

“I started  
calling  
shelter  
after  
shelter...”  
-Regina



**O**ftentimes we receive notes sharing real life stories and words of encouragement that remind all of us working at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission (GCRM) that the work we are doing, through Jesus Christ, truly changes lives.

Recently, we received this letter at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission and we felt, like many others we receive, it needed to be shared with you, our faithful readers and supporters. One staff member responded

by saying, “Sometimes we may feel overwhelmed or unappreciated. Sometimes we might feel like our wrongs have overshadowed our rights. Reading this letter, I know that all the craziness of our days, are part of a divine purpose!” It is because of you, and people like Regina, we can continue to make a difference throughout San Joaquin County. You, our faithful supporters, are helping change lives!

*continued on page 3*



## We are... San Joaquin County Strong!

**O**ur feature story is a compelling testimony of our commitment to serve all of San Joaquin County (SJC) - not just Stockton. Often, when I speak with people in our County, they are not aware we reach far beyond our city limits. Here are a few examples of the programs and services that are focused on San Joaquin County.

**Disaster Refugee & Pandemic Relief:** Should a natural disaster event or pandemic occur in SJC, the Rescue Mission can accommodate additional refugees or pandemic clients by providing lodging, food and clothing. Since June 2020, Gospel Center has served as the primary SJC resource to isolate and recuperate the homeless with COVID-19. Initially under SJC Human Services, and now under SJC Health Services, 36 beds are available in a two-structure secure compound on our campus. Homeless are admitted from referrals through SJC General Hospital.

**New Life Programs (NLP):** Residential 6, 12 and 24-month homeless regeneration programs are available to all SJC residents. In 2021 our NLP for single women, and women with children, has grown to 218 beds due to our 118-bed expansion. In addition, NLP is an option for SJC Court Order sentencing for lesser crimes – especially where drug addiction or alcohol related sentencing is involved. The Gospel Center is also a destination for women who are victims of trafficking and abuse.

**Emergency Overnight Lodging:** Although many people from outside Stockton do not come to our emergency shelters, we take shelter referrals from SJC Health Services for those who have mental illness challenges but can function as a shelter guest.

**Recuperative Care:** This program serves homeless that are discharged from a SJC hospital and are in need of recuperative care – the type of care that a family member would provide if the client were recuperating at home. With our recent bed expansion and in a non-COVID-19 environment, we have up to 50 beds.

**Representative Payee Services:** Gospel Center is one of two nonprofits managing SSA/SSI benefits to the homeless and homeless at risk in SJC. We annually serve up to 600 clients and process up to \$6M in benefits.

**FREE Nonprofit Training:** Gospel Center trains and shares program information to any nonprofit upon request. Over the past four years more than 100 SJC nonprofit organizations have received training, primarily in fundraising. We hope to inspire other nonprofits to do the same.

As a closing example of our County focus, I leave you with our “Battle Coin”. We consider ourselves one of the Lord’s combat units and when our New Life Program Students graduate, they receive their “Battle Coin”. Note the County map and notation.



Wayne G. Richardson

Dear Gospel Center Rescue Mission,

I just wanted to send you a little note of encouragement and thanks for all you are doing! May our Lord Jesus encourage you each and every day – and supply all your needs to do His work to see lives saved and restored!

It is my privilege to send you a small gift of support today and share a little backstory. On New Year's Eve Day, driving to my home in Lodi, I passed the bus stop on Ham Lane across from Lodi Memorial Hospital. There was a lady sitting there in her wheelchair. I had observed her sitting there for several days and it was freezing cold. The Lord just spoke to me to 'go back to see if I could buy her lunch and maybe something warm to drink'. After I parked my car, I walked across the street and began talking to her, asking how I could help. She told me her name was Lisa, and she began to tell me how she ended up on the street. She told me what she really needed was to get to Wells Fargo Bank to reactivate her debit/visa card so she could get a hotel. She shared that she had been taken advantage of by some people who took money out of her account. I took her to Wells Fargo, and they activated a temporary card, and she also took out some cash. The bank manager was wonderful, and I later called and thanked her for her help. Lisa also needed to get a prescription for a medical issue, so we drove to the pharmacy, and we also got her food. I helped check her into the Hampton Inn and paid through Monday. Since I needed to return to work on Monday, I realized I would need a little more time to help get her emergency temporary shelter. So I checked her out of Hampton Inn and into Motel 6 until Wednesday.

I started calling shelter after shelter and everywhere I could think of and found that it is not easy to find temporary shelter. Finally, a man from Gospel Center Rescue Mission called me back Monday afternoon and told me to call Carrie, the Director of the GCRM New Hope Family Shelter. She was so helpful & caring – and told me to have Lisa call Anna Villagomez to do an intake. Lisa made the call and Anna told her to be there Tuesday morning at 9:00am. I was so relieved that Lisa wouldn't be out on the street in the freezing weather. I drove Lisa to the mission on Tuesday and you (GCRM) immediately took her in! I decided at that moment I wanted to start supporting you.

I want to continue to try and support you whenever I can because I personally saw what you are doing for those who are homeless and need help. You are not only giving them that, but most importantly, you are giving them the answer to life's every problem, the Gospel of Salvation through Jesus Christ who loves every man, woman and child so much he bore our sins on the cross and gave us His righteousness, salvation, abundant and eternal life. Thank you, thank you, thank you for all you are doing. I pray Lisa can be successful at the mission and that through Christ's help and yours, Lisa and her daughter can be reunited, and their lives restored. God bless you all abundantly.

With deepest gratitude in Christ,

~ Regina

# GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

*restoring lives since 1940*

445 S. San Joaquin Street  
Stockton, CA 95203  
(209) 320-2310  
gcrms.org

*Whoever is kind to the poor, lends to the Lord ~ Proverbs 19:17*

## GCRM HAPPENINGS



*Thank you to the 17 local churches who hosted a coat drive and donated hundreds of jackets to us! A special thank you to Family Promise of San Joaquin County for coordinating the event!*



*Annual Tea Party hosted by Uplift All Foundation which included two of GCRM's Board Members, Sharon Benninger and Jan Watts.*



Our dining room has just received brand new tables! Through CARES Act funding, we were able to purchase 18 new tables; each with 12 separate seats that will make social distancing a breeze, as well as account for easier seat access for the infirmed and elderly. Additionally, some tables are equipped with a special space for wheelchair accessibility which will greatly benefit our many dining room patrons in the Recuperative Care Program that are wheelchair bound.

These new tables greatly increase our available capacity in the dining room, which previously was 120 patrons per meal period, to 612 patrons per meal period each day. This project is part of our Kitchen Renovation and Expansion and will consist of expanding our meal preparation capacity, currently at 500 meals per day, to over 1,500 meals per day!