



OPEN HOUSE  
MINISTRIES

*We're a family shelter*

# Connections

November 2021



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### *Blessings Overflow*

God's blessings at Open House Ministries have continued to inspire us these past months. The journey our residents take to begin a new life requires difficult lifestyle changes and a lot of counseling. We have watched God work in the lives of so many families this year, and we are truly thankful.

Many people arrive at Open House Ministries with broken hearts and challenging family situations requiring hard work to resolve tough issues. Not everyone makes it through our program on the first try, and people often need a second chance to get their lives back on track. I am grateful we serve a God who doesn't give up on us. He doesn't turn away when we fall and He always wants to see us grow and become whole again.

As I reflect on this past year, the stories of many residents come to mind. I think of the ones who have suffered with illness and deep personal loss. I've seen the struggle families have gone through finding a path to independent living. And I have watched as God walked with new believers, giving families strength to rebuild their relationships.

I want to take this time to say *thank you* to our community friends. Your shared support and commitment to Open House Ministries plays a vital role in the work we do each day to break the cycle of homelessness in Clark County. Your prayers for our ministry are often visible through faithful people who volunteer, serving with their time and talent.

For the past 35 years, Open House Ministries has been blessed by community

friends who help with everything from sorting drop-off donations to serving at our front desk. Many volunteers work diligently in our thrift store, Secondhand Solutions, and in Wheel Deals, our bicycle shop. Others give their time fulfilling our newsletter mailings, counseling residents, or leading financial training courses.



I am also encouraged by those who want to help serve in an area close to their heart like Lorelei Steuben. Lorelei is dedicating time to help kids learn healthy dental habits. As a dental hygienist in Vancouver, she is partnering with America's ToothFairy, raising money for dental necessities. She is donating funds from her virtual Smile Drive to Open House Ministries and gifting resident families with new toothbrushes.

Our continued goal at Open House Ministries is to help restore families and know they'll leave here with the tools they'll need to succeed. We are blessed by so many in Vancouver and we are grateful to serve in lasting and meaningful ways.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving,

Renee Stevens, Executive Director

## GIVING SPOTLIGHT

### Meet Lorelei Steuben



Helping children learn about healthy dental care is important to Lorelei Steuben. As a dental hygienist, she sees first-hand how taking care of your beautiful smile can make all the difference, not only for confidence but also for your health.

That's what inspired Lorelei's *Every Smile Is Priceless* project. She has launched a fundraiser with America's ToothFairy, participating in a matching program for dental necessities. The money she's raising will go to supply families at Open House Ministries with fresh toothbrushes. "Many children suffer from tooth decay. I have chosen to donate to Open House Ministries because more than half of their residents who stay there every night are children," states Lorelei.

We are grateful for all the work Lorelei is dedicating to educating children and thank her for sharing with the families at Open House Ministries. ●

## Seven Reasons for Thankfulness

**W**e had a tradition in my home growing up that maybe you shared as well. Every year following Thanksgiving dinner everyone had to share what they were thankful for. No one got to sit this out. Even the children banished to the children's table had to come over and share.

In the spirit of being grateful, I thought I would share seven reasons why I'm thankful to know and be known by Jesus. I hope that in doing so your soul might be moved to join me in worship and reflect on your own reasons.

**1. I am thankful Jesus is a relentless redeemer.** He doesn't allow the brokenness of my past or this world lay in ruins. He is constantly (and in all things) working for the good of those who love him. He is active in rebuilding and restoring what has fallen apart.

**2. I am thankful Jesus is a patient teacher.** I stumble. I fall. It often takes many attempts to see change through in my life. In fact, there are still lessons I'm learning and relearning. He does not scorn my effort. He gently keeps showing me the way.

**3. I am thankful Jesus is a loving King.** Jesus radically redefined love and leadership by laying down his life for us. He did not delegate or demand

of us work to make his burden lighter. Rather, he took ours upon himself so that we might share in his life.

**4. I am thankful Jesus is a faithful friend.** I don't have to wonder if he will leave me or reject me. I have no reason to fear if he will be true to his promises. I don't have to question his commitment to our relationship.

**5. I am thankful Jesus is a safe refuge.** Life is bumpy. It is hard. It can feel like a juggernaut. In those moments I know where I can run that is free from judgment, full of grace, and strong enough to hold me and allow me to find rest during the storms.

**6. I am thankful Jesus is a generous victor.** Jesus did not return from the grave seeking vindication from his enemies. He returned vindicated and made the gift of life available to all.

**7. I am thankful Jesus is an awesome God.** There is this feeling that accompanies an amazing sunset or standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon. It is the feeling of awe and wonder. It is the feeling of terrifying amazement. It makes you feel small and grateful all at the same time. It is what I'm feeling right now as I reflect on the greatness and grandeur of God. ●  
*Chaplain Jon Nichols*

## IRA Charitable Rollover

**D**ue to an increased standard deduction, many individuals and couples will no longer be able to claim itemized deductions. However, a tax-free IRA charitable rollover offers the following benefits to individuals age 70 ½ or older:

- The ability to direct a current, outright IRA gift, up to \$100,000 to Open House Ministries or other qualified charities
- Satisfaction of the required minimum distribution without increasing taxable income
- No loss of a charitable itemized deduction
- Ability to direct your gift to any area of our operations
- It's easy, simply notify your IRA custodian

For more information, please contact us at 360-737-0300 or email [ross.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:ross.merritt@sheltered.org).

Thank you for supporting Open House Ministries. Please remember us in your will or estate plan. ●

*Adopt a Family*  
at Open House Ministries for  
*Christmas*

Christmas time is quickly approaching at Open House Ministries, and we invite you to celebrate by adopting one of our families this year. If you would like to participate, the following guidelines may be helpful.

**Last day to drop off gifts will be Friday, December 17th.**

### Gift Guidelines and Ideas

- Toys and clothing items from family's wish list, wrapped and delivered by December 17th
- Gift cards such as Target, Fred Meyer, WINCO foods or a gas card. Unwrapped toys and gifts cards are also welcome.

To adopt a family for Christmas, please contact Claudia Merritt at 360-737-0300 or email [claudia.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:claudia.merritt@sheltered.org) for family adoption details. *Thank you!*

### SHELTER NEEDS

- Boxed and non-perishable foods
- Toiletries and laundry items
  - Men's gloves
- Copier paper: 8 1/2 x 11
- Bottled water

### JOB OPENINGS

- Bicycle Shop Staff
  - Part-time Childcare Worker
- For more information please email:  
[careers@sheltered.org](mailto:careers@sheltered.org)



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