MISSION MOMENTS

WWW.VALLEYMISSION.ORG

January 2026

In This Issue

Street Reach Update - Page 2

Reality Sets In Page 3

Construction Update & Pantry Bites Page 4

Volunteer Spotlight Page 5

Warming Shelter Update Page 6



How do you summarize an entire years accomplishments in less than half a page? The short answer? You don't. However, highlights can paint a fairly accurate picture.

Each milestone is a brushstroke on the canvas of our year, illustrating the progress and impact we've made together. From the tireless work at the warming shelter, where we provided warmth and hope during the coldest months, to the successful construction endeavors that have expanded our facilities and enhanced our community services, every moment has been a testament to our collective effort.

Our pantry initiatives have seen a significant increase in outreach, ensuring that no neighbor goes hungry. Volunteers, the heart of our mission, have contributed countless hours, sharing their skills and compassion to make a tangible difference. As we reflect on these achievements, we also recognize the challenges that have strengthened our resolve and the opportunities that lie ahead.

This brief overview cannot capture every detail or every story, but it serves as a reminder of the good we've accomplished and the foundation we've built for a brighter future. Here's to another year of making a meaningful impact together.

STREET REACH | VM



The work of Street Reach represents a true collaboration among various organizations, all striving towards a shared objective. This model has proven to be highly effective!

Thanks to partners like Pocatello Free Clinic, Aid for Friends, VA Services, and others, we are able to connect our neighbors experiencing homelessness with real, tangible resources and opportunities for assistance. While it's essential for them to take the necessary steps to utilize these resources, this crucial support has been lacking in our community for years, making these initial steps incredibly significant.

We have witnessed some of these neighbors, previously living on the streets, successfully secure permanent, safe housing. They are beginning to rebuild their lives one step at a time, fully aware that they are not alone on this journey.

However, there are still dozens of individuals in our community who remain on the streets and are in need. Their stories differ widely, ranging from losing family or employment to grappling with mental health challenges, addiction, and more. Thus, this ministry plays a vital role in connecting them with the help available in our area.

In January, we will continue with additional training for our teams and begin the search for someone to assist Karl in managing this program. Our current team is just starting to address the needs present in our community, so bringing on an additional part-time team member is essential for elevating Reach to the next level. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we embark on this journey.



Reality Setting In

2026 did not begin as we had hoped. Instead of strategizing for new opportunities and witnessing progress across various areas, we were confronted with a stark reality.

On New Year's Day, we were called to assist a business with a homeless individual who had nowhere to go. Due to some form of trauma, she was unable to communicate but posed no threat to herself or others, placing her in a vulnerable position with no support available. Valley Mission stepped in and arranged for her to stay in a hotel for the night since it was a holiday and other agencies were closed.

This narrative continued through Friday when she was finally placed in a local shelter for the night. However, her lack of communication left her still in need of care. She chose to leave the safe shelter and ended up back on our streets over the weekend.

On Monday, we received a call that she had returned to the shelter but was unable to check in. All she desired was a bus ticket out of town. (For clarity, we don't simply provide bus tickets without a point of contact and a destination.)

A call to our local Crisis Intervention Team suggested we were making progress, until we encountered the same communication barrier. After two hours of effort, we ended up securing her a motel for another night while we awaited one last desperate call to the final agency capable of helping her in town.

Why share this story? It underscores a larger problem in our community. Because this woman isn't deemed 'critical' or a threat, she falls into a gap of neglect. The implication? If this last-ditch effort fails, she will likely return to the streets.

If Valley Mission's building were ready, we could have provided her with more than just a day or two of shelter, assessed her situation, encouraged communication, and ensured she received the necessary care.

This situation is not unique to her; it reflects broader systemic issues that leave many vulnerable individuals without the support they desperately need. While the community is often eager to help, the infrastructure is not always adequate for providing sustainable, long-term solutions.

In our town, resources are limited, and organizations like Valley Mission often find themselves stretched thin. Nevertheless, the compassion and dedication of the volunteers and staff remain unwavering. They continuously brainstorm innovative solutions, advocate for additional resources, and forge partnerships with local businesses and agencies to bridge the gaps.

The experience of this woman serves as a powerful reminder of the significance of community support and the urgent need for comprehensive resources that tackle the root causes of homelessness. It highlights the necessity for mental health services, affordable housing, and employment opportunities that can foster lasting change.

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world.

JOHN 16:33



Construction Update & Pantry Bites...

Construction:

PROGRESS! Not only is the sprinkler system getting installed, we are looking to schedule HVAC and electricians ito continue work in January. We are also talking with folks to bring in some volunteers to assist in hanging some sheetrock for our fire barrier in the upstairs area above the food pantry. All in all some great progress and activity!

Pantry Bites:

- WE HAVE FOOD! What an incredible community we have. Thousands of pounds of food was donated all through December, and our local stores came through at the end of the month with over 2, 000 pounds of assorted meats! That allowed us to give families 2 meats during our last distribution - which almost never happens. Thank You, Pocatello!

Food Pantry Bites

Partners In Caring

Smith's

As we work with local markets to collect donated food, we take the opportunity to share the impact that each store makes for our pantry guests.

Smith's in Chubbuck was a big part of our 2, 000 pound meat month, **donating just under 600 pounds of meat** in one week. Dave and his crew at the meat department at Smith's is a great guy to work with and understands what we do here at Valley Mission.

THANK YOU, SMITH'S!



Volunteers make the nonprofit world go round!

As we embark on a new year, we will continue to thank our amazing volunteers and leaders who make up this organization by celebrating a different person each month

For those who may not know it, V***alley Mission is 100% volunteer staffed***. None of our funds are directed toward salaries at this time.
That says a LOT about the heart of this team, their desire to serve those in need, and the character of those who have the honor of leading them.

I am always bragging about the work that happens in our food pantry any opportunity I get. And that's because of these incredible servant volunteers and leaders!

THANK YOU ALL!

Food Pantry Opportunities

There are a few ways to serve:

Wednesdays, 8 am - 11:30 am
Food is delivered from our 14 stores as well as from the Idaho Foodbank. Unloading, sorting, organizing and building food boxes takes place on this day.

Thursdays, 10 am to 11 am
Additional food deliveries from some of the same stores. Unloading, sorting and organizing takes place here.

Thursdays, 3:30 to 6 pm
Food is distributed to the community. Most 'jobs' deal with serving the guest as well as carrying boxes to their vehicles.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others...

1 PETER 4:10

Warming Shelter Update



The Warming Shelter is Now Open!

What started as a mild December is quickly reverting to the typical Idaho winter this January. As temperatures are expected to return to seasonal averages early this month, we are gearing up for several consecutive days of shelter operations.

After completing a few training sessions, with additional ones on the way, I am excited to share that we have gathered over 40 dedicated volunteers so far. They have been wonderful in supporting our neighbors in need. For anyone interested in joining our team, we will hold another training session on Thursday, January 22nd, at 6:30 PM at First Baptist Church, located at 408 N Arthur Avenue.

In December, we provided shelter for 15 individuals, which resulted in 26 bed nights. This shows that not all guests returned each night, and we welcomed new faces nearly every evening. Our guests have truly appreciated the warm environment and peaceful atmosphere, with many reporting they hadn't experienced a good night's sleep for weeks. One gentleman even remarked, "It was the best night of sleep I've had in months."

Currently, the space in the former Convergys building can accommodate at least 35 guests, with the potential to expand to over 50 if needed. A heartfelt thank you to the Housing Alliance and Community Partnerships group for allowing us to utilize this essential space. Special thanks to Jared and his team for sharing this vision!
We have been incredibly fortunate with funding for this initiative, exceeding our initial expectations! This community has not only embraced the vision but has actively worked to bring it to life. In addition to financial support, blankets have been generously donated from various groups and individuals. Due to this overwhelming kindness, we are currently not accepting any more donations for blankets, pillows, or clothing at this time.