

Tell us about your experience in the New Life Program?

“This program changed my life. I mean, I really have a whole new life. I have a happiness and joy that I haven’t had for 40 years. The daily devotions were huge for me and the anger management classes. I was addicted to anger, rage. Co-dependency was major thing for me. And boundaries. I never knew boundaries until this program. The program brought everything to the surface. I couldn’t hide from it all anymore. I also got baptized in the program. I love going to church. I love all the ladies in my program. They’ve seen me at my lowest and my highest. The women that you meet here become your life. They’re my sisters, they really are.”

What does “new life” feel like?

“It’s an overwhelming feeling of joy and peace. I don’t fear being hurt. I can feel every emotion that I wasn’t ever allowed to. I was a very toxic relationship and so I couldn’t have emotion. Don’t be angry, don’t cry or I’d get beat up. Now I can do all that and not be afraid. It’s powerful. Also, I’d really never loved before. I never knew the depths of love. With God in it, it’s a totally different experience. I can pray for my enemies and mean it. I pray for good for them. I’ve seen people that I’d see in my addiction and they’re proud of me, too. That means a lot. I just hope my story can change one person’s life or get one person to think they can do better. Because you can. It’s brutal work, but you can do it.”

So, tell us, where are you at now?

“Well, I graduated from the program at the end of July. I’m working for Valeo as a shelter aid. I also volunteer with Search & Rescue. When I first volunteered, Mario, who runs the Search & Rescue program, remembered me. He remembered the day that he saw me and who I was back then. He was just like, “I can’t believe that was you.” And I’m like, yep that was me. We went out to all my old places in Fife and served my old people. That Search & rescue van saved my life. If I never saw that van, I’d be dead right now. Now, I’m the one in the van helping save lives. I want to help people.”

Scan to read Heather's full, uncut interview



Top Donation Needs for fall and winter

Clothes

- Women’s & men’s underwear
- Long underwear
- Socks
- Coats
- Rain Jackets
- Disposable ponchos

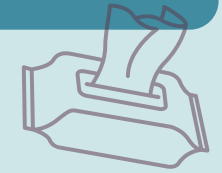


Essential Supplies

- Blankets
- Sleeping bags
- Tarps
- Hand warmers

Hygiene

- Deodorant
- Wet wipes
- Hand sanitizer



We all know how Tacoma gets in the fall and winter: wet, gray, and cold. To help ensure that our unhoused neighbors are safe and cared for, we need your help.

Items go fast when the weather turns, so we are asking for community members to donate our top needed items for fall and winter right now.

How to Donate:

You can drop-off donations at our Donation Center: 504 S 30th St., Tacoma, WA 98402

We are open to accept donations: Monday - Saturday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Duke Paulson serves as our Executive Director. Learn more about our board members and leadership at trm.org/leadership.

MISSION MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Tacoma Rescue Mission

A Conversation with Heather Cook



Come to the Table Our Return to Sit-Down Meals

Top donation needs for fall and winter

A Conversation with *Heather Cook*



Heather - a graduate of our New Life Recovery Program - sat down with us to share about her life and how it was completely transformed...

Heather, tell us what your life was like growing up.

“My family is all addicts. And when I say my family’s all addicts, I’m talking grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters, mother, father. So, I knew about addiction. That’s all I knew. Drugs were everyday life. **It’s crazy to look back and see how God protected me the whole time.** Because I gave up on him when I was about five or six. It was all addiction in my house. And I was like, ‘Why in my house? Why my family?’ Now I’ve graduated from this recovery program and am living a totally changed life. I can’t believe it.”

And how did you first get connected with the Mission?

“I was in Fife - homeless and in my addiction. My worst addiction - to meth - started in early 2000. I found out I had cervical cancer. I was married and already having a hard time getting pregnant. I love kids with all my heart, always wanted kids. But, because of the cancer, I had to get a hysterectomy. I used that as an excuse to get high. Like, if I can’t have kids, why do I need to be sober? Seven years later, my stepdad passed away and I used that as another excuse to get high. And I stayed high. I woke up homeless, in my car. **I was always angry whenever I’d wake up, too. I would be mad at God for waking me up. I didn’t want to live.** It was easier to blame God, than take responsibility.

I came across your Search & Rescue van in Fife and recognized one of the volunteers. It was my old friend from years before. He had actually just graduated from the Mission’s recovery program. He told me to get my ass in the program. I know God was working through him that night. I went back to my hotel room right after, got high for the last time, went on the website and applied, and then went straight into the recovery program.”



Interview continues . . .

Come to the Table

When the pandemic hit our community back in 2020, we had to make some changes to ensure our doors stayed open for our neighbors who needed our services and care. One of the bigger changes was turning our dining hall into additional shelter space and shifting from sit-down meals to to-go containers.

In July, we were able to reclaim our dining hall as an invaluable space to gather with guests, staff, and volunteers alike over a meal for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Sign up to volunteer in our Downtown Campus kitchen at trm.org/volunteer.

Prep meals. Serve meals. Enjoy a meal with your neighbors!

Our Return to Sit-Down Meals

What are the Benefits?



Building community and fostering healing relationships around the table.



Saving costs and being more eco-friendly by eliminating to-go containers and utensils.



Opening doors to other life-changing programs, services, and opportunities when someone comes in for a meal.

