

CONNECT

MEETING HOPE HEAD ON



“I’VE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID OF DOGS,” Trena admits with a smile. She smiles because she’s brushing a tiny bit of dog hair off her scrubs as she speaks.

Trena was bitten by a dog as a young girl, resulting in a lifetime of fear. Yet five days a week she takes the bus to the dog grooming school from which she’ll graduate this fall. “The school has even asked me if I’d think about coming back as an *instructor!*” she says.

She has faced her fear with courage and joy because she’s grateful for the opportunity to receive this valuable training, and full of hope for the new season of life it signals. This attitude has been Trena’s hallmark since she first came to the KCRM Women’s Center 15 months ago. “I came to the Women’s Center after I was released from prison,” she recalls. “I didn’t want to go back to my old life of drugs, and I believed this was the place that could help me.

“But it was hard at first; I couldn’t leave the Women’s Center for the first 90 days except for church on Sundays, and sometimes it felt like being locked up again. It was difficult for me to trust people. But I wanted to straighten up and become somebody, so I didn’t complain, and I did the program.”

Desperate for a new life, Trena has met every challenge head on.

“I got clean in prison, but I never knew I’d be able to leave drugs alone outside of there. But I have! At KCRM, my faith has grown stronger. I used to think I wasn’t special enough to be clean and have a good life, but *look at me!*” she exclaims. “I have clean friends, I’m in my Bible every day, I’m getting my GED, and I’m almost ready to graduate dog grooming school! People tell me here I am a leader. I have found out I *am* somebody!”

Just as she has faced her challenges, Trena is now meeting hope head on as well! “I finally believe I’m worthy. I don’t even think of my past anymore; I don’t sabotage myself anymore. When I accomplish a goal I immediately start looking for the next thing I can achieve! The structure and program at the Women’s Center has helped me get out of my old box and find new ways of doing things. They’ve taught me how to set boundaries, how to save money, and how to study and learn. They’ve prepared me to move ahead.

“I’d like to have a place of my own when I leave here,” says Trena, tearing up as she imagines it. “I haven’t had that for so long. I know I must stay connected with my church and surround myself with people who can help me. I’m just excited for the next level! I don’t know what it’s going to bring, but surely it’s going to be good.”

INSIDE:



COME TOGETHER

by Rev. Joe Colaizzi, executive director

HAVE WE EVER NEEDED THANKSGIVING MORE? Have we ever needed more desperately to turn off the TV, get off Facebook, to hug a neck and share a meal?

Sometimes it feels like the world has become a million radios each tuned to a different station, all turned up full blast. It's noisy, it's angry, it's confusing. But thank God for Thanksgiving.

Because at Thanksgiving ... we laugh at old jokes, we look at old photos, we eat pie (PIE!), we pause and breathe a little deeper, we close our eyes and say "Thank You" then we look at each other and say "I love you." **At Thanksgiving we come together.**

At the KCRM Men's Center we love Thanksgiving so much we do it for nine days in a row! Beginning the Saturday night before Thanksgiving to the Sunday evening after, our food service staff and volunteers will serve up turkey one night, ribs another night, lasagna another night, pulled pork yet another — with all the trimmings. The men will line up early each night and the dining room will seem to have just a little more laughter and a lot more requests for seconds.

Why do we and our amazing volunteers do this? I'll let you in on the reasoning: we love the people we serve and we recognize that God's love for them is infinitely greater.

And as much as we all need the safe harbor of Thanksgiving, the poor and homeless need it all the more. They need food ... but not JUST food: they need meals prepared and served with excellence in a clean and welcoming environment. They need shelter ... but not JUST shelter: they need a hot shower, clean sheets and a warm bed, with the knowledge they can shut their eyes and sleep soundly without fear of violence or theft.

And they need, in a word, love ... the kind of love that remembers their names, and offers reliable solutions to the challenges we all face. That's why one of our mottos around here says that "KCRM is Food, Sleep ... and Love."

I hope you are able to enjoy a peace-filled, joy-filled and even pie-filled Thanksgiving this year. But before you come together on that day, would you come together with KCRM to help us prepare for our Thanksgiving outreaches to our neighbors in need? Please take a moment to note the needs listed in this newsletter and on the insert and please respond as you are able. Thank you, and Happy Thanksgiving!



GRATITUDE SO REAL YOU CAN TASTE IT!

THIS THANKSGIVING, WE'RE SAYING GO FOR IT. Taste that the Lord is good. Really pile on the goodness. Serve yourself a heaping portion. And then? Share your gratitude with others. After all, your generosity may be the very way God wants to reveal his goodness to our brothers and sisters in need.

Let's go! It's that time of year to share your heart and fill a table.

NINE-DAY CELEBRATION OF THANKS

GRATITUDE, like many of the best things in life, is meant to be savored. For nine days, NOVEMBER 18-26, churches, families and other groups will provide special dinners at the KCRM Men's Center as a part of our **Celebration of Thanks**, including everything from traditional Thanksgiving fare to good old KC barbecue!

OPERATION FAMILY FEAST

NOVEMBER 17 AND 18, KCRM and its volunteers will team up with local churches to assemble and deliver 200 boxes of food to struggling families living in poverty. Each **Family Feast** box contains the ingredients for an abundant Thanksgiving meal with plenty of leftovers.

From your heart of generosity, we'll be able to bring Thanksgiving dinner to the tables of Kansas City's home-bound poor and needy. **On Thanksgiving Day**, our volunteers will deliver 500 piping-hot turkey dinners to those unable to leave their homes — the elderly, disabled, and otherwise isolated individuals. With each meal, we also include handmade cards that share the message of God's love.

WANT TO PARTNER WITH US THIS THANKSGIVING? HERE'S HOW!

Contact Volunteer Coordinator Kristen Ray at (816) 421-7643 or kray@kcrm.org for information about the opportunities below. Call soon — these positions fill very fast!

- Make a cash or food donation to cover any of our Thanksgiving outreaches.
- Adopt-a-Box! Provide one or more of 200 food boxes for **Operation Family Feast**. Fill a box or sponsor one or more boxes for \$51.
- Thanksgiving morning, help deliver meals to hundreds of low-income homes around Kansas City. (Contact Kristen to schedule!)
- Create handmade Thanksgiving cards that will be distributed with each box and meal — a great project for kids! *Contact Kristen for digital card templates.*

KCRM'S THANKSGIVING FOOD LIST Take it with you!

Your donations of the following foods will help fill 200 boxes and provide food for struggling families this Thanksgiving season. Bring items to 1520 Cherry Street, KCMO. Make sure to note your donation is for "Thanksgiving." Thank you!

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 280 Turkeys and/or hams | 250 Large canned yams or sweet potatoes |
| 200 Stove Top-type stuffing mix | 60 Lb. russett potatoes |
| 200 Boxed instant potatoes | 200 1-lb. brown sugar |
| 200 Packaged gravy mix | 250 1-lb. butter or margarine in tubs |
| 250 15-ounce canned corn | 200 Sets picnic salt and pepper |
| 250 15-ounce canned green beans | 100 Packages brown and serve rolls |
| 200 15-ounce canned fruit | 275 Pumpkin pies |
| 200 15-ounce canned cranberry sauce | |



LET'S GET SOCIAL!

Share your KCRM Thanksgiving experience by using the hashtag **#HeartToTableKC**



HOULIHAN'S MADE A DIFFERENCE AT KCRM

KCRM MEN'S CENTER'S 24 Hours in My Shoes

open house was educational, inspiring and delicious thanks to the generosity of Houlihan's at Oak Park Mall! "Thank you for the incredible opportunity to be a part of your event," writes Managing Partner Evan Deegan whose staff provided several Houlihan's favorites for our appetizer bar. "My goal every day is to truly **Make a Difference** in someone's day and impact them positively so they pay it forward. I want to better our company, our brand, myself and my team."

We'd also like to thank KCRM's volunteer Baking Brigade for providing an array of cookies, and volunteer extraordinaire Melanie Watt for coordinating our food. We couldn't – and wouldn't – have done it without you!

GIVE FOOD, SLEEP AND LOVE BEYOND YOUR LIFETIME

with Julie Larocco



QUESTION: I've been giving regularly to KCRM for years, and now I'd like to add a gift to the Mission in my Will, too. How can I do that?

ANSWER: To include KCRM in your estate plan, here's a simple codicil you can use:

I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to Kansas City Rescue Mission, Kansas City, Missouri, [percent or amount] of my estate for its unrestricted use and purpose.

KCRM also welcomes your gifts to our endowment fund, providing financial stability for the Mission's future. To learn more about planned giving opportunities at KCRM or to request our free brochure, contact Chief Development Officer Julie Larocco at (816) 421-7643, ext. 141 or jarocco@kcrm.org.



Michael Williams shows off his service award.

TAKE UP YOUR TOWEL

"THE DIDDLE FAMILY serves a meal at the Men's Center each Thanksgiving season during the nine-day **Celebration of Thanks**," Michael Williams, one of KCRM's award-winning food service staff members, explains.

"Brian, the father, gives a towel and washbasin award each year to the family member who works the hardest, and I loved that idea so much I said I wanted to get one for my family, too. Well guess what! For my nine-year anniversary of working at KCRM, Brian presented me my own!"

Michael grins as he shows it off. He loves it so much he couldn't wait to put it to use, so he started giving his towel and washbasin award each month to a volunteer group going above and beyond to love and serve hungry clients who come to the KCRM Men's Center for an evening meal.

He believes serving others should be the most fun you have, and many nights you can hear Michael and his volunteers chanting, "Ain't no party like a Holy Ghost party 'cause a Holy Ghost party don't stop!" as they prepare, serve and clean.

Michael's right! The party – and opportunities to serve – never stop at KCRM! You can learn more at kcrm.org (click "Join With KCRM"). Michael can't wait to put you to work!



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