

# FAIRBANKS RESCUE MISSION

*Making a Difference One Life at a Time*

APRIL 2009 / Serving God and the community since 1974

[www.FairbanksRescueMission.org](http://www.FairbanksRescueMission.org)

## *Restoring to Life*

Easter is about the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since “resurrection” is the cornerstone of the Christian faith; it is also the cornerstone of the Rescue Mission. According to Webster’s Dictionary, resurrection means to “restore to life.” This is the heart of the Fairbanks Mission’s recovery program. The resurrection power of Christ is plainly demonstrated in the “dead things” in the lives of many of our clients. This may include relationships with family members, friends, employers, and co-workers that have been destroyed because of drug or alcohol use as well as jobs and careers that have been lost due to the addictive lifestyle.

Many self-perceived “dead” people walk through the doors of the Fairbanks Rescue Mission everyday. Society has names for these nameless brothers and sisters: addicts, bums, panhandlers, crack heads, hookers, wackos. Many consider themselves dead because no one has ever told them they have worth and beauty.

When I see these people, I think of a drawing that I have by Gustave Dore of the prodigal son, the returned son weeping in the waiting arms of his father. Later, the father says to his other son, “Your

brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found” (Luke 15:32). Here at the Mission we witness that resurrecting power demonstrated in the lives of so many of our residents. When someone comes in for a meal and a place to sleep they may go on to enter one of our programs, thus beginning the process of resurrection.



As our prodigals come to the Mission this Easter, we ask you to pray with us that God will make visible to them the things in their lives that are in need of His resurrecting power. Like the father, we rejoice over the ones that come

to us. We know there are many more that won’t come in but we continue watching the road, hoping for one more to come home.

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*Because  
you gave:*

**5,535** meals  
were served

**1,377** men,  
**447** women,  
and  
**46** children  
had a place to  
sleep

**52** Bible studies  
were held

**36** chapel services  
were held

**AND**  
Thanks to our  
volunteers  
for **378**  
volunteer hours!

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WHY I GIVE:

“Because I once  
was a recipient and  
I feel it’s my time  
to start paying  
back what  
I was afforded.”



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREETING

*from the desk of Rodney Gaskins*

Three years ago in April 2006, I started working here at the Mission and shortly after I wrote a letter asking you for money. Isn't it amazing how some things never change? O.K., take a deep breath, I'm not asking for a donation this time. Instead, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your monetary and in-kind donations, fundraiser support, words of encouragement and wisdom, volunteer hours and, most importantly, your prayers.

It's hard for me to believe that it's been three years already (most days). I really am amazed at all the things that God has allowed me to witness Him do in this amount of time. I have always tried to stay out of His way.

I learned working with my dad as a kid, that although I thought I had so much to offer, most days, I only hindered his progress. He gave me projects to do and I would enthusiastically attack them. As I got older, I found out that my dad would come along behind me and fix the things that I had not done correctly or completely, although, he led me to believe that I had completed them all on my own and would praise me for my great work.

I no longer work for my dad, but my heavenly Father. I'm amazed that God does the same things that my dad did years ago. He comes along behind me and fixes the things that I had not done correctly or completely. And like my dad, He allows others to believe that I completed them on my own. With age came wisdom and I now know about my dad's covert actions...my dad gave the secret away. So, when others give me accolades, I let them in on my little secret, God did it.”

I know secrets aren't made to be shared but you have my permission to share this one. Give Him the Glory.

Thanks for your support,  
*Rodney*

## OUR NEEDS FOR THE MONTH

### KITCHEN ITEMS NEEDED

- Vinyl gloves
- Dinner napkins
- Cooking oil
- Salad dressings
- Coffee
- Tea bags
- Juice mix
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Butter or margarine
- Chicken base
- Beef base

- Canned fruit
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Dried onions
- Fresh potatoes
- Lunch meat
- Macaroni
- Dried Potatoes
- Sliced Bread

### For our Easter dinner

- hams or pork roasts

### OFFICE ITEMS SHELTER ITEMS

- Toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene pads
- Razors
- Shampoo
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Scotch tape for dispensers
- 8-1/2 x 11 copy paper
- Staplers

## ROAD TO THE MISSION

*Andrew Arthur Chavonelle*

My name is Andrew Arthur Chavonelle. I am a fifty year old veteran of the U.S. Navy. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of this past February I entered the Veteran's (F.A.I.T.H.) Program at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission.

Prior to the program I lived in darkness. I dwelt in a camper insulated with styrofoam sheets. All the windows were covered. Inside was pitch black. Outside was darkness as only the northern winter provides. Inside my being was dark. My spirit was crushed, my soul utter darkness. I attempted suicide last January. Surviving the attempt did nothing to ease my hopelessness and I continued heavy, daily drinking when released from the psychiatric unit at the hospital.

For months I lived in darkness, drank heavily and waited for death. I am convinced death was imminent. I drank to die. I obsessed over death. I have had multiple heart attacks and many nights the angina was agonizing. Those nights I begged the Lord to let me live one more day. I was terrified to face Him, to give an account for a life useless and completely wasted in selfishness.



On one of the infrequent days that I went to the soup kitchen to feed myself, I saw Jeff Wilt. He told me about the Veteran's Program at the Mission. I agreed to enter. I drank for several more days, then entered detox. I went directly to the Mission from detox.

My physical and, most important, my spiritual life has improved dramatically, all by the grace of God. I pray and read the Word regularly. I know He hears my prayers because He answers them openly and inwardly. The Word succors my soul and strengthens my spirit. I attend Mass regularly and receive the Sacraments of my faith. I practice the customs and tenets of my beliefs. God has led me back to my Parish choir where I serve joyfully, with thanksgiving. I am active in the 12-step program of

Alcoholics Anonymous. I attend many AA meetings. I have weekly therapy sessions with Kerry Turnbow here. Jeff Wilt is my case manager, keeping me on track to achieve attainable goals. Regular nutrition has blessed me with a weight gain of ten pounds. The Mission assists me in making all my

## ROAD TO THE MISSION, continued . . .

appointments with my internist, cardiologist, psychiatrist, the VA and many medical procedures. In my Parish, in AA and here at the Mission I have tremendous support. I enjoy a true sense of community.

Most remarkable, miraculous is what God has done for me physically. For years I had cardiomyopathy (an enlarged heart) and an enlarged liver. Less than thirty days after starting the F.A.I.T.H. program, I had an imaging procedure done of my heart. The radiologist's report stated, "the heart is of normal size with no remarkable features." I asked the doctor during a physical exam how much my liver was enlarged (my liver has been enlarged for years). The doctor told me there was no discernable enlargement at all.

Since arriving here at FRM I prayed numbers of times that if He willed, not I willed, He heal me. Less than one month after my arrival the chronic conditions of an enlarged heart and liver have disappeared.

I still have medical problems. I still am grieved by my sin. Yet I have trust in the Lord Jesus all is well. My terror of death is replaced with the joy of Christ's salvation.

Truly *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."* Isaiah 9:2

I thank God the Almighty for the Fairbanks Rescue Mission.

Gratefully. *Andrew Arthur Chavonelle*

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Visit our website for more information, including employment and volunteer opportunities.  
[www.FairbanksRescueMission.org](http://www.FairbanksRescueMission.org)

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RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED

