

# CONNECT



“No kid wants to grow up in a gang. But it’s the only option they are given — they must join to survive.”

## FROM **GANGBANGER** TO A **PRAYING MAN**

**Rogers was still a boy when he was recruited** into the gang that controlled his Los Angeles-area neighborhood. On the street he was taught that respect equals fear. His role models were men who died young and violently.

“The men in the gang were the ones who spent time with the youth,” Rogers recalls. “They would do things for the children to earn trust. Becoming part of the gang was the only future we believed we had.”

By the time he was an adult, Rogers was a leader in the gang, but what he really wanted was to find a way out. He fled to Kansas City hoping to start a new life ... but the old life caught up to him.

Rogers was involved in a fight with gang members in Kansas City that should have cost him his life, but miraculously he was uninjured. Realizing he desperately needed help, Rogers came to Kansas City Rescue Mission and joined the recovery program at the Men’s Center.

From that point, everything began to change for Rogers.

“I was curious to find out if God was real,” he says. “What changed me at KCRM was I learned how to pray and how to trust God. I went from being a gangbanger to a praying man.”

“KCRM not only saved my life, they changed it. They introduced me to Jesus. He introduced me to His Father. I came a gangbanger and a dope seller, but I left a child of God and a new man.”

Rogers graduated from the recovery program and moved to Louisiana, where many of his family live. Today he is actively involved in his church and community, serving in a prison ministry and helping youth in his community. And just recently, he got married!

“God has been good to me!” Rogers declares. “I never would have known Him if I hadn’t come to the Mission.”

*Rogers gives his testimony at his graduation from the Christian Community of Recovery, KCRM’s recovery program for men.*



# Mercy in the Moment

— Rev. Joe Colaizzi



*Pictured, Joe and Michael in the day room.*

## Maybe it doesn't seem like a big thing.

In fact, Michael doesn't even remember it himself, but here's what a KCRM staffer told me she witnessed ...

A gentleman came in off the street and asked Michael, who manages our front desk, for some very specific assistance. Unfortunately, his request was something we were unable to help with, but that didn't stop Michael from reaching out.

Michael could tell the man was exhausted and at his wit's end. He apologized for being unable to assist with the man's request then invited him to stay for a bit in the day room. "Why don't you lie down and just rest," Michael offered. And, gratefully, he did.

There's no grand finale to this story that I know of. After a bit, the man went on his way. Like I said, it doesn't seem like a big thing.

It's frustrating, of course, when we can't meet every need or help solve every problem. Many times I've heard a staff member or volunteer say, "I just wish we could do more."

But I'm proud of Michael because when he couldn't do *everything*, he still did *something*. **He demonstrated mercy in the moment.**

That's the three-way partnership that KCRM is built on. We do what we can, we ask you to do what you can, and together, we watch God do miracles with what we bring. That's exciting work, if you ask me, and I'm glad we're doing it together!

Overheard...

**In an email to Volunteer Coordinator Kyle Kumer from a youth pastor following her youth group's participation in a KCRM G2:10 Immersion:**

"I wanted to send you a HUGE thank you from Westside Family Church for your leadership last week. Almost every student said the favorite part of the week was being at KCRM. Our goal was to [learn] what the church is and how it should function. I can safely say KCRM functions as a healthy organization that portrays what the church is supposed to look like."

**In a Facebook post on KCRM's page:** "I went to deliver clothes today and my heart breaks for the men [at KCRM]. But they were so polite and gracious, thanking me as they helped unload my car. They act as if they don't have a care in the world. I wish I could do more and I'm grateful for all you do. But for the grace of God, there go I."

**On a volunteer application filled out by a former KCRM client:** "KCRM helped me for five nights 15 years ago when I was going through a very difficult personal trial. God's grace got me through."

**Learn more** about partnering with KCRM at [kcrm.org](http://kcrm.org). Click "Join with K"

**Board member Don Martineau began volunteering** for KCRM in 2001. At the time, he signed on to pick up donations at a local food distributor each Monday morning. Then, he says, "We expanded to bringing the food we couldn't use to other organizations. We can truthfully say we spend the day making sure 100 percent of these donations are used to help the needy."

Recently, Don (pictured with his wife, Sue) began receiving "incident reports" that alert KCRM's staff to episodes of verbal or physical violence, 911 emergencies or activities in the neighborhood that may affect the clients. "After 13 years, these incidents were a revelation to me!" Don admits. "I now see another dimension of the homeless and the staff I didn't see before. I'm even more thankful we open our doors to meet the emotional, health and other essential needs of these men and women and that we tell them about the saving grace of Jesus Christ."

**NOTE:** To get regular updates on KCRM's ministry, search "Kansas City Rescue Mission" on Facebook and "like" us!

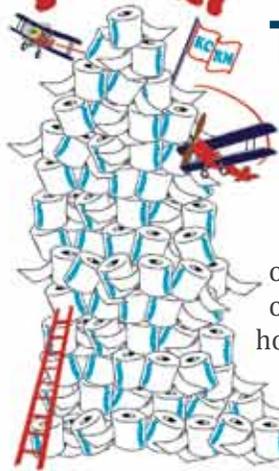


# SO MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!



Contact Volunteer Coordinator  
Kristen Ray for information  
at (816) 421-7643 or  
[kray@kcrm.org](mailto:kray@kcrm.org).

## TP TOWER



### TP Tower Challenge!

September 1 — October 3, 2014

How high will you go to win KCRM's *TP Tower Challenge*?

Each year, KCRM uses around **12,500** rolls of toilet paper! As you can imagine, it's one of our most essential needs. Providing it to our homeless guests helps preserve their dignity and promote hygiene.

The cost of 12,500 rolls of toilet paper is around **\$6,000**. But what if we could save that money and use it to provide **3,000 plates of nutritious food** for the homeless instead? **With your help, we can!**

Join KCRM's *TP Tower Challenge* and coordinate a TP drive in your church, business or organization. Collect toilet paper throughout September then join KCRM October 3 for the *TP Tower Rally* where the group collecting the most toilet paper will be awarded the first annual **TP Trophy!** Yes, really!

We'll create a special *TP Tower Challenge* page on our website so you can find out who you are up against and post your progress. Contact Kristen to let us know you are on board!

## Works in Progress Art Show

Friday, October 3, 2014, 6-9 p.m. Did you know KCRM is a part of the Crossroads Art District? Join us for an evening of family-friendly fun including:



- Variety of arts and crafts from local artists and KCRM residents
- Performances by four local worship bands
- *TP Tower Challenge* rally and award presentation
- Opportunity to paint a portion of our 50-foot-long "paint by numbers" wall mural
- Burger, chips, dessert and a drink for \$6

CRM" to find the right fit for you!

- ★ **Free admission!**
- ★ **Safe, easy parking!**
- ★ **Alcohol- and smoke-free!**

"We make a *living* by what we get. We make a *life* by what we give."  
— Winston Churchill

## Nine-day Celebration of Thanks

During the two weeks surrounding Thanksgiving, KCRM will host nine special dinners for our homeless guests. The weekend before Thanksgiving, we'll distribute food boxes containing all the ingredients for a traditional turkey dinner and more. Then on Thanksgiving Day, volunteers will deliver 500 single-serving meals to the elderly, the isolated and to low-income families.

Help make these events a success by coordinating food drives in September and October. Call for a list of items to collect.  
**Thanks for giving!**

### Immediate needs:

- Volunteer groups to provide lunch or dinner at KCRM Women's Center.
- New underwear for men and women, all sizes to 3X
- New socks for men and women
- New or used jeans for men, all sizes





## Women for Restoration 2014

June 11, 2014, 140 guests braved a drenching rain to attend *Women for Restoration: Women who can for women who can't!* The event, held at The Promise in the Crossroads Art District, brought together individuals who wanted to learn more about the KCRM Women's Center, hear the stories of its residents and give toward their needs. By the end of the event, KCRM had raised \$92,000 — just \$8,000 under its lofty goal of \$100,000!

To learn more about *Women for Restoration* or to serve on the event committee for June 2015, contact Julie Larocco, 816-421-7643 or [jlarocco@kcrm.org](mailto:jlarocco@kcrm.org).

**PLEASE NOTE:** You can help us reach this important goal (which represents about 20 percent of the annual costs of operating the Women's Center) by giving online at [kcrm.org](http://kcrm.org). Just note your donation on the "My Women for Restoration gift" line.

WFR 2014 photos, from top: • **Chasing Grace** inspires with grace-filled music. • **Forrest and Jo Cunningham** receive the *Galatians 2:10 Service Award* on behalf of **Christ Church Anglican** from Joe Colaizzi. • **Kelly** shares her testimony with Julie Larocco.

## Catching Up with Kelly

At last month's *Women for Restoration* event KCRM debuted a video offering a look inside the KCRM Women's Center. In the video we met Kelly who, at the time of filming, had been living at the Women's Center for only three weeks. Recently we asked her how she has changed since the filming.

*As much as my life had already changed when we did the video, it's even a one-eighty since then! I felt so vulnerable when I first came to the Women's Center, but I immediately knew I was safe there. So I just became a sponge to learn and grow as much as I could.*

*Everything I had been taught and believed in my life wasn't working and wasn't the truth. Now I've learned that God is on my side and He's not against me, and that has allowed me to be free and to surrender.*

*I'd spent my life in hiding and running, emotionally and by drinking. But now I face my troubles head on, arms wide open, because I know God is with me and His word is in me. I don't get thirsty for alcohol anymore; I'm thirsty for more of God!*

To see Kelly's testimony and an inside look at the KCRM Women's Center, visit [kcrm.org](http://kcrm.org), click the "Watch Videos" tab at the bottom of the home page, then click "Inside the KCRM Women's Center."

The **CONNECT** newsletter is a publication of **KCRM**

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