

AN UNEXPECTED PATH TO SUCCESS

Carrie Williams never expected to end up at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission (GCRM), let alone hold an esteemed position there, but the Lord used her past to shape her future.

Carrie has been involved with the Mission since 2012, when she first came as an Emergency Lodging overnight guest. Through the years she has been at the Mission as a guest, student, volunteer, and employee. She is currently the New Hope Family Shelter Director.

Growing up, Carrie and her sister dealt with a dysfunctional mother by staying away from the house as much as possible. They would find places to hide or go to friends' houses in order to avoid the chaos within her family. With this kind of childhood, Carrie's only goal was to graduate high school.

As a young teenager, Carrie met her future husband and moved in with him immediately upon graduating high school. Carrie saw red flags early on in the relationship – verbal and physical abuse – but was so eager to become independent and start a life with him.

Carrie got married at the age of 28 and had three children – each of them one year apart. As a new mom, Carrie wanted to stay at home with her children so she quit her job, allowing her husband to solely provide for their family.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

That “one thing”

Carrie Williams's testimony as we enter this Easter season reminds me that no matter how fantastic our 8 core programs are and how amazing our board, staff, volunteers, students, and supporters are, **the key to what we do here at the Mission – what makes us different – is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** Easter is a wonderful reminder of this fact. I have come to look at our name, **Gospel Center Rescue Mission**, as the short version of **“The Gospel Is The Center Of The Rescue Mission!”**

In the movie *City Slickers*, three men go to a dude ranch in New Mexico to “find themselves” in the midst of a mid-life crisis. Mitch learns from a crusty cowhand/trail boss, Curly, that the secret to life is finding that “one thing” that matters most. For Mitch it was family. For all of us at the Rescue Mission, Jesus is that “one thing!”

To exemplify this “one thing” as we enter Easter season, I would like to take this opportunity to publish our Statement of Faith.

1. We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. We believe in God as the Bible defines Him – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 1:2)
3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His death on the cross, His bodily resurrection,

and His ascension to the right hand of the Father. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 6:23)

4. We believe that salvation of lost and sinful people comes by grace through faith in the work of Jesus on the cross. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
5. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. (Galatians 5:22-25)
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life or they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (1 Corinthians 15:42-44; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
7. We believe that God has created humanity as males and females defined as their sex at birth. That homosexual activity in all forms as well as sexual activity outside of the marital bonds (Marriage defined as union between one man and one woman) is against the will of God and therefore sinful. (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:31-33)
8. We believe in the personal return of the Lord Jesus in power and glory. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

Easter Blessings! Christ the Lord has risen!

Wayne G. Richardson

DONATION NEEDS

The seasons are changing and so is your wardrobe! We are in need of spring clothes for our clothing closet, where homeless individuals and our students go for free clothing. Doing some “spring cleaning?” We are too! We welcome any cleaning supplies so that we can keep our Mission in great shape. Please drop off items at 445 S. San Joaquin Street or arrange for a pick-up by calling (209) 320-2310.



IN THE COMMUNITY



Stewardship Dinner

On February 7 the Gospel Center Rescue Mission provided a stewardship dinner for the Ripon, Manteca, and Escalon communities. The dinner was held at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Ripon. Chief Operations Officer Britton Kimball and New Hope Family Shelter Director Carrie Williams shared their testimonies. CEO Wayne Richardson gave a Mission update, and County Leader of Homeless Initiatives Adam Cheshire gave the keynote speech.

The Gospel Center Rescue Mission was founded by people from Ripon, who still promote and support it today. The event was meant to thank the generous people in these communities for their support since the Mission's inception. They have provided us with so much of their finances, time, and prayer, and we will continue to honor them through these events.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

We are extremely grateful for Zeiter Eye Medical Group and the Zeiter family for their leadership pledge towards the renovation of the former Alustiza Hotel and Restaurant. Upon completion, this will create another 118 women's New Life



Program (NLP) beds. When combined with our current women's NLP, we will have a total of 170 beds. Zeiter Eye Medical Group and the Zeiter family hope that their pledge can inspire others to donate. We now need an estimated \$400,000 to complete the fundraising for this critical comprehensive homeless program.

The New Life Program consists of two residential 6-month phases with a 1-year transitional housing phase. NLP manages addiction to recovery providing spiritual, emotional, and physical health classes, work therapy, positive community activities, job acquisition or vocational training, GED or basic literacy, and transitional housing towards permanent

housing. Women reside with their children and families are reunited on our campus. We also include a foster dog program for those entering with dogs. The resurrection of the former Alustiza Building will ignite hope in our city!

Zeiter Eye Medical Group has served the eye care needs of Central Valley residents since 1962. Zeiter Eye has become one of the largest groups of eye care providers in Northern California with seven locations. In addition to its commitment to patient eye care, Zeiter Eye Medical Group believes in giving back to the community. This includes philanthropic contributions to the local arts and music organizations, homeless shelters, schools, and nonprofits that support women and children.

Thank you Zeiter Eye Medical Group and Zeiter family!

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

over 75 years of restoring lives

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It's Easter Season! Hallelujah! Christ the Lord has risen!

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Carrie noticed the signs that her husband had been cheating on her. Carrie began drinking heavily and her marriage began falling apart. Her marriage ended and she was left to provide for herself. Without a consistent source of income, she lost her home and her children went to live with her now ex-husband.

During this time Carrie became homeless and bounced between her mom's house and her sister's house. She couldn't handle the constant dysfunction in both places. She decided to live in her car and fell deeper into her addiction.

Carrie vividly remembers one day taking her kids to school and then buying alcohol and drinking in her car – knowing that she would have to pick up her kids after school. When she went to get her kids, she was incoherent. "My kids asked what was wrong with me. My son pushed me into the passenger seat because I couldn't even speak," she recalls. Carrie's kids ended up driving home without her while her best friend picked her up.

Carrie's friends took her to a 6-month rehab program, which was followed by after care at Haven of Peace. She reluctantly realized that recovery takes more than six months. "My mindset was, 'I need to get a job, have my own place, and take care of my kids' – not thinking of the whole recovery process."

Carrie took the bus, whose route passed right by the Gospel Center Rescue Mission, to go to recovery meetings. Her counselors encouraged her to start a program at the Mission, and she finally decided to go. She first entered GCRM as an Emergency Lodge guest in December 2012. This only consisted of overnight stays and meals – no program.

After talking with people at the Mission, Carrie decided to get into a program there. She started in March 2013. "To me, it was easy. I was excited about my recovery. I was excited about gaining skills before going out on my own again," she said.

During the first phase of the New Life Program, Carrie volunteered in the Contact Office. She was also asked to take on some shifts as a housewoman. After graduating in September 2013, she was offered a Case Management position, which she gladly accepted and held for three and a half years. Her job performance and enthusiasm for the work she was doing led her to become the New Hope Family Shelter Director a year and a half ago.

"I truly believe I went on that path for a reason and it brought me here. Every day I'd come by the Mission on the bus, I'd look at this place from the outside and think, 'I'm not going in there.' But you don't know until you're inside the gates what a truly amazing place this is and how many people we help, including myself."

Though Carrie grew up believing in God, it wasn't until she came to the Mission that her faith grew strong. She has become comfortable sharing her testimony at churches and continues to help in case management.

Carrie desires to go back to school in the future and feels there are several fields she could study, from business to finance to addiction counseling. For now, she encourages her students to find their worth and realize there are endless possibilities for them, just as she believes there are for herself.