

The Power of Faith that Brings Change

Greetings from Open House Ministries. I want to thank you for your prayers and support this year as we share the gospel with families in our shelter.

Christmas is a powerful time for our residents to see God's love in action. Families get to witness the generosity of our community through our *Adopt a Family for Christmas* program and see the outpouring of gifts and volunteers who faithfully bless our ministry.

Time spent in chapel learning about Jesus also creates the perfect opportunity to share God's greatest gift with us. We see the work of the Holy Spirit, connecting with our residents and giving them hope for the future. Your support helps change the lives of these struggling families who need to know people care about them and to learn it is possible to rebuild their families and their lives in Christ.

Amanda Goforth and her husband, Jimmy, were two of those residents. In 2014 they came to Open House Ministries, homeless and struggling with drug addiction. Their sons, Isaiah and Caleb, had been in foster care for over a year, and their social worker was discussing terminating their parental rights and seeking adoption for their boys. Desperate for help, Amanda and Jimmy had heard how Open House Ministries helps parents get their children back and decided to reach out to us. They had every intention of leaving as soon as their boys were returned to them.

But something started to change. Despite initial resistance to classes and curfews, Amanda began to open up and feel God's love and acceptance for her, just as she was. In a little over a month, she and Jimmy were reunited with Isaiah and Caleb, and the adoption of their sons was taken off the table. Over time, Amanda's faith grew, and she accepted Jesus into her heart and the classes she was so unsure about became opportunities to learn more about God. Everything in Amanda's life started to shift as she learned all about the Bible and being a Christian. She learned how to set healthy boundaries in relationships and gain life skills that she knew would help her be successful when it was time for her to move on.

Amanda and Jimmy started working again, and their family was able to move into transitional housing at Pinewood Estates. When Amanda learned of a job opening at our thrift store, she was so excited. She wanted to work at Open House Ministries so badly, she didn't care where she worked on our campus.

Since being hired, Amanda has grown in her faith and after five years has become the manager of our thrift store, Secondhand Solutions. Amanda and Jimmy celebrated the birth of their third son, Luke, in 2018 and recently purchased their

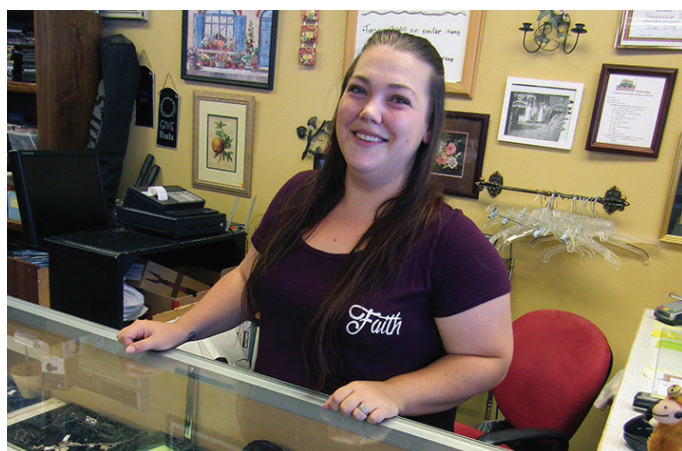
first home. Amanda is thankful to Open House Ministries for helping her regain hope and find faith. Now she has the opportunity to help other people find faith, and in her words, "there is nothing better than that."

Success stories like Amanda and Jimmy Goforth's are testimony to the power of faith in Jesus Christ that changes lives. We are grateful for the dedication of everyone who partners with us to help residents overcome their obstacles and find hope. Our community is

blessed every time a broken family finds acceptance and love and can rebuild with confidence and the skills they need to succeed. Your prayers and support help make that possible.



Amanda and Jimmy Goforth with their sons, Isaiah, Luke, and Caleb



Amanda in Secondhand Solutions thrift store

Please remember Open House Ministries in your end-of-year giving plans. You will be blessed. Merry Christmas from everyone at Open House Ministries.

Blessings,

Renee Stevens

Executive Director

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

~ Romans 15:13



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Choose Joy

Most of us use the terms feelings and emotions interchangeably. Yet, there is a technical difference. As Dr. Laura Markham points out, "Feelings are the physical sensations in our bodies. Emotions are our interpretation of those feelings." Or another way I learned it is that feelings are bodily reactions, meaning they have causes. For example, fear may cause our hearts to race, our mouths to become dry, and our skin to turn pale. Whereas emotions are active responses meaning they have objects. For example, I may love dogs, hate bugs, and fear elevators. In each case, my emotion has an object.

What is significant about this is that it means joy (considered by nearly all as one of the four core emotions) has an object. We rejoice over something and someone. This is a beautiful and liberating truth.

Where we might not be in control of our bodily responses (i.e., feelings), we do have a great level of control over our emotions. Why? Because we can control the objects to which we give our attention. If we focus on things we hate, we will be filled with hate. If we focus on objects that fill us with fear and dread, we will be anxious and scared. If, however, we focus on that which we rejoice over, we will be filled with joy.

The angels at the birth of Christ, our savior, announced, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10). May you choose to know and focus on Christ your joy this season. ● Chaplain Jon Nichols



GENEROUS GIVING



Christmas Giving Perspectives

This is a special time of year that seems to change our perspective and helps to put us in the mood for giving and doing more for others. We seem to think less about our own needs and desires and consider others, which helps to make it a wonderful time of the year. You, as our faithful supporters of Open House Ministries, are doing this for our residents and staff through your generous support of your time, talent, and treasure. Thank you!

Christmas is a good time for giving, and Open House Ministries (OHM) seems to be at the top of your list for receiving generous gifts. You have been so faithful, and we cannot thank you enough for being so supportive in helping homeless families have a place to call home and helping them to realize there is a new and better direction they can take. They hear the message that God gave us

the greatest gift of all because He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

As a volunteer in the development office, I have had the pleasure of talking to many of you and hearing how much you love supporting the mission of Open House Ministries. Many have told me they wish they could do even more, which often gives me the opportunity to discuss how they can do that by remembering to include Open House Ministries in their will/trust or with beneficiary designations.

If you would like to discuss in more detail how to consider making a gift of this type, please call Jean LaCrosse at the shelter at (360) 737-0300 or email ross.merritt@sheltered.org. Have a blessed holiday. ●

MINISTRY BLESSINGS



We want to thank the Washington Insurance Network for choosing Open House Ministries as a recipient for their annual charity golf tournament. You are a blessing!



We were blessed by the gathering of donors and friends who joined us in honoring long-time board member and champion of Open House Ministries, Claudia Dalton. Her years of service and leadership helped advance our mission, and brought hope to homeless families. We look forward to including more attendees at our next donor appreciation event in 2023.



Thanks go out to Grace Foursquare Church in Camas for their volunteer work and service at our shelter. We enjoyed the breakfast and game day!

Twas the Night Before Christmas!

SECONDHAND SOLUTIONS HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Thank you to everyone who came out for our holiday bazaar. We were so blessed on November 7th!

JOB OPENINGS

Accounting Manager – Full-time position
Administrative Assistant – Part-time position
Events Coordinator – Full-time position
Child Care Worker – Part-time position

If interested, please contact
careers@sheltered.org
for an application.

SHELTER NEEDS

- Clorox wipes
- Hand warmers • Disposable razors
- Men's and Women's hats and gloves
- Socks and underwear of all sizes from infants through adults
- Boxer briefs for boys

Thank You!



900 W. 12th St. | P.O. Box 242
Vancouver, WA 98666-0242
360-737-0300 www.sheltered.org