

BELIEVER

 **The Mission**
AT KERN COUNTY
do you believe

Restoring lives in your community since 1952... do you believe

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSION AT KERN COUNTY • Fall 2024

Don't miss...

2 Join our Thanksgiving Campaign!

2 Share Your Story

3 "Now, I'm a man of God."

Giving thanks for **YOU**

INSIDE: Niko shares how your support changed his life!



Giving thanks for YOU this fall



A Message from CARLOS BALDOVINOS

Sometimes I wonder, what would become of the struggling neighbors The Mission at Kern County cares for if it wasn't for your compassion and generosity?

I think of people like Niko, whose story you can read on Page 3 – his testimony is a powerful reminder of how God works through the gifts and prayers of friends like you to transform lives, now and for eternity!

I thank God for how YOU are providing hope, help and healing to people who are hurting in our community.

From the essentials of food, warm clothing and safe shelter... to long-term healing and stability through our

recovery program – with you beside us and Christ as our foundation – our ministry can provide all this and even more life-changing services this fall.

As we prepare to serve an estimated 58,750 meals to our hungry neighbors, I pray you'll continue to share your time, talent and gifts with our ministry, knowing God will use your blessings to restore hope in many lives.

Thank you for giving me – and countless guests at The Mission at Kern County – a reason to give thanks this fall!

Carlos Baldovinos
Executive Director

Join Our

2024 THANKSGIVING CAMPAIGN

58,750

Meals Needed this Thanksgiving Season

This Thanksgiving, countless guests will gather at our tables. Many are alone... longing to overcome homelessness and poverty... wishing they could reunite with their families.

For just \$3.03, YOU can provide a meal to nourish their bodies and lift their spirits. Your gift welcomes someone who is hurting to our table and surrounds them with life-changing care:



Safe,
welcoming
shelter



Warm clothing,
coats & shoes



Classes &
job training



God's
unconditional
love

Please help our neighbors in need this holiday season! Send your 2024 Thanksgiving Campaign gift today using the enclosed reply card and envelope OR online at themissionkc.org.

Meet Niko on the next page - he is thankful for your support!

3 Ways to Share Your

You have a story to share. Some of it may be funny, other parts spotlight the ups and downs and all of it has shaped the person you are and the values you hold dear. It's a story your family wants – and needs – to hear. Take advantage of holiday togetherness and share it with your loved ones. We have some prompts to get you started:

Talk about traditions. Do you know why you always serve ambrosia with your holiday meal? Or where did that Christmas tree ornament come from? It's important to talk about those traditions to preserve memories, remember loved ones and bring deeper meaning to these practices.

Interview yourself. We often think of interviewing others to get their stories, but you don't need to wait for someone to talk to you – do it

“NOW, I’M A MAN OF GOD.”

Niko remembers when his happy childhood took a sad turn, just as he entered high school. In the wake of his parents’ divorce, he’d thrown himself into sports, hoping to become a professional athlete. When he was excluded from the baseball team due to budget cuts, Niko was devastated. “My dream of going pro was my identity. Christ wasn’t yet a part of my life, so I felt directionless,” he shares.

Longing to fit in with his peers, Niko was persuaded to try drugs. By the time he was a young adult, he’d fallen into the grips of



addiction. “Drugs wanted all of my attention,” he recalls.

During a particularly tough year, Niko experienced the passing of several close loved ones – four of them in one month. Still struggling with substance abuse as he grieved, Niko spiraled... he lost his car, his job and his housing.

One rainy night, Niko found himself under layers of cardboard as he tried to sleep inside a dumpster enclosure. That was the moment he realized he needed to leave his old life behind. “That’s when I began to say yes to Jesus,” he smiles.

“I became a new creation.”

Niko’s brother led him to the Mission where he felt welcomed without judgment for the first time. Hard work in our men’s program paid off – not only did Niko attain lasting sobriety, but he also developed a profound understanding of God’s love. “I thought I was just a filthy sinner. **Now, I realize God sees me as a son... and even a friend.**”

Over a decade later, Niko continues to serve the Mission and the community as a mentor, counselor and case manager – all fueled by the desire to reach the hearts of men struggling as he once did. Now happily married, Niko thinks of the Mission as extended family.

This fall, Niko gives thanks for YOU and your incredible generosity. Your prayers and support have helped change his life. “The Mission taught me to follow the Lord’s will for my life and I’m so grateful for that wisdom!”



Story This Christmas

yourself! Then share your answers with loved ones.

Impact others. At the heart of your story are the values important to you, as well as the causes close to your heart. Including a gift in your will to The Mission at Kern County is a meaningful way to share that with your family – and impact others beyond your lifetime.

Your faithful support over the years makes you a significant part of **our story**, and we’re so grateful! You and your story embody these words from Mother Teresa: “I alone can’t change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING WITH US?

Join our volunteer orientation/tour to get started! Visit themissionkc.cervistech.com and register for our Volunteer Orientation/Tour or call 📞 (661) 325-0863, ext. 219.

Host a donation drive for our current needs this Holiday Season! To learn more, give us a call at 📞 (661) 325-0863, ext. 219 to speak with our Volunteer Coordinator. We currently need towels, hygiene items, canned foods, blankets and coats.



How can WE pray for you?

Email us at info@themissionkc.org and share your prayer requests – we would love to pray for you!



2024 MISSION CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT

There is still space available. Register today! →



Christmas Care Kits

Help us provide a Christmas gift to someone that attends our Christmas Eve Community Meal! Every year our community comes together and helps provide essential items for our Care Kits that are gifted during our Christmas event. If you would like to be a part of this seasonal tradition, donate a Care Kit to our Donation Center at **816 E. 21st Street Drop Off Center.**

Please label with age and gender.

Care Kits can be gathered in a large Ziplock bag and include the following...



ADULTS

Travel Size Shampoo/
Conditioner
Bodywash
Combs/Hair Brush
Toothbrush/Toothpaste

Tissues
Band-aids
Socks
Lifesavers or Other Candy
Hand Sanitizer

Beanie/Gloves
Other Small Items like
Notepads, Lotions, Nail
Polish or Nail Clippers
Note of Encouragement

CHILDREN (ages 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14)

Small Toys
Shampoo/Conditioner
Bodywash

Coloring Books with
Crayons or Markers
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
School Supplies
Bracelets
Sunglasses
Baseball Cards
Small Puzzles

Books, Holiday Candy and
Other Small Items
Note of Encouragement

