



RESCUE MISSION

2018 Fall

# News

A Publication of Bridgeport Rescue Mission

## With a Heart of Thanksgiving

“I didn’t have a dad,” Chris says. Although he lived with his mother and sisters, **“I was really alone... I had no one to talk to.”** Without his father in his life, he grew up with a sense of abandonment... of rejection. When, at age 10, he was abused by someone he trusted, his sense of isolation grew even more severe. Still a child, he began to numb his pain with alcohol.

As he grew older, he became immersed in the street life – drugs, gangs, unhealthy relationships – whatever it took to ease the void in his heart. By the time he became a man, his destructive behavior dominated his life. He tried different treatment programs, but they never touched the heart of his misery... the wounds he suffered as a child.

**“I recall people telling me, you really, really need to come to Jesus,”** Chris says. Finally, at Bridgeport Rescue Mission, he did.

Chris had gone to church and read the Bible as a boy, but his relationship with the Lord wasn’t solidified until he joined our New Life Program. Through our faith-based counseling and classes, he was healed of hurts he’d been running from for years. **“The only thing that’s been able to do it is God’s truth,”** he explains. **“His love, His discipline, His mercy and His grace.”**

Today, Chris says his time at the Mission saved his life, and his heart is filled with thanksgiving for friends like you who helped provide this life-changing opportunity.

“Now I’m going to do as God says,” Chris shares. **“I’ve got to do something for somebody else. I’ve got to do God’s work.”**



“ This place, this Bridgeport Rescue Mission, is my lifeboat. ”

BridgeportRescueMission.org

# Get Connected ...



Executive Director Terry Wilcox invites individuals, civic groups, congregations and business associates to take part in the 2018 **Great Thanksgiving Project**.



## Bridgeport Rescue Mission

1088 Fairfield Ave.  
Bridgeport, CT 06605  
(203) 333-4087

[BridgeportRescueMission.org](http://BridgeportRescueMission.org)

Rev. Terry Wilcox  
Executive Director

Donna Romano  
Director of Communications

All stories and photos in this newsletter are of students and guests at Bridgeport Rescue Mission.



Fighting Poverty  
from the Inside Out  
and Serving the  
Hurting and Homeless  
of Coastal  
Fairfield County

Dear Friend,

Over the past 25 years, the generosity of friends like you has allowed us to expand and enhance our ministry to provide a greater variety of services to an increasing number of men, women and children. That growth includes our **Great Thanksgiving Project**, the cornerstone of our holiday outreach.

I remember the first season we introduced this program to the community. It was 2008 and the weather was challenging – rain, sleet and snow – and our tents were blowing over. Yet our guests chose to stay. It was a heartbreaking testament to the tremendous need. And it inspired our plans to move the event indoors, which happened three years later, and to increase the number of lives touched through this vital outreach.

That first year, we gave away 161 turkeys and just a handful of coats. Today, with generous hearts and helping hands of so many groups and individuals, our distribution includes more than 3,200 turkeys and fixings bags, 15,000 coats and many other forms of compassion.

The following pages share the many ways to get involved with our 2018 **Great Thanksgiving Project**, and I invite you to take part. I can tell you from experience, it will truly warm your heart.

The Thanksgiving season offers a special opportunity for everyone on our staff – and each man, woman and child in our care – to reflect on the many blessings of your kindness. With a heart of gratitude, I pray you'll continue to share your time, talent, gifts and prayers to uplift our neighbors in need.

In His service,

Rev. Terry Wilcox  
Executive Director



## Give Financially at Thanksgiving

The final quarter of the year is a critical funding time for Bridgeport Rescue Mission. Please prayerfully consider these important opportunities to support our holiday programs and daily services.

- Make a gift today in the enclosed envelope.
- Pledge a meaningful financial gift, payable October through December.
- Designate the Mission as the recipient of your workplace United Way campaign.
- Include the Mission in your will or estate plan.
- Encourage your company – or your church or synagogue – to become a **Great Thanksgiving Project** sponsor.

For more information, contact Kim Fawcett at (203) 333-4087, ext. 113.



Join Our Annual

# Great Thanksgiving Project

## in Bridgeport & South Norwalk



These pages offer important and meaningful ways you or your group can nourish hungry bodies, uplift discouraged spirits and fill empty hearts with gratitude – through our **Great Thanksgiving Project**.

### Join a Distribution Team

Volunteers are needed to pack and hand out turkeys, bags of fixings and coats to bless hungry children, struggling families and lonely senior citizens in Bridgeport and South Norwalk. You'll feel blessed too, knowing you're providing everything they need to enjoy a traditional holiday meal and to stay warm and comfortable during the winter months.

### Be Part of a Prayer Team

Pastors and members of local congregations are invited to partner with our staff to pray with anyone who comes for turkeys and coats.

### Serve with a Corporate Team or Become a Corporate Sponsor

Teams from local businesses and organizations help us meet our tremendous holiday needs while having fun and building company spirit. Team slots fill quickly, so contact us today.

We also need corporate sponsors to underwrite the costs of our **Great Thanksgiving Project**. To learn more about the details and benefits, contact Kim Fawcett at (203) 333-4087, ext. 113.

### Give Financially

Your cash donations are always needed and deeply appreciated, and never more so than during the holidays. An envelope is provided for your convenience. God bless you for your generosity!

***"It makes a difference for the children... to say we have turkey for Thanksgiving."***

***– 2017 Great Thanksgiving Project recipient***

To learn more about these important **Great Thanksgiving Project** activities, contact Patti Law at [PLaw@BridgeportRescueMission.org](mailto:PLaw@BridgeportRescueMission.org) or visit [BridgeportRescueMission.org](http://BridgeportRescueMission.org).



**See more opportunities on Page 4!**

# Our Great Thanksgiving Project

... more opportunities to take part!



**Virtual or actual, we need 3,200 turkeys before Thanksgiving!**

## Team Up for Turkeys

Workplace associates, church and synagogue congregations, family members and groups of all kinds are encouraged to form teams to collect turkeys. Please deliver frozen turkeys to our Donation Center. **Or your turkey team can contribute \$20 to donate a "virtual turkey"** by making a gift online at [BridgeportRescueMission.org](http://BridgeportRescueMission.org) or sending your gift in the envelope provided.



**"I don't really have a job that pays a lot, so it means a lot to me because my kids can eat."**

— 2017 Great Thanksgiving Project recipient

## Hold a Coat Drive

The Mission will give away nearly 15,000 gently used coats, jackets, hats, gloves and other winter wear to disadvantaged adults and children. We need individuals and groups to host drives for these items. Please deliver your contribution to our Donation Center, 1069 Connecticut Avenue, Unit 2-B, Bridgeport, CT, Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Hold a Thanksgiving Food Drive

Encourage your business, church, synagogue or civic group to organize a food drive for the items listed below, which will be used in the thousands of meals and fixings bags we'll provide during the Thanksgiving season. We're grateful for your helping hands and generous hearts!

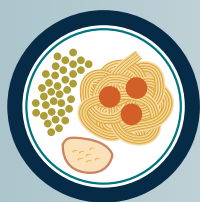
- 12- to 15-pound frozen turkeys
- Canned green beans, corn & peas
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Stuffing mixes (not croutons)
- Gravy mixes

If you're not able to shop for us, your financial donations help too! Please send your "gift for groceries" in the envelope provided.



## This Thanksgiving Season

Your Gifts Will Fill Hearts With Gratitude



14,657

Prepared meals each month



26,911

Pantry Bag meals each month



88,000

Meals through our Great Thanksgiving Project

Please bring your **Great Thanksgiving Project** contributions to our Donation Center, 1069 Connecticut Avenue, Unit 2-B, in Bridgeport, CT, Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more details on all these activities and opportunities, email Patti Law at [PLaw@BridgeportRescueMission.org](mailto:PLaw@BridgeportRescueMission.org).