



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

Connections

April 2023

EASTER MESSAGE

The Glorious Good News

Dad, Why is the sky blue? Why does it snow? Why do I have to do my chores and homework?

It's assumed that for every question there is an answer. And one of the primary expectations placed on me as a parent is that I know the answers. As my sons have grown up this relationship has shifted only slightly. Now it is assumed that if I don't know, google will.

Yet, what about those questions we can't answer? And not because we don't have WIFI.

I'm thinking of the ultimate "why" every human soul asks in the darkest moments. If God is all good and all-powerful, why does evil exist?



As a Chaplain and Pastor, I've been asked this question countless times. In fact, when I worked at the hospital it was suggested on several occasions that my primary reason for being was to answer this very question.

I love this question. It is one of the most real and searching questions someone can ask. However, what surprises and troubles many is that the Bible does answer this question. Or at least not one that we expect.

In fact, a pastor named Augustine made this powerful observation about 1700 years ago. He considered how only created things have explanations. Sunrises and sunsets,

fruit growing on trees, a blue sky, the wind, and the rain... these things were created.... they belong... thus, they all have explanations.

To make sense of evil—to have an explanation for evil—would mean we could identify its cause. Its existence would be justified. It would have an intended place in the created universe. Yet, we can't explain evil. And the reason why, Augustine concluded, is simple. It doesn't belong. Evil has no place in God's good creation.

This sounds strange, yet our souls bear witness to this. Ask yourself, why do we protest evil? If this is just the way the world is, why complain about it? Why lament the brokenness we see if the world was intended to be imperfect? If this evil is a design feature of creation, not a flaw, why do we long for justice?

Evil is a corruption of the good, the disordering of creation. We were not made for this. We were made for the good world God made. This is not to deny the reality, presence, and experience of evil. This is to deny that it belongs in the good world God created.

So what then does the Bible say?
(Continued)

BLESSING VOLUNTEERS

Calling All Volunteers!

You Are Invited To
**Cheers for
Volunteers!!**

April 20th, Noon to 1pm
Join us for a light lunch and celebration for all you do for Open House Ministries!

Please RSVP by April 12th
to Norma Seeley at
events@sheltered.org or contact
Norma at 360-737-0300

We're looking forward to
cheering for you!!



SAVE THE DATE



Open House Ministries is
joining Washington State's
non-profit fundraiser

GiveBIG 2023
Giving starts on April 18th

Go To: www.wagives.org
Find a cause:
Open House Ministries

EASTER MESSAGE CONT.

While the Bible does not offer an explanation of evil, it does tell the true story of the gracious God who takes on evil. And how he ultimately took evil and sin onto himself as he suffered and died on the cross, rising victorious on the third day so we could be forgiven and free.

As theologian James K. A. Smith wrote, "Evil isn't answered. It is overcome." This is the glorious good news we celebrate at Easter. The grave is empty. Our King has risen. He has risen indeed! While we might be desperate for answers, God gives us something greater, hope.

Yet, to those who persist, I wonder even if we had a sufficient answer to the question "Why?" If that would really satisfy us? Just as nothing anyone could ever say could make the hurt disappear. No answer or explanation could ever fill that painful hole we feel, because, I don't think it is an answer we're looking for after all. What our souls crave is God himself.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 1 Peter 1:3

• *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

SHELTER NEEDS

- Bottled water • Hand warmers
- Paper towels • Lysol spray
- Gallon Ziploc bags
- Infant and toddler socks
- Men's gloves

Thank You!



**OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES**

We're a family shelter

900 W. 12th St. | P.O. Box 242
Vancouver, WA 98666-0242

360-737-0300

www.sheltered.org

2023 ANNUAL HOPE FUNDRAISER

Constructing Hope

SAVE THE DATE

For our annual fundraiser to benefit the families at Open House Ministries.

• Celebrate the evening with us

May 18th at 7pm

Limited in-person at the Open House Ministries Multi-purpose Gym

• **RSVP by May 11th**
to events@sheltered.org



OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES
HOPE
FUNDRAISER

2023

We hope you will join us on May 18th to learn how we work to restore families and help them build stable futures. You will be blessed.

MINISTRY BLESSINGS



Open House Ministries has a new van!

Thank you, Marie Lamfrom Charitable Foundation, for your generous grant and blessing our youth program with their own transportation.

Our kids are so excited about their new ride.

You are a blessing!

GENEROUS GIVING

A Lasting Legacy

Making a planned gift to Open House Ministries isn't just for the wealthy or for those trying to minimize taxes. It's a wonderful way to leave a legacy and continue a lifetime of support for an organization you believe in. There are many ways to do this through the use of non-cash assets such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, IRAs, and real estate. These can enable you to both avoid income and capital gains taxes and even provide a lifetime income.

After providing for family, friends, and others, many individuals also choose to remember charitable organizations that are important to them by including them in their will or trust. If you believe in

the mission of Open House Ministries, this can be a significant and lasting way for you to help ensure we have a strong financial future and continue to provide families with life-changing assistance.

Planned gifts can provide many benefits and we would be delighted to discuss the various options that might be best for you. We have the expertise and information that will help you decide if this might be a way for you to make a gift and assist in getting your financial affairs in order. Please contact Jean LaCrosse at 360-737-0300 or email ross.merritt@sheltered.org for more information.

Please consider Open House Ministries in your estate or tax plans. Thank you! •