

MINISTRY THANKFULNESS

Blessings from Resident Graduates

Open House Ministries is blessed to have a dedicated staff. Many were former residents who found the ministry when they were homeless and their families were in challenging situations. They went through our program, and most importantly, found faith in Christ. Today, they are walking testimonies to change through trust, commitment, and love.

We are grateful for each one of them. In celebration of the Thanksgiving season, we asked them to share their hearts and thoughts on how being at Open House Ministries has impacted their lives and the lives of their families. These are three of our resident graduate staff members.



Open House Ministries is the foundation that God set for me, so he could rebuild my life to walk in his plan and purpose. A family I always wanted and air that was breathed into me to bring me back to life.

Living at Open House Ministries is a dream beyond what I could ever imagine. My first real SAFE place. Every day I wake up and go to sleep knowing I am loved, worthy and deserving."

~ Angie Fosburg
Wheel House Manager



Open House Ministries is so much more than just a shelter. It is a welcoming, safe place where my family was reunited and restored. The program sparked a fire in me. Living here made me want to be a better person, not only for myself, but for my children. I give all the credit to God, and OHM is where I found him."

~ Alexis Rhodes
OHM Receptionist



Open House Ministries completely changed the trajectory of my life. The support and love my family and I have received is unmatched. What I'm most thankful for is the opportunity to work for Open House — to give back to the place that gave us our lives back."

~ Samantha Del Grosso
Revival House Staff

GENEROUS GIVING

Year End Giving

As a supporter of Open House Ministries, your gifts throughout the year have enabled us to help change our residents' lives in so many ways. By providing a stable living environment for families, continuing education, and most importantly, regular Bible-based encouragement, you make that happen through your generosity.

Many of you have decided to make gifts directly from your IRA to maximize your gifts and avoid unnecessary taxes. Another way we have received numerous gifts is from your Donor Advised Fund (sometimes known as a Giving Fund or similar names). These funds can be set up in numerous ways, but one of the best ways is transferring appreciated stock to avoid capital gains taxes. This makes larger year-end gifts possible and gives you the flexibility to delay making a large gift while providing you with a current year tax deduction. This can allow you to take time to prayerfully consider where, when and how much to give and plan a more comprehensive giving strategy.

Giving appreciated assets can make you a more cheerful giver because these assets are almost like a gift from God. Thanks to His leading, you have enjoyed a blessing that acknowledges the fact that He is the rightful owner of all that we have, and we are just trying to be a good steward of what He has entrusted to us.

If you have any questions about how to give through funds like this or would like to discuss other unique ways to make a generous year-end gift, please contact Jean LaCrosse at 360-737-0300 or email jean.lacrosse@sheltered.org.

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

Rooted in Christ or arranged in a vase?

This time of year the sidewalks are covered in leaves. The air is crisp, the colors are rich, and it feels like the whole world is letting go. It's not so different from the vase of fresh flowers on the counter, dropping its petals—both are beautiful, both will soon fade, yet the reason why changes everything.

A leaf falls because it belongs to a tree. Its season has run its course, but the roots are still alive, holding fast through winter, ready to send out new life in the spring. That's change, not death.

Cut flowers are another story. Their roots are gone. They may look alive for a while—bright, fragrant, arranged just so—but what looks like life is really the slow fade of death.

That difference is everything. From the outside, leaves and cut flowers look the same. And when families arrive at Open House Ministries, their struggles often look the same too—loss, instability, hardship. But what's happening underneath matters. Some are in a hard season with roots still drawing strength. Others show what is true of us all apart from Christ: like cut flowers, we can look put-together for a time, but without roots we cannot endure.

Genesis tells the story plainly. God warned Adam, *"In the day you eat of it you shall surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). A warning that can sound confusing, because there they stood in the sunlight after eating the fruit. Still breathing. Still alive to the eye. Yet the devastating sever had taken place. The first sign wasn't their bodies falling to the ground, but their hearts pulling away. They ran and hid. The closeness they once knew with God was replaced with fear, shame, and distance. What had

been a secure attachment was now a broken one.

Parenting classes, job training, and financial help, are all good and necessary things. But if that's all we give, it's like topping off the vase or trimming the stems. You don't tape dead flowers back onto a tree. And you don't fix rootless life by adding a little sugar to the water. What people need is to be rooted again—to belong, to be securely attached, to draw life from Christ himself. And this attachment isn't something we can manufacture; it comes only as a gift of grace.

One resident put it this way: *"My faith was dead before I came here. But in the very first class I started to*

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feel it come alive again." The truth was they didn't need to tell me that for it to be unmistakable. I could already see it—not because faith itself can be seen, but because its fruit can. I saw resilience where there had only been despair. I saw courage to face the courts, to tell the truth, to walk into counseling, to begin rebuilding trust with children. Those are not small things.

At the end of the day, that's the test. Are we rooted in Christ, or are we only arranged in the vase? One lasts. The other is just display until the petals fall. And it isn't only individuals who face that question—whole cultures do too. A vase full of cut flowers can look alive for a season, but without roots, the fading is certain. That's why the work of Open House Ministries is not just about keeping appearances fresh, but about helping people put down roots in the only place life endures.

• Chaplain Jon Nichols



OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES

Peace on Earth

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Thursday, Friday, & Saturday
November 13th, 14th & 15th
10 am ~ 5 pm

OHM Family Resource Center Gym
905 W. 13th Street • Vancouver

Great holiday shopping, festive cookies, and holiday themed drinks!



REVIVAL HOUSE
THRIFT STORE

Adopt a Family 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 will be helpful.

Last day to drop off gifts will be Friday, December 19th.

Gift Guidelines and Ideas

- Toys and clothing items from the family's wish list, wrapped and delivered by Friday, December 19th.
- Gift cards such as Target, Fred Meyer, WINCO foods or a gas card.

To adopt a family for Christmas, please contact **Claudia Merritt at 360-737-0300** or email claudia.merritt@sheltered.org, and she will give you the details needed for your family adoption.

SHELTER NEEDS

Clorox wipes • Paper towels
Bottled water • Deodorant
Kid's shampoo • Baby wash
8.5 x 11 Copy paper
Canned Fruit
One-pound packages of hamburger

TOURS & TALKS

Join us for a
First Friday Tour
Noon to 1 pm

To sign up,
contact us at
events@sheltered.org



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

P.O. Box 242
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www.sheltered.org