

ANNUAL HOPE FUNDRAISER

Gathering for Hope at the Waterfront

On Friday, May 16th, over 200 guests gathered for the 2025 Annual Hope Fundraiser at the AC Hotel. The view of the waterfront created a soft backdrop for the luncheon on a rainy spring day in Vancouver.



The *Light of Hope* luncheon was the first fundraiser in six years to be held during the day, expanding an opportunity for guests to hear how our ministry is impacting families in our area. “Having the Hope Fundraiser luncheon at the AC Hotel was a great way to spend time with our community this year,” said Executive Director Reneé Stevens. “We were excited to see so many people join us and hear how Open House Ministries is helping struggling families find hope and healing.”

Vancouver’s Mayor McEnerny-Ogle, community friends, and faith leadership shared in a Mediterranean lunch and listened as Reneé welcomed guests with gratitude. Cody Ritter, Sr. Vice President, from Riverview Bank, expressed appreciation for our ministry, and Jim Mains spoke on our shared focus to see families in the margins succeed.

Lights removed from the Open House Ministries Secondhand Solutions thrift store in the annex provided a special symbol of the ministry’s years of bringing help and hope to the people of Vancouver. Seven of the 21 lights restored by GKA Lighting in Portland were available in a silent auction for the fundraiser.

Chaplain Jon Nichols addressed the audience with words of encouragement to

keep striving in faith, knowing God never changes even when our circumstances are pressed and challenging. Two of our resident graduates shared their story at the event, and we were blessed to hear how



Samantha and Justin’s family has been building on the skills they learned while in our program. A video of Randy Richardson’s story gave guests a moment to see how coming to faith in God has changed a whole family and inspired Randy to serve in a faith-based motorcycle ministry.

The *Light of Hope* event was recorded and will be available to view and share on our website. We are grateful to everyone for supporting our annual fundraiser. If you would like to help, you can make a donation at sheltered.org. *Thank you!* •

Thank you to our event sponsors!



GRACIOUS GIVING

Maximize Your Giving

There 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. • *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

The Potter is Just Getting Started

We've all prayed. "God, fix it." "God, make it stop." "God, change me." And then we waited. Sometimes it feels like nothing happens. No breakthrough. No miracle. No inner peace. Just silence... and the same mess as before.

You start wondering if you did it wrong. Didn't say it the right way. Didn't believe hard enough. Or maybe God's got more urgent things to deal with. What if it's not about getting the formula right? What if God isn't Amazon Prime, and prayer isn't a checkout cart?

Real change is rarely one prayer deep.

It's not instant. It's not tidy. It's a fire. And fire needs fuel. Time. Oxygen. Persistence. Any Scout could tell you that—you don't get a flame without patience and tinder. I've watched it firsthand—soggy kindling, shaky hands, and the temptation to give up too soon. So you lean in. Breathe steady. Shield the spark. And wait.

You pray for your kids. For your spouse. For the diagnosis to reverse. For the anxiety to let up. And when heaven feels quiet, when nothing moves—what then?

And when heaven feels quiet, when nothing moves—what then?

Jesus told a story in Luke 18 about a widow who wouldn't quit. She kept knocking on the judge's door. Not because he was kind—he wasn't. Because she knew justice mattered, and she wouldn't let go.

Jesus didn't tell that story to teach us how to twist God's arm. Luke records, "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1). He told it so we would keep praying and not lose heart. Because God is good. And He is listening. He is not flipping switches. He is shaping souls. He's not a vending machine. He's a potter. And some of us are just now getting soft enough in the clay for Him to shape.

That's true here at Open House Ministries—but not just here. You don't need to live in a shelter to know what it's like to wait for change and healing. This isn't just about "them." It's about all of us—all who've waited, who've wondered, who've dared to pray.

So if you're still praying, keep going. If you've run out of words, let the tears do the talking. If it still feels stuck, don't give up. The potter is just getting started.

• *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

We are grateful to Battle Ground Four Square Church for providing Vacation Bible School for our kids during spring break. Arts and crafts projects gave our kids an opportunity to be creative and learn about God. Thank you Battle Ground Four Square Church!



Thank you, Celestine, for bringing your Bible study friends to Open House Ministries. We appreciate the volunteer help, sorting and organizing in our donations department. You are a blessing!

Walmart managers and representatives from area stores have been serving lunch for our residents this year. We have been blessed by their kind service for our families and staff at Open House Ministries. Thank you!



FATHER'S DAY BLESSING



Happy Father's Day from Open House Ministries
And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"
 ~ Galatians 4:6

SHELTER NEEDS

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



OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES
We're a family shelter

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