

Sharing a Recipe for Life

Chef Brett Swayn believes that teaching the homeless to  cook can save their lives.

Swayn says this was his experience after his marriage collapsed and his music career fell apart, causing him to live four months in a homeless shelter before he found work. He later emerged from his despair and learned a new trade in culinary arts.

“I remember looking on some people with true pity,” says Swayn, worship leader at the Hope Center (Foursquare) near Nashville, Tenn. “When I [became] homeless myself, I went from pity to compassion. With compassion I knew what people felt, what they were afraid of, and how they looked at other people.”

Thanks to a connection he made at the shelter, Swayn later became a chef at an upscale restaurant. There he learned the culinary talents that will fuel Lambscroft, an outreach to the homeless he hopes to open later this year in a building owned by Belmont University.

The ministry has affiliations with several churches and nearly a dozen volunteers. It raised \$25,000 through a charity banquet earlier this year and is working to raise another \$25,000.

Swayn plans to open a small café that he envisions growing into a full-service restaurant, affording opportunities to teach job and life skills. Most importantly, Swayn wants the homeless to gain a new identity.

“They don’t believe in the Jesus [the church] often presents, but they believe in love,” he says. “They want to see it.”

Say it Again

“When Jesus was on Earth He said: ‘Guys, I’m leaving. I’m putting you in charge. ... Feed the hungry.’ It’s not a suggestion. If Jesus walked into Denver, where would He go? Who would He hang out with? He would come to Sox Place. He would go where the hurting people are.”

—Assemblies of God minister Doyle Robinson, who founded “Sox Place” in downtown Denver to provide shelter, meals, computer access and socks to the city’s large homeless youth population