

## ART OF FAITH

### Building Reliance through Creativity

Residents at Open House Ministries are learning more about themselves and fostering resilience through a class called Art of Faith. This class is not about making beautiful works of art, though many residents tap into an unrealized artistic gift. Art of Faith uses creative processes to help residents discover the beauty of what God is doing in each one of their lives.

"At first, I was apprehensive because I haven't ever thought of myself as an artistic person. ... Nonetheless, I kept an open mind and quickly realized that *Art of Faith* isn't about who's a better artist or more creative," one resident added, "it's about expressing ourselves and our faith through art."

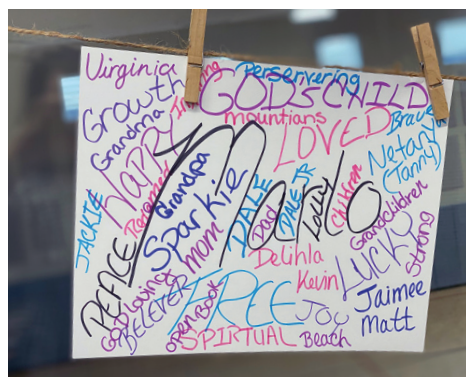
People often enter Open House Ministries with a resistance to change, frustrated and hurt from past experiences, and weighed down by guilt or anxiety. Rather than engaging in conversation concerning change, *Art of Faith* immerses residents in an environment where they can begin to process tough emotions.



Meaningful themes focus on purpose, grief and forgiveness, change and adversity, identity, belonging, and strength. Many residents struggle with expressing what they are going through and avoid facing deep emotional trauma. (Continued)

### Exploring Emotions

In this week residents were invited to explore their emotions. While some are thinkers and others are feelers, we all experience emotions in some way. To help each resident examine their emotions they were asked to pick different emotions and makes lines that are expressive of each emotion. They were then asked to reflect on which emotion was most familiar, and what positive/negative effect that emotion has on their life? (Emotions are labeled on the back of the page. See if you can guess what emotion is being expressed before looking at the back).



## CHAPLAINS CORNER

### God's Unreasonable Grace

I have been taught a great many 'truths' about the world. Truths that may in part offer some worldly wisdom. Truths like:

- You get what you pay for
- Nothing in life is free
- You always pay in the end
- God helps those who help themselves

The last one even sounds 'churchy.' You might even think it's in the Bible, but it's not. In reality, each of these statements runs counter to biblical grace. Grace is more than tolerance or acceptance. Grace is generosity to the undeserving.

I don't think grace is a hard concept to understand. In fact, I think it's something we all desire. And maybe because deep down inside of us we know we can't be perfect. So, we strive to be as good as we can and hope for a little grace.

None of us like to think we're looking for a scandalous amount of grace. Just enough to fill the gap. It's like when the posted speed limit is 65mph, and we drive 70, maybe 75, and hope for a little grace. Or when our items at the mini-mart add up to more than the cash we have, we rifle through the *take-a-penny*, *leave-a-penny* dish and smile at the cashier hoping for a little grace.

Yet, Paul frames the grace we have received in rather stark terms writing, "But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

Thank God he gives us a scandalous amount of grace – grace that brings dead men, like me, back to life. • Chaplain Jon Nichols



## ART OF FAITH CONTINUED



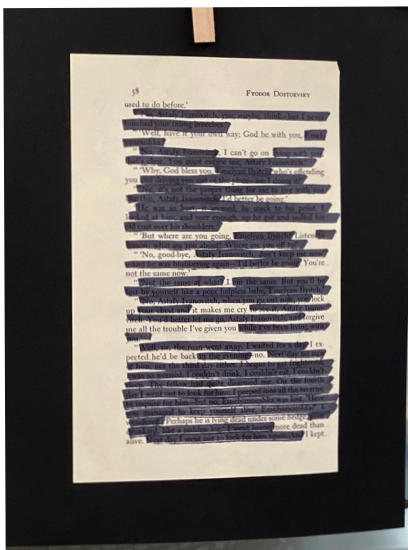
The projects in the ten-week art therapy class are intentionally designed to create a courageous space for honest and deep reflection. “No matter the age of a person or their skill set,” states Patti Ellias, instructor for *Art of Faith*, “art is a portal through which life experiences can be expressed or processed with authenticity and vulnerability.”

This process is empowering our residents to sit with heavy emotions and learn new ways to approach painful memories and situations.

“It truly helped me express my feelings in a fresh way,” states one resident. “It helped me to see and look more for God in everything.”

Residents are encouraged to explore an assortment of creative techniques using applied arts, music, and several forms of poetry in an informal atmosphere. Collages are made from recycled found objects, paper mâché masks are created, and residents craft personal statements using lyrics from songs and redactive print exercises. “The goal is never about the finished product,” said Patti. “The purpose is always found in the process and through art learn to embrace life experiences as an opportunity to build character and strength and to identify brokenness with God’s redeeming love.”

Residents are sharing how much they’ve enjoyed expressing themselves through art, saving pieces meaningful to them, and displaying them in their homes. It is a blessing to see God moving in their hearts and how *Art of Faith* has been significant to them. •



## CELEBRATING MOMS



### Looking for a way to bless Moms at Open House Ministries?

Each year we gift our moms with a package from Bath & Body Works. If you would like to help, please contact Vikkilyn Rolfs at vikkilyn.rolfs@sheltered.org or call 360-737-0300.

## MINISTRY BLESSINGS



Thank you Elroy and Vancouver Elks #823 for sharing your day and pizza with our kids!

## GENEROUS GIVING

### Support Open House Ministries and reduce taxes

If you are 70½ years or older, gifting a charitable rollover from your IRA may be a great way for you to partner with us. You will pay no taxes on transfers up to \$100,000. And, with a direct transfer to Open House Ministries, you will satisfy your RMD (required minimum distribution) and reduce your taxable income even if you do not itemize your charitable gifts.

Please consider Open House Ministries in your estate or tax plans. Thank you! •



**OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES**  
We're a family shelter

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

## SHELTER NEEDS

- Bottled water • Hand warmers
- Paper towels • Clorox wipes
- Lysol spray • Gallon Ziploc bags
- Infant and toddler socks
- Men's hats and gloves

Thank You!