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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 • Holiday 2026

Don't miss...

2 Share the gift of hope!
3 "My biggest fear came true..."
4 Year of Impact

LARRY HAS *hope* THIS *Christmas*, THANKS TO YOU!

SOMETHING EXCITING IS COMING SOON!

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A Message from
CARLOS BALDOVINOS

Building More Than a *Building*

If you've driven by The Mission at Kern County lately, you've probably seen something new: **construction is underway.** After years of praying, planning and believing... seeing the foundation poured was a realization that this project is no longer a dream. It's becoming a reality!

Let me tell you... the excitement on campus is palpable. This project to build a new kitchen, dining room, vocational training center and transitional housing is something we've anticipated for some time. It will give us better capacity to reach more people and help our community in new, major ways.

It's about more than a building. It's about building new beginnings – and we couldn't do it without support from people like you. It truly takes a village... we're so happy you're part of ours!

The reminder of the importance of community is extra special now, as we enter the Christmas season. It's one of my favorite times of the year. It's festive... everyone gets a meal and everyone gets a gift. And because a lot of our guests don't have family, we become their family.

That's why this building project is so important: it will extend The Mission's welcoming arms to ensure no one feels alone. It means more meals, more opportunities and more lives transformed – like Larry, whose story you'll find on the next page. That is certainly something to celebrate.

I hope you'll also join in continuing the celebrations into next year, when The Mission celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2027. There's a lot happening, and I want you to continue to be part of it. More information will be shared soon.

Until then, thank you for being part of The Mission family. May God bless you throughout Christmas and into the New Year.

Carlos Baldovinos,
Executive Director

A Milestone on the Horizon

Next year, The Mission at Kern County celebrates 75 years of serving our community. What began as a simple commitment to help neighbors in need has grown into a ministry that provides meals, shelter, recovery programs and lasting solutions for thousands each year.

As we look ahead to this milestone anniversary, we are excited about all God is doing. In 2027, we will have a brand-new kitchen that serves up to 180 individuals. No longer will our guests be standing out in the elements, lined up waiting for a meal. The impact of this new kitchen goes far beyond meeting an immediate need... it helps us continue our commitment to serve the most vulnerable in Kern County.

Learn more about our impact at themissionkc.org.

Give a meal. Share the gift of *hope!*

For our neighbors experiencing homelessness or hunger, Christmas can feel more lonely than joyful... **but YOU can share the gift of HOPE.** Just $3.03 provides a nourishing Christmas meal – and opens the door to recovery and a fresh start this holiday season.

$3.03 for 1 hot meal → **SHARES HELP & HOPE** → **That leads to new life!**

Please send your Christmas gift today!

"My *biggest fear* came true..."

For much of his life, Larry carried wounds no one could see.

Trauma, violence and instability dominated his childhood. Though his parents worked hard to provide financially, Larry often felt overwhelmed by what was happening behind closed doors.

"My coping mechanism was to check out mentally," he says.

As he got older, alcohol and drugs became a way to numb the pain. But what started as an escape eventually became an addiction that controlled his life and led to feelings of shame and hopelessness.

"I didn't care if I lived or died," he says. "I became homeless and remember sleeping on the ground at this gas station in a sleeping bag. I thought to myself... 'Something is wrong with this picture. What am I doing?'"

That's when Larry came to The Mission at Kern County.

However, while Larry was in our recovery program, tragedy struck. He learned his sister had been murdered, after already losing his other sister and brother to violence. It was his biggest fear... and the kind of pain that would have sent him back to addiction in the past. But this time was different.

> **"I resisted. I had a sense of false pride. I was arrogant. When I stopped resisting, that's when things started to change."**

"Thank God I didn't leave The Mission. I didn't self-sabotage. I grieved in a safe place, and everybody here was supportive."

Today, Larry's life is defined by hope instead of despair. He is preparing for the future and hopes to help others who are facing the same struggles he once faced.

"If God can pull me out of the gutter," he says, "He can do the same for you."

This Christmas, Larry is experiencing God's grace at work in his life. Thank you for sharing the gift of hope with him! "This is not about me," he says. "This is about God and His greatness and what He can do if people let Him."

A Gift That Says, "You Matter"

For many of our community's most vulnerable neighbors, The Mission feels like family during the holidays. Men, women and children turn here for a nourishing meal, safe shelter and the hope they need to keep moving forward.

This holiday season, more than 1,200 people will receive a special holiday meal and a care kit filled with everyday essentials. For many, it will be the only gift they receive. You can be part of their Mission family by providing a care kit that reminds them they are seen, valued and not alone.

Scan the QR code to purchase a care kit today.

YEAR OF IMPACT: Changed Lives

Lives are changing at The Mission at Kern County... because of YOU.

Your generosity helped provide 92,047 bed nights for people in need. But your impact didn't stop with immediate needs. You also helped 142 people find employment and 158 people move into permanent housing – giving them the tools they needed to build stable, independent lives.

Even more exciting, 16 men, 7 women and 9 children completed The Mission's one-year Christian Discipleship Program and are now moving forward with stronger faith, practical life skills and hope for the future.

To learn more about the life-changing work you make possible across Kern County, visit **themissionkc.org/programs**