

# ACHIEVING GOALS AND SETTING NEW ONES

Zach Newton’s story, which you can read in this newsletter, is a lot about goal setting and goal achieving. In this vein, we want to share some goal achieving (that your support and God’s enablement helped make happen) and some goal setting (that we are prayerfully asking God to provide for) of our own.

## 2025 Goal Achievements - Thank you!

**Thank you for helping us meet our December matching gift!** Your support helped so many hungry and hurting neighbors get off our streets and into faith, sobriety, housing, and employment.

Through your support and God’s blessing, 2025 was a successful year for helping people get into housing and obtain employment. Compared to the last three years (2022-2024), **in 2025 the Rescue Mission helped 51% more people get into housing and helped 18% more people find jobs.** We could not achieve these goals without your support!

## 2026 Goal Setting

When compassionately giving freely, we not only provide emergency services to keep people alive, but a hand up, connecting people with the spiritual and physical resources they need for a changed life. Change starts with a meal, a night of shelter, and progresses to our New Life Program.

Help us meet the goal of guiding people off the streets in 2026.

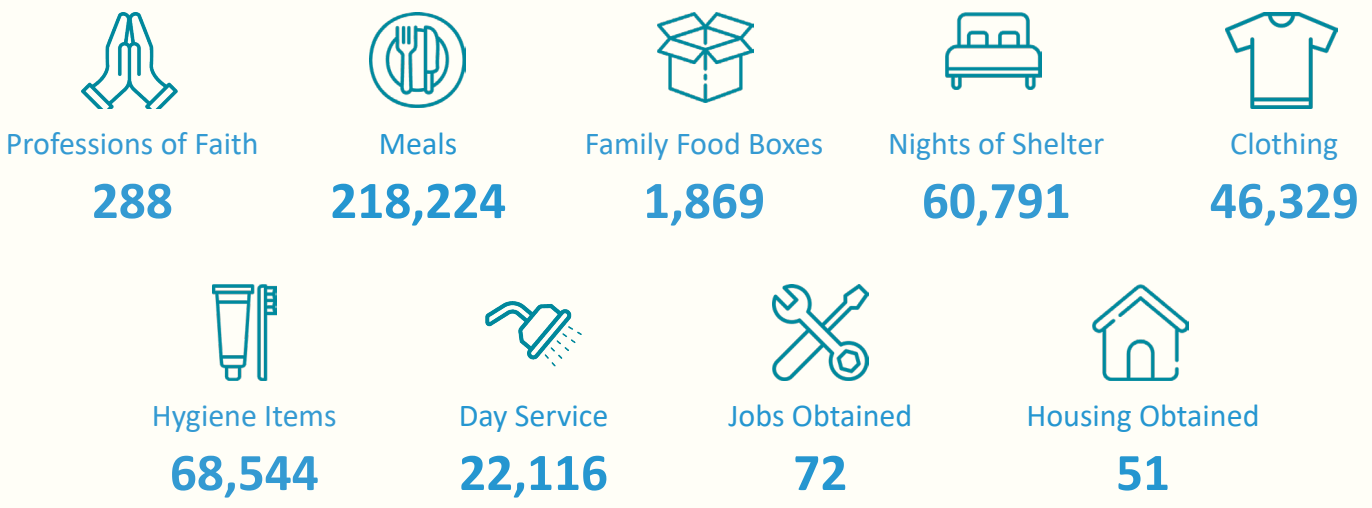
**\$1 provides a meal**

**\$7 provides a night of shelter**

**\$50 sponsors a person on our New Life Program for a day.**

Please give as you are able and help us lift our homeless friends off the streets and into faith, sobriety, employment, and housing.

### HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS: OUR STATS THROUGH NOVEMBER 2025



# RESCUER

JANUARY  
2026

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



Zach Newton (sharing a recent selfie from “the land down under”) was in and out of jail and homeless for 15 years before finding new life, employment, and stable housing through the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake.

*I grew up in Idaho where I was a good student and a better athlete. But after years of homelessness, it took my time at the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake before my life and fitness were restored.*

In high school, I ran track and competed as a sprinter, specializing in the quarter mile and relays. On the outside, things looked good. I had talent, speed, and opportunity. But inside, I never felt like I truly fit in. I was not part of any group where I felt fully accepted, and I carried a lot of anxiety that I did not know how to deal with.

Substances became my solution. At first, it was just partying, chasing social acceptance and the thrill of it all. Drugs quieted my insecurity and helped me feel like I belonged, at least temporarily. What I did not understand at the time was that I was setting myself on a path that would consume years of my life. Addiction slowly stole my ability to think clearly and damaged my body.

A significant point came when my wife and I lost our child to miscarriage. That grief broke something inside me. I dove headfirst into alcohol, trying to escape the pain instead of facing it. Not long after, our marriage ended in divorce. I spiraled further into addiction, cycling through short periods of sobriety followed by relapse. For 15 years (while living in the Boise area), rotating between jail and homelessness became my way of life, if you can call that living. Homelessness was especially dangerous for me. Without stability or structure, staying clean felt nearly impossible.

I had family in Utah and wanted to be closer to them. I started searching online for help in the Salt Lake area, and Rescue Mission of Salt Lake came up. Even though I did not fully understand what the Mission’s New Life Program involved, I knew I

Please see “Zach” on page 3.

# HELPING THE HOMELESS THROUGH COLD AND DARKNESS

*At the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, we are committed to helping individuals transform their lives in 2026.* But I want to be clear about something — change is hard work. (Please read about



the hard work Zach Newton, who shares his life story in this month’s Rescuer, went through to get sober and begin running marathons).

The road to recovery, healing, and lasting transformation is not easy, and the Rescue Mission does not believe in offering shortcuts. Our New Life Recovery Program is a structured yet challenging path

for those who are ready to embrace the hard work of change. I often share with our program members that the road they walked to bring them to the Mission was hard. Thus, the road to recovery will be filled with hard work for the heart, mind, soul, and body.

Work therapy is a central part of the program. Every participant in our New Life Program is assigned a role at the Mission, where they serve others in tangible ways. This could involve serving meals to our guests, making beds, washing linens and towels, checking guests in at night, cleaning, washing dishes, or doing a variety of other tasks.

These tasks may seem simple, but for those coming out of homelessness, it’s a critical part of the healing process. More than just fulfilling daily duties, this work is about instilling a strong work ethic and giving individuals a reason to show up each day with purpose and dedication.

In addition to work therapy, there are required classes, Bible studies, and accountability sessions. These classes are essential tools that help our students develop skills and spiritual strength. Through these classes, they receive healing for past wounds and

begin to build a relationship with Jesus that is central to transformation.

We regularly assess our New Life Program members’ progress through tests and evaluations to verify that they are internalizing their education. It’s a way to ensure they’re not passively moving through the program but actively engaging.

At the time when students advance to the outside employment phase of the program, some are scared. They share they have not worked in years (just like Zach Newton) and fear they will not be able to do so. At this point we remind them about what they have been doing for the past seven plus months: staying sober, being committed to learning about God, working the program, and fulfilling their responsibilities. They need only recall these commitments outside the Rescue Mission, while resting in the grace God has provided through Jesus.

The New Life Program is not about permanent handouts; it’s about restoring dignity and community. It is about a hand up, not a handout. Our goal is for every participant to graduate and move on to a life of stability and self-sufficiency, not to rely on long-term government subsidies. We are here to support, but the real work of transformation comes from God’s enabling power and the hard work of change.

Thank you for supporting this transformative work. You are truly helping our program members transition out of homelessness and into employment and self-sufficiency. It’s only through this effort, combined with God’s enabling grace, that true, lasting change is possible.

God bless you,

*Chris D. CroswHITE*

Executive Director

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# ZACH: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

had nothing left to lose. I took the leap and came to Utah, hoping for one more chance.

When I arrived at the Mission, I experienced what God might call the gift of desperation. I was finally willing to try anything. From the beginning, the Mission was loving. That acceptance changed me. I committed to the program and the process. For the first time in my life, I was surrounded by people who wanted to grow, heal, and help one another. I had never experienced stable, healthy relationships rooted in accountability. Slowly, I became emotionally invested in people and in my own recovery.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) became a crucial part of my sobriety and I regularly attended meetings outside the Mission as well as the Mission’s classes. The Mission gave me the safe place I needed to fully immerse myself in fellowship. I went to meetings, took on commitments, attended events, and started building connections. As I grew, I felt a responsibility to give back, to encourage others in the program, and to help bring people along with me.

Work was another major hurdle. My work history was limited, and I had to start from the ground up. I donated plasma, did side jobs, and kept pushing forward until I found stable employment with a pest control company. I started as a seasonal technician, learning the basics. Within three weeks, I was offered a permanent position and earned promotions and greater responsibility.

As my life stabilized, I found myself drawn back to something I loved as a kid: Running. Addiction had taken my mind and body from me, but I asked myself what I loved doing when I was a teenager (before I started using substances), and the answer was clear. I started slowly, following training plans I found online and building consistency. My NA sponsor happened to be an ultra-marathon runner. We began running together on trails in the foothills above Salt Lake, logging long miles and having long conversations.

Along the way, I learned about the new Sydney Marathon and felt an immediate connection to it. I entered an online lottery to run it. When I received the email saying I had been selected to run the Sydney Marathon, I was overwhelmed with gratitude. Seven hundred thousand people applied, and only 40,000 were chosen. I followed a strict training plan for 24 weeks, balancing work, recovery, and service commitments.

At the time, I was living at the Mission’s transitional housing unit Freedom House and paying rent and my own

expenses. I did not know how I would afford the trip, but I stayed committed, saved every dollar, lived frugally, got my passport, and trusted the process.

Running the Sydney Marathon in August 2025 was life changing. I exceeded my race time goal and spent 10 days in Australia, attending NA meetings there, exploring the country, and pushing myself to fully experience a life I once thought was impossible.

I had always admired Ironman athletes, even during my darkest years. Competing in an Ironman felt like the ultimate symbol of recovery. Today, I am training for an Ironman. I am actively involved with my family again and committed to giving back. Through the Mission, I learned how to receive love and how to give it freely. That growth did something therapy alone never could.

This year, I will compete in an Ironman in Boise, returning to the place where I once hit rock bottom. It feels like a full circle moment. My life is proof that no matter how broken you feel, anything is possible. For those struggling with addiction, homelessness, or despair, I want my life to be an example that hope and recovery is real. Thank you for supporting the Rescue Mission. Your support has changed my life!



Zach Newton celebrates completing the 2025 Sydney, Australia Marathon. He was blessed to find help at the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake and running has been an important part of his new life.



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