel helps build faith!**

Through daily prayer, worship, scripture teaching and fellowship, our two on-staff chaplains are ready to meet the spiritual needs of hurting guests. With this guidance, men and women feel inspired to make positive changes in their lives.

Chapel becomes a refuge for our guests, where they can seek God in prayer, study His Word and discover the good plans He has for their future.

Are you or your church interested in getting involved with chapel or donating Bibles for our guests? For more info, contact us at **(616) 396-2200** or **info@hopefoundhere.org**.

**NEW**

## HOW WILL YOU GET INVOLVED THIS FALL?



### Book a Mission speaker for your next event!

Hear how God has been at work in our community this year, and how your generosity is supporting life-changing services and programs.

*Contact us today to arrange a visit at [info@hopefoundhere.org](mailto:info@hopefoundhere.org).*



### Donate essential items!

Help stock our kitchen with the food items and our clothing closet with the protective clothing needed to care for our hungry, weary neighbors. OR... host a donation drive by inviting others to join you in collecting much needed items for struggling community members.

*To see our most urgently needed items, visit [📄 hopefoundhere.org/needslist](https://www.hopefoundhere.org/needslist)*



### Get involved yourself!

Join us for a chapel service, attend our program residents' graduation, enjoy a guided tour – we'd love to show you the life-saving work made possible by your generosity! OR... set up a time for your family, friends or church to volunteer this fall!

*To learn more, visit [📄 hopefoundhere.org](https://www.hopefoundhere.org)*

