

**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## A Milestone Celebration

This year, Open House Ministries turns forty! It is amazing to think how long this ministry has been helping families struggling with homelessness. Only God knew what was in store when the doors opened at the original ten-room boarding house on the corner of West 12th Street and Jefferson. How families would hear about this place and find hope and healing when they had nowhere else to go.



The founders of Open House Ministries also knew how important it was to offer families more than a place to stay if they were going to have a lasting impact in

the community. They wanted families to find real-life solutions to the problems that were keeping them from succeeding. Problems that were impacting their children, creating another generation that would struggle in poverty and with home insecurity.

They began developing a program that would help heal families. A program that focused on hope and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Case managers and a chaplain began counseling each family, working on their specific



*Original family shelter, circa 1986*

It didn't take long for the number of families seeking real solutions to outgrow the original space, and, with support from our community, leadership made a bold choice to build the Kendall Family Shelter we have today.

A lot has changed since 1986. The high cost of housing has contributed to help graduate



*Kendall Family Shelter completed in 1996*

families locate base-level rentals. In 2024, we completed OHM West, next to our family shelter, adding 30 apartments for families. The ground level became the new location for our thrift store, bicycle shop, and new coffee shop where residents are learning new job skills.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to share the gospel of Christ with families in our program. To continue to serve a risen savior



who transforms broken lives with hope and love. Our goal has stayed the same since 1986, and like our founders, we want to

break the cycle of generational homelessness so families can thrive.

As we look to the future of Open House Ministries, we are focused on helping the next generation. Now more than ever, pressures on our kids are having a lasting impact on their physical and mental health. We want to support the next generation with positive opportunities and hope so they will succeed.

Thank you for your compassion and commitment to Open House Ministries. We are grateful for your prayers and support.

Blessings,

*Renee Stevens*

Renee Stevens  
Executive Director

**GRACIOUS GIVING**

You can Help Open House Ministries with a Recurring Gift

Many of our Open House Ministries supporters take advantage of our automatic donation option—a way to simplify your giving to Open House Ministries on a monthly basis.

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 continued support through an automatic withdrawal from your checking account or credit/debit card helps provide Open House Ministries with a steady and dependable stream of income, creating a solid foundation of support for this ministry.

It's easy to set up. Just go to our website at [www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org) and click on *Donations*. When filling out the form, choose a donation schedule option under *frequency* that works for you and complete the required information for ongoing donations. If you would like assistance, please contact us at 360-727-0300 and we can help set it up for you.

Please remember Open House Ministries in your planned giving or will. Thank you for your support. You are a blessing. ●

# The Care of Souls

Spiritual care can sometimes feel like something intangible. A conversation, a prayer, a moment that helps someone feel better. It can seem intuitive and ad hoc. However, for centuries, pastors understood that care of souls required discernment. They paid attention to recurring patterns in how people struggled. They learned to recognize different kinds of spiritual conditions and to respond in ways that corresponded to those conditions.

In Matthew 9, when Jesus looked at the crowds, the text says He had compassion on them because they were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." In that moment, Jesus is not simply describing how they feel. He is not offering commentary on their political situation or their relative lack of resources. He is diagnosing their soul.

Once you see that, you begin to notice it everywhere in Scripture. Jesus meets a Pharisee named Nicodemus in the night. Nicodemus comes with questions, yet Jesus does not engage him at the level of information. He names a deeper condition. Nicodemus does not lack understanding. He lacks life. When Jesus encounters a pious, rich young ruler who asks what he must do, Jesus tells him to sell everything and follow Him. He does not challenge his effort. He exposes what holds his life together. The man's obedience is real, but his trust is elsewhere. Even after the resurrection, Jesus sits with Peter on the shore of the Sea

of Galilee and asks him three times, "Do you love me?" He presses into what the failure revealed. The issue is not the moment of denial, but the deeper fracture beneath it. Again and again, Jesus addresses people at the level of the soul.

And if you listen to people talk about their circumstances, their problems, the stress, and frustrations they hold, you can hear it. Someone keeps repeating the same patterns and cannot explain why. Someone else is surrounded by people and still feels alone. Another is stuck in a conflict that never resolves.

Each carries with them the weight of unmet spiritual need.

Confusion about direction. Loss of worth or belonging. Anger, blame, distance, and unresolved relationships. Because they touch how a person understands their life, their value, and their place before others and before God. This is what we mean by spiritual distress.

At Open House Ministries, this is part of what we are paying attention to. Across the ministry, we observe how people are growing and adjust as needed. Just as we seek to be faithful in providing housing, support, and stability, that same commitment extends to the care of the soul. Spiritual realities are taken seriously, and we approach this work with intention and care, seeking to see clearly and care faithfully, while knowing that it is the Lord alone who brings life, change, and renewal.

• *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

*"Just as we seek to be faithful in providing housing, support, and stability, that same commitment extends to the care of the soul. Spiritual realities are taken seriously, and we approach this work with intention and care..."*



# 40 Years of Hope

Tickets are on sale now for our Annual Hope Fundraiser Celebration  
**Thursday, May 14, 2026**

Noon to 1:30 pm Check in at 11 am  
Waterfront AC Hotel in Vancouver

For more information contact Joanie Curtis at [events@sheltered.org](mailto:events@sheltered.org) or visit our website at [sheltered.org](http://sheltered.org)



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Columbia Bank  
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## MOTHER'S DAY BLESSING

Happy Mother's Day from Open House Ministries

*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ~ James 1:17*

## SHELTER NEEDS

- Blankets • Bottled water
- Paper towels • Toilet paper
- 8.5 x 11 Copy paper
- Household Items • Hair conditioner
- One-pound packages of hamburger

## 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](mailto:events@sheltered.org)

## JOB OPENING

**Volunteer Coordinator Position**  
Please Inquire at [careers@sheltered.org](mailto:careers@sheltered.org)



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

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