

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Giving Kids Spaces to Grow

Open House Ministries is dedicated to providing engaging opportunities for the school-aged children in our program. Each year, we work to bring a variety of activities to campus and plan outings for them to experience new places in the area. We help them stay on track toward their goals and share regular feedback with their parents, updating them on progress and stability toward long-term success.

Kids in our after-school program enjoy a fun and safe place to gather. They spend time working on group projects and playing games in our gym. We are grateful for the many volunteers and church groups who give their time to share the gospel through activities and Vacation Bible School. Read NW



partners with us, providing weekly reading buddies, which give kids an opportunity to advance their reading skills and find support vital to their academic success. We also partner with groups such as the Elks Lodge, IF Robotics, and the Columbia Play Project, giving students new experiences outside their school environments.

This year, the YMCA will return to lead basketball and fitness camps in our gym for families in our shelter and extended housing. It's a great time for children to learn new skills during spring break. These camps also serve as neighborhood outreach to families in our community, who are welcome to join us for the YMCA camps on campus.

When our students are out on school



breaks, we enjoy taking them on outings to destinations, giving kids new opportunities. This summer, they will have an opportunity to take swim lessons at a Fun & Fitness Camp. We are also taking another group of middle and high school students on an overnight adventure to Peak 7 Summer Base Camp this year. It's a special time for them to go hiking and paddleboarding near Mt. Rainier during the day and return to camp for games and a campfire each night.

Having the opportunity to walk alongside kids and their families in our program is a great blessing as they navigate their personal challenges. We know it is vital to invest time in these young lives while they are here, giving them guidance and hope to move forward long after they move out on their own.



We appreciate your prayers and support as we share the gospel and build relationships with the children in our program. Together, we can break the cycle of homelessness by helping each new child who enters Open House Ministries. ●

GRACIOUS GIVING

Lasting Legacies

Making a planned gift to Open House Ministries isn't just for the wealthy or for those trying to minimize taxes. It's a wonderful way to leave a legacy and continue a lifetime of support for an organization you believe in. There are many ways to do this through non-cash assets such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, IRAs, and real estate. These can help you avoid income and capital gains taxes and even provide a lifetime income.

After providing for family, friends, and other loved ones, many people choose to remember charitable organizations that are important to them by including them in their will or trust. If you believe in the mission of Open House Ministries, this can be a significant and lasting way for you to help ensure we have a strong financial future and continue to provide families with life-changing assistance.

Planned gifts offer many benefits. If you would like to learn more and discuss opportunities for long-term giving to Open House Ministries, we can help. Please contact Jean LaCrosse at 360-373-0300 or email jean.lacrosse@sheltered.org for an appointment.

Thank you for considering Open House Ministries in your estate or tax plans. We appreciate your support. ●

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

When Jesus Is Not "Christlike Enough."

One of the ironies of the Gospels is how often Jesus is treated as though he is not acting "Christ-like" enough. I know that sounds anachronistic. But I mean it. There are moments when Jesus is criticized for acting in ways that do not align with expectations for the Christ. He eats with the wrong people instead of policing purity. He heals on the Sabbath instead of honoring the moment. He delays when urgency seems obvious. Again and again, Jesus is measured not by who he is, but by what people believe faithfulness should look like in that moment.

I hear versions of this message constantly. It's broadcast at full volume all around us. *'If Jesus were here, he wouldn't be quiet about this.'* *'If Christians loved the way Jesus loved, they would do something.'* These claims turn love into a moral test, in which faithfulness is judged by speed and compassion by the number of exceptions met.

Imagine Martha meeting Jesus on the road to Bethany in John 11 and saying, You call yourself the Christ? God would not have let my brother die. Stated that way, it sounds absurd. And yet what Martha—and later her sister Mary—actually say is not far from it. Both meet Jesus with the same words: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died" (vv.21, 32). They had reason to say this. When word reached Jesus that Lazarus was sick, the request was unmistakable: come. But Jesus did not go. He remained where he was for two more days, not because he was interrupted.

From the outset, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory, so that God's Son may be glorified through it." The delay can begin to look deliberate, even calculated, as though Lazarus were less a friend than a means. Yet when Jesus finally

stands before the tomb, he is deeply moved and weeps (vv.33–35). That grief does not serve the miracle. It disrupts any reading of the delay as indifference or calculation, showing that it is not a failure to act but a refusal to act as expected.

Yet that expectation is understandable. Had Jesus arrived sooner, it would have been mercy. But mercy is not the fullest disclosure of who Jesus is. That is why judging Jesus by imagined alternatives ultimately fails. It explains the pressure he faces but not who he is or what he says outside the tomb: "Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe" (vv.14–15).

Love, here, is not aimed at preventing pain at all costs, but at making Jesus known in the midst of it.

The delay is not a withdrawal of care, but a decision about what kind of care tells the truth. Love, here, is not aimed at preventing pain at all costs, but at making Jesus known in the midst of it. The delay offers something rescue alone could never give: a deeper knowing of who he is. When he finally speaks, he names himself. "I am the resurrection and the life." Prevention would have said, I am here to help you avoid death. Resurrection declares, I am Lord over it.

If Jesus' delay in Bethany tells the truth about love, then responding to every demand on crisis's terms surrenders the authority to define what love is. That distinction shapes my understanding of the work at Open House Ministries. We do not respond to every situation as the crisis it is declared to be, because doing so trains people to live forever at the level of crisis. Care must be shaped by truth before timing. Anything else may feel compassionate in the moment, but allows urgency, need, and outcomes to take Christ's place as the judge of love.

● *Chaplain Jon Nichols*



40 Years of Hope

Open House Ministries
Annual Benefit for Families

Join us for our
40th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, May 14, 2026
Noon - 1:30 pm

Luncheon will be held at the
Waterfront AC Hotel in Vancouver

For ticket information
contact Joanie Curtis at
events@sheltered.org or
visit our website at
Sheltered.org



OHM WEST UPDATE



SIGNS FOR STORES

New thrift store and bicycle shop names are now displayed on our store windows.

Stop in soon for a delicious coffee drink at The House Coffee Shop. Great selections are always arriving at Revival House Thrift Store.

Spring is the perfect time to bring your bicycle in for a tuneup. Competitive pricing and great used bikes are on sale now at Wheel House Bicycle Shop.



SHELTER NEEDS JOB OPENING

Blankets • Bottled water
Paper towels • Toilet paper
8.5 x 11 Copy paper
Kid's shampoo
One-pound packages of hamburger
Thank you!

Volunteer
Coordinator
Position
Please
Inquire at
careers
@sheltered.org



P.O. Box 242
Vancouver, WA 98666
360-737-0300
www.sheltered.org