Hope Kitchen opened its doors in Neosho, Missouri, in 2015. This ministry provides meals to anyone in need, no questions asked, and strives to uphold the dignity of their guests. The facility is available for local businesses and volunteer groups to come and serve. After signing up for a date, volunteers buy the food, prepare and serve it.

In January 2017, Mercy agreed to sponsor meals that would be prepared and served by a group of co-workers. By April 2017, the first meal provided by Mercy was served. A group of volunteers were organized by Tammy Gold, RN, who had served at Hope Kitchen before. Speaking of her past experience, she says, “I enjoyed serving at Hope Kitchen so much that I wanted to share this experience with my co-workers.”

Nearly 250 people were fed on the first night. A goal of the volunteer group is to serve the same type of meals that would be prepared in a home environment, so the menu consisted of smoked pulled pork, hash brown casserole, homemade coleslaw and banana pudding. Community members were very receptive and appreciative of Mercy’s efforts. “I believe this is a way to let the guests we serve know that Mercy is in their community and cares about their needs,” shares Gold.

In 2017, Mercy co-workers served 450 meals on two separate occasions. Four dates have already been reserved in 2018, with a goal of serving over 800 meals. A shoe drive is also being considered for 2018, in order to provide a pair of shoes as well as a meal for community members in need.