

## A Season of Gratitude and Transformation

Thanksgiving is just around the corner—and at Hope Gospel Mission, it's more than a meal. It's the beginning of transformation.

Soon, our residents and community members will gather around the table for our annual Thanksgiving Day Community Dinner. They'll enjoy turkey with all the trimmings, plus warm conversation and a sense of belonging—perhaps for the first time in a long time.

Behind every plate we serve is a story of hope taking root. That's why we're already preparing—stocking the pantry, lining up volunteers, and making sure there's enough food and care to go around. Because for many, this meal is the first step toward a fresh start.

When someone receives a meal, given with compassion, it opens a conversation about the resources and guidance available at Hope Gospel Mission. Many come to eat, and choose to stay to begin the path to a new life. For our residents living here, a meal is a comforting reminder that they are on the right path, encouraging them to keep up the good work.

Thank you for the kindness you show all year long. Your faithful support helps our residents rebuild their lives—one meal, one prayer and one day at a time. God bless you!

### Thanksgiving Day Community Dinner Thursday, November 27

Hope Renewal Center for Men,  
2650 Mercantile Drive, Eau Claire

Everyone is welcome to dine in or drive through.



Your words of encouragement  
are a blessing to many  
at Thanksgiving.



## A New Chapter for the Community Haven House

### Hope Is Under Construction

Big changes are underway for the Community Haven House—and they're happening exactly where they're needed most. Renovations began in July on a new facility, set to open this December, that will allow us to serve more people with greater dignity and care.

Once complete, the renovated Community Haven House – Day Resource Center will become a life-changing space for our neighbors experiencing homelessness—a place designed to bring essential daytime services together under one roof.

### Meeting Urgent Needs, Building Community

Even in its current aging facility, the Community Haven House remains a vital refuge for neighbors experiencing homelessness. Each day, an average of 60-80 guests come through its doors—seeking shelter from the elements, a place to rest and a sense of safety and dignity.

“This space is essential,” says Lisa Leazott, manager of Community Haven House. “For people who are often pushed to the margins, just having a place where they're welcomed and cared for can be life-changing.”

While capacity is limited, the existing center continues to offer critical support—from hygiene items and restrooms to a safe place to receive mail, often the first step toward securing an ID or housing. Every day brings stories of progress. Recently, four

guests were assisted with college applications—and all were accepted. They began classes on August 25, a milestone made possible through the encouragement and support they found at the Community Haven House.

“There's already a strong sense of community here,” adds Lisa. “People are welcomed, supported, and treated with dignity. With the new space, we'll be able to build on that and reach even more people.”

Local partners are also stepping in. From haircuts to on-site medical services, every contribution helps restore dignity. Since April, over 52 clothing vouchers, 168 hygiene kits, 1,612 meals and 10,523 snacks have been distributed.

And more is coming. The new Day Resource Center, set to open this December, will expand and centralize services—bringing nearly 40 essential supports under one roof and offering even greater hope for the future.

### Thank You

Thanks to your support, the Community Haven House – Day Resource Center offers more than just a place to escape the elements—it offers connection, care and a pathway forward. As we look ahead to the December opening of the new center, we're deeply grateful for your partnership in making this vision a reality.

# the hope

Fall 2025

**t+ Hope**  
GOSPEL MISSION  
LIVES RESCUED. REBUILT. RENEWED.

## Thankful IN EVERY SEASON

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

PO Box 1127, Eau Claire, WI 54702 | 715-552-5566 | [HopeGospelMission.org](http://HopeGospelMission.org)

Inside: A New Life Begins with Hope • Community Haven House



**Sandi Polzin**  
Executive Director

*Give thanks in all  
circumstances,  
for this is  
God's will for you  
in Christ Jesus.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18, ESV

### Thank You!

Hope Gospel Mission extends its gratitude to the following partners:

Andersen Corporate Foundation

Eau Claire Community Foundation

Nordson Corporation Foundation

United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley

Xcel Energy Foundation

## Thankful in All Circumstances

Dear Friend,

Thanksgiving Day comes just once a year, but giving thanks happens every day at Hope Gospel Mission.

When someone in need comes here, they receive a safe place to stay and a good meal. They are welcomed with warmth and given support, and their gratitude is plain to see. As they begin the work toward lasting life transformation, every day is clearly a blessing in their eyes.

That's just as it should be for all of us, every single day. Even in the most trying of times, there is always something, however small, to be thankful for. A wonderful way to show your appreciation is by sharing your blessings with others who are less fortunate — which is exactly what you do when you support Hope Gospel Mission. And everyone here is thankful for you!

That's especially true now, as we've recently taken over operations of the Community Haven House. Though this daytime shelter has served the community for years, this new chapter brings renewed hope — with enhanced services, compassionate care, and a deeper commitment to those who need it most. Each day, we see lives touched by this effort. Thanksgiving may come once a year, but at Hope Gospel Mission, gratitude is a daily experience — shown through every meal, every warm welcome, and every step toward healing.

As you begin your own Thanksgiving plans in the weeks ahead, please remember Hope Gospel Mission. As we are completely community funded, your support and compassion help make the holiday special for the men and women we serve. And as always, keep us in your prayers. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Sandi Polzin  
Executive Director  
Hope Gospel Mission

### A New Life

## Begins with Hope

Kelly's childhood took many twists and turns. Growing up in a home shaped by addiction and family trauma, she faced challenges no child should have to endure. At 16, Kelly was in and out of the foster care system—but eventually found herself living in a car.

For a few months, that car was Kelly's home, allowing her to get a job. With determination and government support through the foster system, Kelly was able to move into an apartment when she became an adult.

Yet another twist in Kelly's life was waiting. Once again, she was surrounded by drug use. She went against her own best judgment, and mistakes were made. Kelly landed up in jail,

and it was there she learned about Hope Gospel Mission. Upon release, Kelly came here in hopes of changing the course of her young life.

"I had a lot of anxiety and anger when I got here. But I knew I needed a stable place and people like the women and staff here who welcomed me right away. They gave me hope."

Now 23, Kelly has spent just over a year at Hope Gospel Mission. She works full-time and is saving money. She attends regular Bible studies and counseling. She has begun to experience true healing—body, mind and spirit. "I've learned how to manage my anger. I've learned to let go of the fear and pain that controlled me."

Most importantly, Kelly gave her life to Jesus. She says, "I know God has always been there for me." One verse in particular has helped heal her: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear..." (1 John 4:18). "I can finally find comfort and safety in God," she says.

Eventually, Kelly wants to secure a place of her own. But for now, she is taking it one day at a time. "I'll go wherever God leads me," she says.

This Thanksgiving, Kelly is grateful for her new life and the support you helped provide. "Words cannot express how thankful I am," she says. "Your money is so well spent here. It does wonders! None of this is possible without you!"

***"Words cannot express  
how thankful I am.  
Your money is so well spent  
here. It does wonders!"***

Gifts given in honor of or in memory of loved ones can be viewed online at [hopegospelmission.org](http://hopegospelmission.org)

## "Now I know God has a plan for me."

Mike spent years trying to escape the pain of his past. He turned to alcohol at a young age—first to numb the trauma of childhood abuse, then to cope with his mother's death from cirrhosis. By the time he was 20, addiction had its grip on him. "I didn't know how to ask for help," he says quietly.

At 23, he began having seizures. Later, he survived a brain tumor—without any lasting physical effects. Still, the cycle of drinking continued. He married for financial security and joined the Army, but was discharged for drinking. His life unraveled further, and eventually he ended up in jail. "No matter what I tried, I couldn't stop drinking."

***"You may not know how  
deeply your gifts impact lives.  
Now I feel wanted—and I  
know God loves me."***

When Mike's father—now sober himself—offered him a place to stay in Eau Claire, it became a turning point. "He brought me to Hope Gospel Mission. That's when everything started to change."

At Hope Gospel Mission, Mike found structure, support and something he didn't expect—faith. "I accepted Jesus as my Savior here," he says. "God put people in my life so I could grow. He placed me in a church, gave me a mentor and continues to guide me."

One verse that keeps Mike grounded is James 1:19: "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." It reminds him daily to listen, pause and walk humbly with God.

Today, Mike is working, saving for a sustainable future and preparing to join Hope Gospel Mission's Discipleship Program. Long-term, he wants to pay off his debts and follow wherever God leads—because after everything he's been through, he says, "Now I know God has a plan for me."

To the donors who made his transformation possible, Mike shares his heartfelt gratitude:

*"You may not know how deeply your gifts impact lives. Now I feel wanted—and I know God loves me. You don't know us, but you still care. I didn't know that kind of compassion existed. I want to be that same example to others."*

**Thank you for helping men like Mike  
rediscover hope, healing and a future.**

