

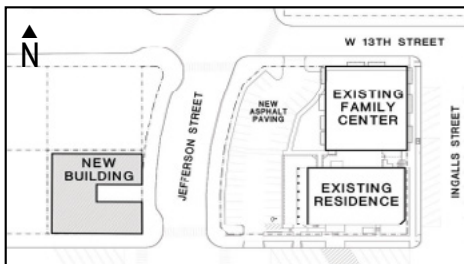
**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## Road work impacting Open House Ministries



If you haven't been by Open House Ministries lately, you might not know about the construction taking place on Kauffman Avenue and Jefferson Street. The city is in the process of straightening the road to the waterfront and eliminating the tight turns next to our campus on West 13th Street.

It is all going according to plan. When OHM West was completed, Secondhand Solutions thrift store and Wheel Deals bicycle shop were moved into new locations on the ground level of the new building next to our campus. The 30 new apartments above the stores are filling with the first tenants. Families who have graduated our program are living close by, supported by the ministry and a network of friends, grateful for the blessings of the new building.



The next step to rework the road began at the end of January. We watched as heavy machinery removed the two-story annex and full basement on the corner of our campus and started reshaping the intersection on West 13th Street and Jefferson.

By removing the building on the corner of our campus, we will gain much-needed

parking space for our multi-purpose gym and family resource center. But construction is having an impact on our ministry. The city's overhaul of the outdated sewer system under the street is a big undertaking, and the road work will continue to separate the flow of traffic and shoppers to our stores. We are looking forward to the city completing the project and having a smooth road between our buildings. I



appreciate the patience shown by our staff, volunteers, and everyone on campus while the road work is underway.

Secondhand Solutions and Wheel Deals are open during construction. We invite you to stop in soon and enjoy a coffee at The House Coffee Shop, located inside our thrift store. Please don't let the detour signs keep you from shopping and dropping off donations at the shelter.

Thank you for supporting Open House Ministries during our road construction. You are a blessing.

*Renee Stevens*  
Executive Director

**GRACIOUS GIVING**

## Making Great Things Happen

It is important to have an up-to-date Will or Trust. In addition to documenting how your property will bless your loved ones, your Will or Trust can be a meaningful and effective way to support Open House Ministries and our work to provide life-changing help to local families.

There are many benefits to planning a gift in your Will or Trust.

- Assurance. You have provided for others in the way you intend.
- Flexibility. Your gift can be changed during your lifetime if your needs or goals change.
- Impact. Support the work you care about most.
- Influence. Shape your personal legacy and set an example for others.

Your Will or Trust needs to be drafted in accordance with the laws in our state. We can refer you to attorneys who specialize in estate planning and there are even suitable on-line programs if you have a fairly simple estate. Please contact either Jean LaCrosse here at Open House or email [ross.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:ross.merritt@sheltered.org) if you would like to discuss or would like more information. Thank you! ●

**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)**

# Beautiful New Beginnings

Recently, I had the profound joy of baptizing nine residents. As each stepped into the water, they publicly declared that Jesus was transforming them from the inside out. Watching this reminded me vividly of a familiar scene from Mark's Gospel. Jesus approached ordinary fishermen with a simple command: "Follow me." But He didn't stop there. He added an incredible promise: "I will make you become fishers of men."

Pause and consider what Jesus was saying. A boss can assign tasks, and a parent can impart wisdom, but only God can remake who we truly are. Jesus wasn't merely offering these fishermen a new job—He was promising a completely new identity.

**A boss can assign tasks, and a parent can impart wisdom, but only God can remake who we truly are.**

For years, I misunderstood this call. I thought being a "fisher of men" depended on charisma or persuasion, something rooted in my own personality or skills. But I've learned it's not about our abilities at all—it's about Christ's authority and our surrender to Him.

This truth became clear to me during a fishing trip to Bend, Oregon, with my son, Jude. Jude was thrilled when he caught his first trout—until he realized earning his Scout badge required him to catch, clean, and cook the fish. That unsettling reality revealed something deeper: fishing isn't just about the excitement of the catch but about what follows—the haunting necessity of death, the end of one thing leading to the start of something else.

In Scripture, fishing powerfully symbolizes God's judgment and disruptive power. The prophet Amos declares vividly, "The Sovereign Lord has sworn by his holiness: 'The time will surely come when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks'" (Amos 4:2). This imagery isn't gentle; it signals judgment, disruption, and the dramatic closing of one chapter as another begins.

When Jesus calls us, He invites us into something significant, messy, and transformative. Who we've been and what we've done brought us here—but it can't take us where we truly need to go. In this sense, Christ's call is both judgment and invitation. He calls us to leave behind familiar comforts, to die to old identities, and step fully into the new life He alone can offer.

Change is never easy. At Open House Ministries, people arrive carrying deep brokenness and familiar ways of coping. The new expectations, rhythms, and guidelines often leave them feeling like fish out of water. Many ask themselves, "Can I really do this?" And the truth is, on their own, they can't—but God can. He transforms fishermen into fishers of men, sinners into saints, orphans into sons and daughters. Every day at Open House Ministries, we witness this very thing: God ending old stories of brokenness and writing beautiful new beginnings. • *Chaplain Jon Nichols*



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[www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org)

## SHELTER NEEDS

Diapers in sizes 4, 5 & 6  
Hair conditioner  
Clorox wipes • Paper towels  
One-pound packages of hamburger  
*Thank You!*

## VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION



### Are you an OHM Volunteer?

Join us for a celebration lunch for all you do for Open House Ministries!

**April 24th, Noon to 1pm**  
Please RSVP by April 14th

to Jennifer Amerine at [events@sheltered.org](mailto:events@sheltered.org)  
or contact Jennifer at 360-737-0300

## ANNUAL HOPE FUNDRAISER



A Benefit to Help Restore Families  
at Open House Ministries

**Friday, May 16, 2025 Noon - 1pm**

Luncheon will be at the AC Hotel on the  
Vancouver Waterfront

For Tickets and Event  
Information contact  
Joanie Curtis at 360-737-0300  
or visit our website at  
[Sheltered.org](http://Sheltered.org)



## MINISTRY BLESSINGS



New Heights Church donated 500 sets of new pajamas to our resident families from their "Wear Pajamas, Give Pajamas" Kids' Drive.  
*Thank you, New Heights Church!*