

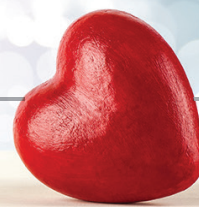


OPEN HOUSE  
MINISTRIES

*We're a family shelter*

# Connections

February 2022



## FROM THE CHAPLAIN

### Good Endings Bring Fresh Chapters

When I asked a close friend what some of the best advice is he has been given, he answered with something he learned from his grandmother. She would say, "It's not over until it's good. So, if it's not good, it's not over." As a naturally curious person, I wanted to know what happens when it's good? "Oh, that's easy," he replied, "it means you're ready to start the next chapter." Reflecting upon my life through this lens I can see distinct chapters marked by 'good ends'.

Moving to Vancouver and joining the amazing Open House Ministries team was one of these 'good ends' and new beginnings. It was difficult to understand years ago how Seminary out of state (Portland) or the adventure and trials of planting and pastoring a church in San Diego could be a part of a bigger story. My wife's health challenges and the invitation to serve and be trained as a clinical chaplain seemed like nothing more than moments of chaos and disruption. Yet, I can look back and see how God was working through all the trials, challenges, and opportunities to prepare me for this new chapter.

February marks ten months since I started here at Open House Ministries. It has been ten months full of getting to know people and hanging out with their children. It has been ten months of listening to resident stories, asking questions, and holding their tears as they process their pain. It has been filled with both praise and lament as I hold



*Open House Ministries Founder Joanne Kendall with Chaplain Jon Nichols*

the needs of this house in prayer. It has been filled with moments of insight and growth as I've taught classes and counseled couples who are pursuing marriage. It has been ten months saturated with joy, celebrating when milestones in recovery have been achieved and rejoicing when children are welcomed back into the home. It's been ten months of seeing God's grace outpace and outshine human sin and failure at every turn. It's been ten months of witnessing God do the impossible. As one resident told me, "This place could be called 'the house of miracles'" (a sentiment I share completely).

My desire in ministry has always been to meet people where they are and journey with them to where God wants them to be. I want to walk with people and help them see themselves in Christ.

*(continued)*

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

### Celebrating with Hoo-Hoo International

Open House Ministries has been blessed for many years by Hoo-Hoo International. At Christmas time they have faithfully provided an evening of entertainment, food, and gifts for the children of our staff and residents. We are grateful for their years of compassion and service. Thank you, Hoo-Hoo International!



*Renee Stevens receiving a special gift from Hoo-Hoo representatives Jim Adams, Terry Haddix, and Mason Virnig*





## FROM THE CHAPLAIN CONT.

A great many people feel unseen and invisible. They feel isolated by their circumstances and alone in what they are facing. Therefore, I'm so thankful to be a part of a ministry that shares this value. Everyone here works not just to create a safe space—a warm and clean place off the streets— but a courageous space. A place where questions can be asked and truth can be sought. A place where belonging and healing can be found. A place where we can be thrust into lives of excellence that we never knew we had the strength or capacity to embrace.

Therefore, one of my primary endeavors has been to strengthen and expand our programming for our residents. The challenges Open House Ministries has faced due to loss and the health and safety restrictions because of the pandemic have been real. Yet, not once has the leadership been tempted to shrink away from providing every opportunity for our residents to learn and grow. We continue to rebuild and establish partnerships with great volunteers and community organizations. I have also been able to develop new classes that keep with Open House Ministries' holistic approach to ministry. Keeping the focus of our programs on transforming thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

As my wife and I meet new people and make friends we are continually asked, "Why would you leave San Diego?" And, "How are your boys doing with the transition?" The truth is it is all because of God and that God has been so good. The decision to move was less about *why would we leave*, and more about *why would we stay*. The work taking place at Open House Ministries is so compelling it was harder to dream of being anywhere else. This step of faith



Micah and Jude Nichols

has only been confirmed as our boys have made great friends and continue to thrive here.

For many years I have served as a shepherd helping people discover a sense of belonging. I know how important and yet how elusive and difficult it can be to find. Therefore, my heart spills over with gratitude for the warm welcome I have received in joining this amazing ministry. It is wonderful to be a part of a ministry that seeks to create and offer that same experience for every family here; a place to write 'good ends' and new beginnings in their stories just as it has been for me. ● Jon Nichols



Jon and Sarah with their family dog

## GENEROUS GIVING

### Helping Open House Ministries in a Convenient Way

Many of our supporters are taking advantage of our automatic-donation option. It's an easy way to simplify your giving to Open House Ministries on a monthly basis with a credit card or an automatic bank withdrawal.

Recurring gifts are very helpful, allowing us to make even more strategic plans for providing homeless families with shelter, intervention and Christ-based, life-saving programs. Your reliable support for Open House Ministries helps make a steady and dependable stream of income, enabling us to create a solid financial foundation for this ministry.

Automatic donations are easy to set up. Just go to our website at [www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org) and click on *Donate* to fill out the required information; or call us at 360-737-0300 and we can assist in setting it up for you. Thank you for giving to Open House Ministries. ●

*Please consider including Open House Ministries in your will or estate plan.*



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#### JOB OPENINGS

**Facilities Manager**  
Full-time position available  
**Bicycle Shop Staff**  
Full-time position available  
**Child Care Worker**  
Part-time position available  
Contact [careers@sheltered.org](mailto:careers@sheltered.org)  
for an application

#### SHELTER NEEDS

- Men's gloves
- Gallon size zip lock bags
- Pull ups of all sizes
- Bottled water

*Thank You!*



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**Go to: [www.shopgvychamber.com](http://www.shopgvychamber.com)**

**Choose Tailgate Week #14** and Open House Ministries will receive a \$25 donation

Thank you for supporting our area restaurants and businesses!