

**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

## An Unforgettable Day at Open House Ministries

**I**t's easy to miss the quiet miracles.

When the world shouts, "Look over here!"—at chaos, headlines, and disaster—it's hard to notice what God is doing just off stage. But that's often how He works: not in the storm or the earthquake, but in the whisper.

On June 18th, twenty-two people were baptized at Open House Ministries. What made the day unforgettable wasn't just the number, but who stepped into the water: eight adults and fourteen youth. But even more moving than that—it was how they came—moms and their children, side by side. Several families were baptized together.

It felt like something straight out of Acts 16. After an earthquake shook the prison where Paul and Silas were held, the jailer fell before them, trembling and asked, "What must I do to be saved?" They told him, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." And then we read: "At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized" (Acts 16:33).

That was the feeling. Whole households choosing Jesus. You could see it in their faces—this wasn't about rules or religion. This was resurrection. This was a generational shift. This was the birth of a new legacy.

This is the second summer we've had the joy of baptizing youth through our growing Youth Program. And these twenty-two only scratch the surface. Many other residents have been baptized recently through the churches they've connected with beyond our walls. That's always our deepest hope—for residents to become rooted in a local body and continue growing long after they leave.

But for some, the time couldn't wait. Like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, hearing the



gospel on the road, they're ready now. Not everyone has yet found a church where they feel comfortable taking that step. So Open House Ministries becomes that road, that moment, that water—where grace meets urgency and someone says, "Why not now?"

And all of it feels like something bigger is unfolding. Because while the world is busy pointing fingers and losing its mind—while foreign wars rage and domestic debates divide—God is still quietly raising the dead. And He's doing it in places no one is watching.

It's not unlike the early church. In those first centuries, Rome was unraveling—plague, war, corruption, chaos. But something strange was happening beneath the surface: the church was growing. Not because Christians had power, but because they had hope. While emperors fought and cities burned, believers loved one another, adopted the abandoned, cared for the sick, and laid down their lives. Slowly, steadily, the world began to change.

That's what revival looks like. Not fireworks, but first fruits. Not noise, but new life.

So while the world may be unraveling, the kingdom is still advancing. And that's okay, because our hope was never in this world.

● *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

**GRACIOUS GIVING**

## Maximize Your Giving

**T**here are many ways to support Open House Ministries and its efforts to help families get back on their feet with lasting solutions for our homeless population. We have many generous donors that support us with outright cash gifts and donations for our residents and thrift store. Many of you have supported Open House Ministries with non-cash gifts.

When you explore other ways to give your assets, you may be able to increase your impact and experience personal tax savings.

Some examples and options include:

- Adding OHM to your will or trust
- Individual Retirement Account (IRA)
- Real Estate
- Business interests
- Life insurance
- Appreciated assets like stocks and bonds
- Personal property
- Vehicles

If you would like to discuss any of these options contact Jean LaCrosse at 360-737-0300 or email Ross Merritt at [ross.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:ross.merritt@sheltered.org).  
*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)**

## MINISTRY CHANGES

# New store locations at OHM West lead to rebranding at Open House Ministries

Moving our thrift store and bicycle shop to their new locations at OHM West recently sparked discussion on rebranding the store names. Not only were we moving the existing vocational training centers, but we also added a new coffee shop to our job-skills opportunities, and the distance across the street from the main shelter was creating a disconnect for the stores.

After weeks of planning, we recognized the need to identify all three stores with elements tied to Open House Ministries. Since our coffee shop was a new addition, *The House Coffee Shop* was branded first, using "house" to tie into the name of the ministry. It also became important to include the heart and cross logo in all our store identities to avoid any confusion over the ownership of our thrift store, bicycle shop, and coffee shop.



Rebranding the names of our thrift store and bicycle shop took some time and a great deal of consideration. Both stores have a legacy at Open House Ministries, especially *Wheel Deals Bicycle Shop*.

Established in the mid-90s, Mark Roskam, our former chaplain, saw an opportunity to build a program out of the donated bicycles dropped off at the shelter. As an avid cycling enthusiast, Mark spent years creating a workshop that not only provided bicycle repair services for the public but also a vibrant space to minister to residents and local customers.

*Secondhand Solutions Thrift Store* was also established years ago in the annex building that stood at the corner

of West 13th Street, where Kauffman Avenue and Jefferson Street merge.

Both stores expanded over the years with the help of countless volunteer hours. They became training facilities for our residents, generating a revenue stream for operations, and, most importantly, fostering a strong connection to our community. Resident graduates have been working in both locations, holding management and staff positions, and building on our established program. "Open House Ministries has focused on being a place for rebuilding families from the beginning," said Executive Director Renee Stevens. "Vocational training in our stores is vital to our program and gives residents the job skills they need to succeed."

Our goal through this time of transition has been to honor both stores, giving fresh life to our retail and vocational training centers while paying tribute to their origin stories. Wainscoting and other elements from the annex building have been carefully incorporated into the decor, adding historic finishes to the new spaces and preserving our past.

We are excited to move into the next chapter of Open House Ministries with fresh branding for the stores. *Wheel Deals Bicycle Shop* will now be *Wheel House Bicycle Shop*, and *Secondhand Solutions Thrift Store* will now be *Revival House Thrift Store*.

We invite you to visit soon for a hand made drink at *The House Coffee Shop* and explore our new retail store locations at OHM West. Thank you for supporting Open House Ministries and our work to help people struggling with homelessness. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of families in Clark County. ●



## AUGUST UPDATES



**2025 Block Party & Resource Fair**  
Thursday, August 14th  
11 am to 4 pm

**Over 40 Resource Organizations Participating on the OHM Campus**

**Free Block Party Includes:**

- BBQ Lunch & Ice Cream Treats
- Preventative Pet Care • Fashion Show
- DSHS Mobile Unit Services • Carnival Games
- Construction Raffle Game for Prizes



**Special Thanks to our 2025 Sponsors:**

Burgerville, Clark County Rotary Club,  
Columbia Play Project, Franz Bakery,  
Frito Lay, Home Depot,  
Humane Society SWW, Olive Garden,  
PepsiCo, The Chef's Store,  
Vancouver Church Yum Truck, Walmart



You can help support our kids with new clothes and shoes for school!

**Now through August 19th**

To adopt a student  
contact Vikkilyn Rolfs at  
[vikkilyn.rolfs@sheltered.org](mailto:vikkilyn.rolfs@sheltered.org)  
You will be blessed! Thank you!

## SHELTER NEEDS

Clorox wipes • Paper towels  
8.5 x 11 Copy paper  
Bottled water • Canned meat  
One-pound packages of hamburger

 **OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES**  
*We're a family shelter*  
[www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org)  
900 W. 12th St.  
P.O. Box 242  
Vancouver, WA  
98666-0242  
360-737-0300