

Stories of HOPE

FALL 2020

SERVING
HOMELESS
IOWANS
SINCE 1915



An Abundance of Blessings

Donnie still remembers what it feels like to go days without food. But today, he's grateful for both spiritual and physical nourishment as he rebuilds his life at Hope Ministries.

INSIDE:

- **A Special Note from Leon**
- **Donnie's Uplifting Story**
- **Feed Your Neighbor Info**

GET CONNECTED



Dear Friend,

As I write this note, we're still months away from Thanksgiving . . . and yet, my heart is filled with gratitude. Though none of us could've foreseen all the unexpected challenges this year would bring, I shouldn't be surprised at the way God—through you and other compassionate ministry partners—has provided for Hope Ministries. After all, He's been doing it for 105 years!

Of course, if the COVID-19 crisis wasn't enough in 2020, many of us were affected by the devastating windstorm in August. I find myself thinking especially of farmers who are facing the loss of crops. As I pray for them during this year's harvest, I also think of the hurting people we serve—of the many life storms they face and our shared efforts to nurture an abundant harvest of changed lives.

The seeds you help us sow—through your prayers, financial gifts and volunteering—include meals for hungry men, women and children; safe, clean shelter for homeless and weary people; and life-changing recovery programs to help those who are hurting discover healing and growth. You'll read about one of those changed lives in Donnie's testimony on page 3.

Thank you for being a part of this meaningful harvest and for helping us give hope . . . today and every day.

Your partner in ministry,

Leon Negen
President/CEO

We truly are experiencing a *Harvest of Blessings* at Hope Ministries this fall—thanks to the compassion and financial support of people like you!



hopeministries
Giving hope. Changing lives.

Our Ministry Centers

Bethel Mission

Door of Faith

Hope Center for
Women and Children

Hope Café

ENCORE Thrift Stores

P.O. Box 862
Des Moines, IA 50304-0862

info@hopeiowa.org
hopeiowa.org
Donate online.



Like us on Facebook.

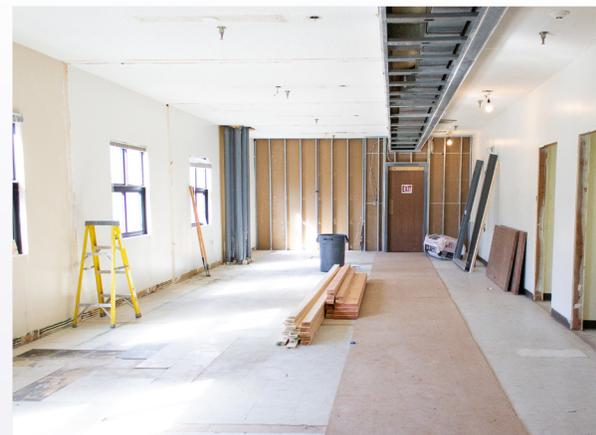


Hopelowa channel

CONSTRUCTION corner

We're looking forward to the day when the renovation at our Bethel Mission men's shelter is complete . . . and we're getting closer! Currently, on our second floor, our expanded dorm and new bathroom and shower facilities are nearly complete. In late summer, work kicked into high gear on the first floor with much-needed updates to our chapel, intake area and Hope Café.

We're very thankful that our staff and current shelter guests have been so flexible and adaptable throughout months of construction. We also want to extend a special thanks to all who helped us raise over \$100,000 with your special gifts to be sure we can serve 250+ more men each year.



This used to be a narrow hallway and is now part of our dorm, which is expanding from 80 to 110 beds.

Two of our big needs right now at our men's shelter include travel-size shampoo (3-ounce bottles) and deodorant. If you can help us out, please deliver donations to our ENCORE Thrift Store at 4640 Merle Hay Road in Urbandale during business hours. Thank you!

FOR DONNIE,

*hope truly began
with a meal*



Donnie knows what hunger—deep, gnawing hunger—feels like. “There are times in the past when I’ve gone two or three or four days without eating. It affects your mind along with your body.”

He knows what homelessness is like, too. “Living in a tent camp is hard and dangerous. There’s the danger of hypothermia in the winter. And there’s always the danger of being robbed, beaten, having your few things stolen.”

Donnie’s struggles stem back many years, beginning with regrettable choices in his teenage years that led to being kicked out of school *and* home at only seventeen.

In some ways, he was able to bounce back in the following years. He got married, started a business, bought a house. “We lived what looked like a good life,” he remembers, “but that whole time we were also caught up in drugs.” His addiction took its toll as the years went by, leading to time in prison and a broken marriage.

Although Donnie had periods of sobriety, things went downhill again two years ago when his mom died and he started spiraling. “I lost my job, lost my apartment, lost everything.” After he was evicted, he lived in a tent camp, and that’s when he began eating at Hope Café.

“The other campers told me about Hope Café,” he says. “We’d get up early in the morning and go eat there at 7 a.m. Then we’d go again at noon. Three times a day, we’d be there. Without those meals, I wouldn’t have eaten. I didn’t have money for food.”

“This program is for broken men with all kinds of struggles and addictions—and it can change your life.” —DONNIE

“At first, you have this pride where you don’t want to reach out for help,” Donnie adds. “But once I started eating there and got to know the staff, I realized they really cared. I felt very, very blessed.”

After eating at Hope Café daily for months, Donnie decided to join our life recovery program. “I knew what the consequences were if I kept living my same lifestyle. I knew if I was going into the recovery program, I had to take it seriously. You get more out of it if you put your heart and soul into it.”

That’s exactly what Donnie’s doing as he dives into program classes, works in the kitchen as part of his job readiness training and meets regularly with his case manager. “My walk with God is a lot stronger now. The Lord is part of my daily life.”

This month, Donnie is celebrating his ninth month of sobriety, and he remains committed to rebuilding his life! “My health is really spectacular now that I’m living a life of sobriety. I wake up in the morning thankful and I go to bed at night thankful. I really appreciate the blessings God has bestowed on me and my brothers here.”

Your financial gifts and compassion have produced a *Harvest of Blessings* in Donnie’s life and so many others—thank you!



FILL A PLATE *with hope*

We're grateful to be partnering with Hy-Vee; Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating & Cooling; and Northern Lights Pizza for our **Feed Your Neighbor** meal campaign.

All through September, stop in at a participating Des Moines area Hy-Vee store and "feed your neighbor" by giving at the cash register. Last year, this program raised enough to provide more than 20,800 meals!

Just \$1.85 will provide a meal and hope to a struggling neighbor!

You can also give online at hopeiowa.org/neighbor.



A LOOK TOWARD THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is a big deal at Hope Ministries! As you may know, last year we served and delivered more than 3,000 meals thanks to the help of around a hundred volunteers.

However, at the time of the writing of this newsletter, we're continuing to evaluate our plans for Thanksgiving this year due to COVID-19. So please watch our website at hopeiowa.org (or your inbox if you're signed up to receive our emails) for future information.

Later this year we'll also have a variety of ways you can help us make Christmas special for our shelter and recovery residents. Visit the website for updates and look for more in your next *Stories of Hope* issue!

With Grateful Hearts

As we draw close to Thanksgiving, please know we're giving thanks for you and all the many ways you help us give comfort, compassion and life-changing opportunities to those in our care. Thanks to your support, in the first half of 2020 we provided:

77,412
hot, filling
meals

30,158
nights of safe
shelter

26,000+
hours of
Christ-centered
guidance



United Way — You Can Write Us In

During your company's United Way fall campaign, you can direct your contributions to Hope Ministries by simply writing "Hope Ministries" as your designated charity. While our ministry is not a United Way member, United Way will honor your designation. Your contribution will provide food, shelter, Christian guidance and long-term life recovery programs for homeless and struggling men, women and children. Thank you for writing us in!