

**ANNUAL HOPE FUNDRAISER**

## Celebrating 40 Years of Hope

The annual Hope fundraiser was blessed by over 200 friends and supporters at the AC Hotel at the Vancouver Waterfront on Thursday, May 14th. The luncheon provided guests with an opportunity to hear how Open House Ministries has evolved since its beginning in 1986.

This year's event focused on our children's program with a spotlight on our kids through the *Seeds of Hope* video. Children in our program planted seeds in the flowerbeds at Open House Ministries and helped create flower seed packet gifts for guests at the luncheon.

Eric Sawyer blessed our event by hosting the program. He teamed up with eight-year-old Eleanor Bunnell to draw prize winners for a packaged stay at The Heathman Lodge, AC Hotel at the Vancouver Waterfront, a weekend getaway to Long Beach, Mariners tickets, and more. Guests were automatically entered to win a refurbished Momentum Cruiser from Wheel House. The bicycle shop manager, Angela Fosburg, shared how the bike shop has grown since moving to its new location in OHM West, connecting with organizations that donate bikes or help provide used bikes to people in need of transportation.

Bryan Dent, OHM Board President, welcomed guests to the event. Chaplain Jon Nichols blessed our time together with prayer and encouraged guests to envision a future of growth in keeping with the founders of Open House Ministries. Executive Director Reneé Stevens connected guests with a message of strength through relationships with family and community that have built the ministry over the years.



Guests were blessed by the story of Audrey Holmes, a former child resident at Open House Ministries and a current on-staff case manager. The video of her journey touched the audience as her childhood and path to the present day played on the room's screens. Audrey shared how much she loved being at the shelter as a child, making friends, going on adventures, and feeling cared for and loved. How living

there has had a big impact on the way she works with the families she helps as a case manager, knowing her experience is vital to understanding the challenges they face.

Audrey's story was amplified as her mother, Executive Director

Reneé Stevens, shared her gratitude for the opportunity to rebuild her life, which she and her daughters healed through the program at Open House Ministries. "The hardest times in my life became the best times for my girls because they were at Open House Ministries," said Reneé. "Because of the love and care that we were freely given by the staff and volunteers in the ministry, our family was saved."

Reneé Stevens and her daughter, Audrey Holmes, are living testimonies of strength and hope in Jesus Christ, established by our founders forty years ago. Their lives, as well as those of hundreds of others who have passed through our doors since 1986, have impacted the community, breaking the cycle of homelessness and strengthening families throughout Clark County.

If you were unable to attend this year's Hope event, you can access the videos on our website at [www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org). Thank you for supporting the families at Open House Ministries. ●



*Executive Director Reneé Stevens*



*Pastor Rich and Launda Carroll*



*Amanda Goforth & Jennifer Ferjancic*



*L-r; Mayor McEnerny-Ogle and Mindy Chumbley with Senator Cleveland*



*Guests participating in the raffle*

# A Person Is More Than Their Inner Story

The modern world has become remarkably skilled at interpreting nearly every human problem through the lens of the self. We drink because we do not value ourselves. We remain in destructive relationships because we do not know our worth. We sabotage our lives because, deep down, we hate ourselves.

The solution, we are told, is then found somewhere deeper within. Learn to value yourself more highly. Learn to affirm yourself more fully.

Learn to heal your relationship with yourself.

Scripture describes the problem very differently. Human beings are not empty of love. They are consumed by it. The issue is not that we love ourselves too little, but that our loves have become disordered. We love our desires more than truth, our autonomy more than wisdom, and our appetites more than holiness. Which is why people will destroy their marriages to protect a craving, sacrifice their future for one more moment of pleasure, or burn down every relationship around them rather than surrender their pride. That is not self-hatred. It is self-love enthroned.

This is why Proverbs does not say the beginning of wisdom is self-esteem, self-expression, or self-acceptance. It says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7)

Scripture points the human heart not further inward, but upward. Wisdom begins when the self is no longer treated as the final authority over what is true, good, or livable.

This does not mean human suffering is simple or self-explanatory. People are wounded in ways they did not choose and shaped by forces they did not control. But there is a limit to how far we can explain a human life by looking only inside the human being.

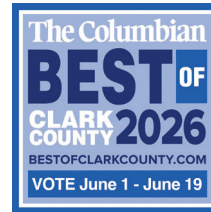
**Scripture points the human heart not further inward, but upward. Wisdom begins when the self is no longer treated as the final authority over what is true, good, or livable.**

At some point, that framework stops working. A person is more than their inner story, more than their past, more than their feelings about themselves. If you only explain someone from the inside, you eventually run out of answers for why they do what they do.

Which means the real question is not only what is wrong within a person, but what is ultimately guiding a person. What sits above their desires. What has authority over their choices. What they are actually serving when life gets hard.

That is where Scripture speaks differently from our culture. Scripture does not ignore the inner life. However, it refuses to make it the final explanation for everything. Because a person is never big enough to be their own final reference point.

• *Chaplain Jon Nichols*



Vote for our Nominations at:  
[www.columbian.com](http://www.columbian.com)  
**Best Bike Store:**  
 Wheel House Bicycle Shop  
**Best Nonprofit Organization:**  
 Open House Ministries

ANNUAL HOPE CELEBRATION



# 40 Years of Hope

Thank you to all our sponsors and generous donors for supporting this year's Hope fundraiser. You are a blessing!



Rotary Club of Greater Clark County

Columbia Presbyterian Church • Lake Shore Community Church  
 Liberty Bible Church • Richard & Jeanette James • Jan & Steve Oliva  
 Andrew & Morgan Roskam • RealVest Foundation  
 John & Cindy VanDinter

FATHER'S DAY BLESSING

Happy Father's Day from Open House Ministries

*"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you."  
 ~ Numbers 6:24-25*

SHELTER NEEDS

- Blankets • Bottled water
- Paper towels • Toilet paper
- 8.5 x 11 Copy paper • Box fans for shelter units
- Household items • Hair conditioner
- One-pound packages of hamburger

TOURS & TALKS

Want to see Open House Ministries up close?

Join us for a **First Friday Tour!**  
 Noon to 1 pm

To sign up, contact us at [events@sheltered.org](mailto:events@sheltered.org)

WAYS TO GIVE

Please remember Open House Ministries in your planned giving, estate, or will.

Thank you for your support. You are a blessing!



**OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES**  
*We're a family shelter*

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