

CONNECT

"I WOKE UP, WALKED INTO MY KITCHEN AND COUNTED eight large trashbags filled with crushed beer cans," Duke remembers. "I had done all that in one weekend.

Every night, Duke would sit in the dark in his apartment and drink. "No lights, just the TV," he says. That morning, staring at the remains of another wasted weekend, he knew he needed help — and for the first time he could remember, he slid to his knees and prayed, "God, please help me."

The months that followed his prayer were an odyssey of loss: a debilitating knee injury ... a lost job ... an impounded truck ... an eviction from his apartment ... and eventually, homeless.

Desperate and overwhelmed, Duke found himself at Kansas City Rescue Mission, and without realizing it, that single prayer was being answered.

"Ever since I started coming [to KCRM]," he says, "I started smiling. In 47 years, I had never smiled. I've always hated the world and the people in it. But since the day I came here, I started smiling."

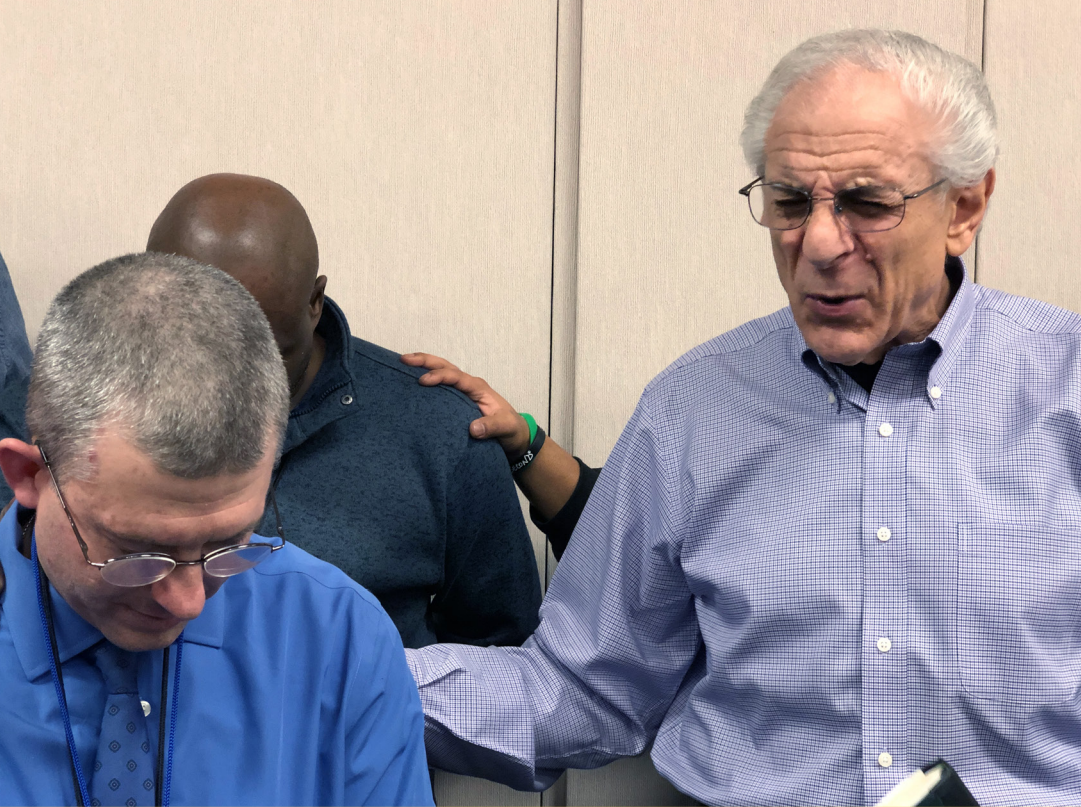
FINALLY, SMILING

At KCRM Duke felt something he'd never felt before, and then did something he'd never dreamed of doing before: he joined KCRM's residential recovery program. "My dad died five years ago, and I miss him dearly," he shares. "My first night on the program, I shut my eyes and saw him smiling at me. I knew I was in the right place.

"I've been here 17 weeks now. I never used to believe the Bible was true but the more I read it and the more I learn here, the more I wake up. I love this place.

"It's hard being homeless. When someone has lost their job and their home, it hurts. One of my assignments here is to do laundry in the mornings. I'm there smiling and happy as the overnight guests wake up for the day. I love to make those guys smile," Duke says. "I know what they're facing out there on the streets, so before their day starts I want to show them joy. After breakfast, they leave smiling, because they're coming back to a place where people really love them."





Joe Colaizzi prays for a KCRM recovery program graduate in January.

WHAT DOES KCRM MEAN TO ME?

— by Rev. Joe Colaizzi, executive director

That's the question we're asking ourselves in this issue of the **CONNECT** newsletter. Since you're reading this, there's a very good chance you've given a gift to Kansas City Rescue Mission recently — of time, or a donated supply, or your hard-earned money. And we think you deserve to know why this place is so important to so many people.

I've been the executive director at KCRM for 34 years, and I could fill a book with answers to this question but on this cold mid-winter day I'll give you just one important reason ...

KCRM is the warm side of the window.

It's the place of safe shelter where the food is hot and filling, where the blankets are warm and clean and no one has to look over his shoulder. It's the place Bill limped into, with nine toes blackened by frostbite, and where Nurse Liz cleaned, cared and prayed for his feet each day until every toe was restored to full health.

It's the place where Sarah escaped the fear and violence of the street and, for the first time, felt safe enough to face the roots of her anger and addiction.

It's the place where people laugh and cry and grow together, the place to be heard and to hear, the place where love replaces fear ... where warmth replaces brutal cold ... and the place where hope replaces shame. **That's what KCRM means to me.**

So, what does KCRM mean to you? If you've never come to take a tour or volunteer, maybe 2019 is the year to take that next step! Connect with us online at **KCRM.ORG** and click "**Connect with KCRM**" to learn more!

WHAT

WE NEVER TAKE FOR GRANT
COMMUNITY. ON THESE P
THEM. WITH YOUR HELP

MICHAEL

MEN'S CENTER RESIDENT

THE MISSION IS WHERE

I've begun to change the way I think. I used meth for 16 years, and I have a lot of regret. But every day since I came to KCRM, I hear God say to me, "My child, I have this."

I've had a complete change of heart since I came to KCRM. I've let go of anger and so many bad emotions, and I've come alive.

I've been to other places where the main goal was to change my behavior, but at KCRM they want to help me discover my identity in Jesus before everything else. I'm not the same person I used to be!



THANK YOU!

FROM OUR CITY'S STREETS, A
YOUR GENEROSITY IS DOING

THE **MISSION** MEANS TO ME

THAT THE FINANCIAL, PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT GIVEN TO KCRM BY A GENEROUS AND CARING
FAMILIES, JOE, MICHAEL, CORDELLIA, LIZ AND TIM EACH SHARE ONE EXAMPLE OF WHAT KCRM MEANS TO
THEY, KCRM CONTINUES EACH DAY TO PROVIDE DIGNITY, HOPE AND HELP TO THE POOR AND HOMELESS.

CORDELLIA

KCRM EDUCATION SERVICES MANAGER

THE MISSION IS WHERE

I can help our Women's Center and Men's Center residents see what they are not used to seeing about themselves.

They often find themselves in a box, and they don't know there is a bright horizon outside of it. My role is to challenge them to face what has limited them and to push past the place where they've always given up before.

I tell them, "You haven't met your real self yet! Your real self is crying out for you to come get her/him. Do you know how brilliant you are, how amazing you are?"

I get to help our residents begin to see their full potential beyond what they've dared to dream before.



LIZ

KCRM HEALTH SERVICES MANAGER

THE MISSION IS WHERE

Sam*, a frequent overnight guest, asked to see me because he had a cold. But that medical visit became an opportunity for this man to share his story of addiction, hurt and shame.

And, as so often happens, God helped me respond to Sam with encouragement and hope. His countenance changed as he was treated with dignity and heard about God's grace and love.

I love what I do at KCRM because I am doing what Jesus did! I asked Sam if I could pray with him, and he was so thankful. God performs miracles every day at KCRM.

**not his real name*



TIM

KCRM BOARD MEMBER

THE MISSION IS WHERE

I am inspired by the resilience and character of people who have hit rock bottom in life.

Recently, four men from the Men's Center recovery program were helping me on a service project and they each began to share their stories. One man told how he hadn't had a place to call home for nine years. After listening to them awhile I noted that it seemed like the common thread of their struggles was addiction to drugs or alcohol. "No," one of the men said, "the common thread is that we all needed Jesus."

Later one looked at me and said, "Thank you for treating us like human beings." It still brings tears to my eyes.



OVER THE LAST YEAR WE PROVIDED **38,000 NIGHTS OF SAFE, WARM, COMFORTING SHELTER**
AND WE SERVED MORE THAN **87,000 FIRST SERVINGS OF HOT, FILLING FAMILY-STYLE MEALS.**
GREAT THINGS!

A NOTE FROM JULIE LAROCCO

Dear KCRM Friends,

In January, I celebrated 10 years as director of development for Kansas City Rescue Mission. During those years I watched with wonder as you stepped up time and again to ensure that KCRM's homeless guests and residents had good food to eat ... clean sheets and safe shelter ... a towel to dry off with and a fresh shirt to wear ... and an opportunity to find freedom and hope again.

I've learned a lot at KCRM, and now it's time for me to take what I've learned and share it with others. In late February, I will begin a new career as a consultant and coach for small rescue missions around the United States. I'll take along a lot of great memories, experiences and a very grateful heart. Thank you for being my encouragers, my friends and my partners in ministry.

— Reaching Up!



Julie with her granddaughter Ada

MEET NICK FRANKLIN, KCRM'S MANAGER OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES

"EACH DAY IS DIFFERENT," says Nicholas Franklin, who oversees KCRM's volunteer scheduling and training. "I love having the opportunity to connect different types of people with KCRM." Since joining KCRM's staff in April 2018, Nick has talked with hundreds of compassionate men and women who want to serve the homeless as volunteers. "It takes so many people with different talents and interests to cover all the bases at KCRM."

Right now, Nick (*pictured right*) is looking for men's groups to help with our emergency shelter Game Night each week. "Our other great need is for volunteer groups who will bring

DID YOU KNOW?

- KCRM receives no government funding.
- KCRM does not sell, share, trade or rent our mailing list and the security of your information is always our priority.
- KCRM has a four-star rating with Charity Navigator.
- 83 cents out of every dollar donated to KCRM goes directly to client care.

and serve balanced lunches and dinners at our Women's Center. The staff and residents there are working on building healthy lifestyles, including the food they eat."

To learn more about volunteering at KCRM, email Nicholas at nfranklin@kcrm.org or visit KCRM.org and click on **"Help KCRM."** We can't wait to meet you!



The **CONNECT** newsletter is
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