



Bobby Smith, Food Service Director; Alicia Whitfield and Tianna Morgan, Lead Shift Cooks; Emerick Flores, Food Services Assistant Director

Five Loaves, Two Fishes

On Wednesday, August 25th, our community gathered to celebrate an exciting grand opening and ribbon cutting of our beautiful new kitchen and dining room. San Joaquin County Supervisors Tom Patti and Miguel Villapudua, Stockton Mayor Kevin Lincoln, GCRM Board Members and other local dignitaries spoke during the ceremony. Looking up to heaven, we gave thanks! Our very own Food Services Director, Bobby Smith (2011 New Life Program Graduate) and his staff prepared a delicious meal in our beautiful kitchen. This fine meal was served in our dining room as guests gathered around the tables, enjoying their lunch, and each other's company. Now, on a daily basis, we open the doors of our dining room for our staff, students, and the homeless and hungry in our community.

The situation we were in prior to the renovation of the kitchen and dining room reminds one of the familiar Biblical story of the five loaves and two fishes.

As evening approached, the disciples came to Him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fishes," they answered. "Bring them here to me," He said. And He directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and two fishes, and



A Six Year Journey

As we celebrate the expansion of hot meal production in our new kitchen (500 to 1,500+ hot meals/day) and increased dining room seating (40 to 180), I am sharing with you the historical perspective of these two projects.

KITCHEN
Hot meals per day
From 500 to 1,500+

DINING ROOM
Seating From
40 to 180

In late 2016, we began planning for the expansion from 211 homeless program beds on campus to the goal of over 500 beds within the next ten years. Simply put, the homeless crisis our County faces demands action from

nonprofits like us to expand service capacity. Since then, we have added: 15 Recuperative Care (RC) beds in 2017; 12 RC beds in 2020; and 118 New Life Program (NLP) beds in late 2020, for a total of 356. Up to 178 multi-purpose NLP, RC, Overnight Low Barrier Shelter, and Disaster and Pandemic Relief beds are projected to be added in 2024 by means of a large three-story dormitory on campus.

To support this 500+ bed goal, our kitchen and dining room had to be addressed. My predecessor, Bill Brown, started this work to bring the kitchen and chapel (the chapel would become our future dining room) up to code requirement by adding fire detection and suppression to these two areas. Some of you might remember pledging or purchasing a sprinkler head at the *2016 GCRM Gala* held at the Stockton Golf & Country Club.



Gala Sprinkler Head Pledge

Then in September 2017 a *Love Stockton Project* installed the flooring for the future dining room. In 2019 as part of the kitchen and dining room expansion, an anonymous donor funded the purchase of enhanced kitchen equipment and our refrigerated box truck. In 2020 San Joaquin County approved 50%, and the City of Stockton approved 25% of the kitchen's renovation costs. Your donations funded the 25% balance. Similarly, the dining room was funded with 50% San Joaquin County funds, and the additional 50% funded with your giving through *The Vision* newsletter. The renovation took place in 2021.



Love Stockton floor installation

These two projects were in the works from 2016 – 2021! And when you see the kitchen and dining room, you will know they were worth the wait! Projects like these take long range planning, patience, and trust in the Lord that He will provide everything to see them through – from beginning to end. With respect to long range planning I am reminded of Luke 14:28 which states,

For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—

Wayne G. Richardson

GCRM HAPPENINGS

Our students were invited by Carol Caminata to the Circle of Love monthly luncheon held at the First Baptist Church. It is such a blessing to our New Life Students to attend and participate in faith-based events with fellow Christians.





Stockton Mayor Kevin Lincoln addresses the crowd



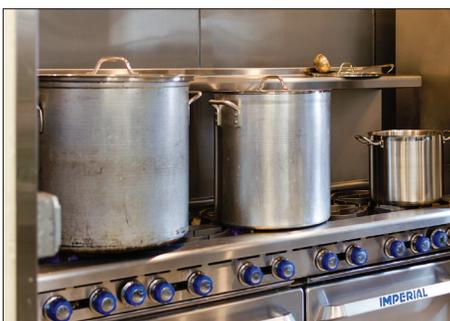
Wayne Richardson (c) receives proclamations from Mayor Lincoln (l) and Supervisor Patti (r)



Dining Room Ribbon Cutting



Staff, students, community leaders, donors and friends of the Mission line up for the Kitchen Ribbon Cutting



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looking up to heaven, He gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then Jesus gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, women and children.

This story of the compassion of Jesus, how He uses other people, including a small boy with only five loaves and two fishes, shows us that Jesus is big enough for any expectation or need that we have!

Let's take this story of compassion and place it at the Gospel Center Rescue Mission. We too, are in a remote place, where on a daily basis crowds gather waiting to be fed. We are also limited – like the five loaves and two fishes - as we have a small, simple kitchen that can only prepare 500 hot meals a day. Yet, there are so many more people, Lord. So many waiting to come in, ready to change their lives and be fed to thirst no

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GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

restoring lives since 1940

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

“Give us today our daily bread.” Matthew 6:11

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more. Not just with food to feed their bodies, but food to feed their souls.

We looked up to heaven! And with God’s continued grace and blessings, the planning and construction of the Gospel Center Rescue Mission kitchen and dining room began. Just as Jesus used a young child with five loaves and two fishes, God used others to help us: San Joaquin County; The City of Stockton; individuals; church; and corporate supporters. The transformation began with fresh paint, new floors and beautiful stainless-steel ovens, stoves and essential kitchen equipment. As we continue to expand from 356 homeless serving beds, to more than 500 in the next few years, this kitchen and dining area are vital. The dining room expands our seating capacity from 40 to more than 200, and our meal capacity increased from 500 to now more than 1,500 meals per day!

We heard Jesus say, “bring them to me”. We did, and through Him, we now feed the multitudes.



Our new kitchen can roast a lot of turkeys!

Please consider a financial gift to purchase turkeys, or bring a frozen turkey to the GCRM Campus. For information contact: Andrea @ (209) 320-2310.

