



OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES

We're a family shelter

Connections

August 2021



RESIDENT STORY

Living and Learning in a House of God

If you met Bradyn and her young son, Isaiah, you might find it hard to imagine the difficult journey they have been through together. Not long ago before arriving in the Pacific Northwest, Bradyn was living a very reckless lifestyle where she drank and used drugs excessively. She remembers being homeless and a slave to her addiction.

At 38, Bradyn became pregnant with her first son, Jacob, and soon after his birth, became pregnant with Joseph. Due to her addiction and living conditions, both babies were adopted by wonderful, caring families.

"When I got pregnant the third time I knew in my heart and soul that my purpose was to be a mother and I was not going to lose this baby. God gave me the strength, courage, and determination to put together a plan," states Bradyn.

Bradyn became fearful of staying in California knowing the inevitable outcome. That fear became far greater than the fear of moving to a new state with an unknown future. So, she boarded a train headed north to Portland where she could stay with a friend and figure out her next moves.

"Soon after, I ended up on the streets of Portland and I remember the night I truly surrendered my heart and soul to Jesus. I was crossing a freeway overpass ... tired, alone, addicted, and pregnant. I felt His loving presence surround me completely," Bradyn recalls. Two days later June 1, 2020, Bradyn gave birth in an ambulance on the way to the hospital. The baby boy was taken into custody by Child Protective Services (CPS) and placed with a foster family.

Bradyn fondly remembers, "I gave birth to an angel and named him Isaiah. All I needed was a chance to prove I could be the mother he needed. By God's grace, I was given the chance by a program called Lifeline where, if successful, baby Isaiah would be returned to me in 30 to 60 days," said the new mom. *(continued)*



Bradyn and her son, Isaiah, enjoying the park

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A True Vision Of Hope

It's been said, "a person can go three weeks without food, three days without water, and three seconds without hope." I have never sought to test this statement, nor do I suggest you try either. What I do know is that hope is vitally important. I hear stories of hope almost every day. The hope for one's children, one's family, one's recovery, one's future. The hope for peace and the hope to be loved and find belonging.

Yet like all good things, counterfeits exist. These false and shrunken stories of hope come in many forms. There is the naive and blind optimism of "everything is going to be fine." The unrelenting burden of selfish ambition that says, "my future is only what I can make of it." The near-insane mantra of "If we keep doing what we're doing things will get better." Or the dark pit of crushed hope that can set in when we come face-to-face with limits of our power to control and change the world around us.

The Scripture, however, offers us a true vision of hope. It is a vision of hope that rests upon the presence and power of the Lord. *(continued)*

YMCA SUMMER DAY CAMP

**Join us at Open House Ministries
for Fitness Fun & Games**

August 9th – August 13th

Ages 4 - 6 9am - Noon

Ages 6 - 12 8:30am - 2:30pm

Campers will be having fun with interactive games focusing on agility, coordination and cooperation.

**For availability please go to www.ymcacw.org
For Summer Day Camps contact**

Jennifer Lawrence at:

JLawrence@ymcacw.org or (360) 258-3835

RESIDENT STORY CONT.



Isaiah's foster family gathered around Bradyn and Isaiah

"I knew that I was done with my old life. I got Isaiah back two months later and my world changed forever. I became very close with his foster parents who are both pastors and have surrounded us with prayers and love. They are our family now and a huge part of our lives," says Bradyn fondly.

By God's grace, Bradyn and Isaiah secured a spot at Open House Ministries around Christmas time. She recalls, "I felt like I was in Santa's Village filled with lights and decorations, but even better, it was a house of God."

Parenting classes, financial planning sessions, and room checks teaching organization and cleanliness have kept Bradyn learning and busy for the past six months. Her case worker through the Parent Child Assistance Program was also tremendous help advocating for outside resources and helping her navigate next steps. Bible studies became one of Bradyn's favorite sessions.

"Ever since I was a very little girl, I loved Jesus. My amazing father, Kenneth, who is in heaven, taught me about Him. I am so grateful to have a safe place like Open House Ministries where I can continue to bond with my beautiful son while strengthening my relationship with Jesus and learning about what it

means to be a righteous new creation in Christ," says Bradyn.

Bradyn continues to prepare for transition into the world, supported by the loving, compassionate, and knowledgeable staff, and residents at Open House Ministries.

"This organization has given me the guidance

and resources I need to become a successful and very capable person in society. I am no longer involved with CPS and just celebrated a year of sobriety right after my precious son's first birthday! He is 100% healthy and adorable, and I am so grateful that Jesus protected him in my womb," says Bradyn.



Isaiah playing in the park

Bradyn and Isaiah's lives get better each day. The one-year-old loves Jesus and lifts his hands high to worship our King and Savior every time he hears Christian music. Bradyn adds, "I also know in my heart that in God's time I will one day have a relationship with my two other sons whom I love and think about every day, and that all of my boys will one day be in each other's lives." ●

SAVE THE DATE
DAY OF GIVING : SEPTEMBER 23



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER CONT.

He is the one who declares that He is with us and is for us. As the Lord declared through His servant Isaiah, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10).

Our hope is not the mere outworking of our past + our present = our future. This is yet again another shrunken story the world tells about hope. It believes what has been done and what is being done defines what must happen. If this were the case, Abraham most likely would have died an idol worshiper in Ur like his ancestors. Moses would have retired as a fugitive masquerading as a shepherd in the desert outside Egypt. Mary would have lived an unnoticed first-century Jewish life as a teenage mother. Paul would have continued on his rampage against the church and most likely died in the Jewish revolt against Rome in 70 AD (if he lived that long).

Our hope is that the impossible can happen because of God. The world is no longer defined by what "must" happen because of past failures or our present limitations. The Spirit of God at work in us can transform our abilities and transcend our inabilities so that we can become more than who we were before Christ. ● Chaplain Jon Nichols

BACK TO SCHOOL

Adopt a Student!

You can help a student going back to school this fall by purchasing new clothes and shoes.

Contact Vikkilyn Rolfs for sizes and information

Email vikkilyn.rolfs@sheltered.org or call 360-737-0300

Please bring adoption items to the shelter by August 23

SHELTER NEEDS

- Clorox Wipes
- Men's gloves
- Men's, women's, and children's socks and underwear of all sizes

Thank You!



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We're a family shelter

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