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MESSENGER

Helping Families, Transforming Lives



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Special Winter Edition
2008-09

We're OPEN!

As if Christmas wasn't exciting enough... I have received the best present ever! After six years of planning, and nearly four years of building we are finally OPEN! It has been a long road, and my thanks goes out to all of you. From spreading the word about My Father's House to donating furniture, clothing, food, time... fundraising events and of course financial gifts... \$3.8 million later, we are here, and we are open!

We have built the 30-family shelter TOGETHER. There have been many times over the past four years that I have wondered if we were going to make it, then just as I was losing hope, I would look at a family who is so grateful that they have a warm safe place to call home – a place where they can stay together – and I knew we couldn't give up.

The most difficult part of opening our doors is that we have to open slowly. We're not sure what it will cost (we can only estimate) for utilities. PGE estimates that it will cost us about \$1500-\$2000 per month for just electricity! So we have taken in five families for December and we are hoping to have enough funds to continue to take one to two families each month until we have all 30 units full and sheltering families in need.

If you haven't toured My Father's House, you should. It

is absolutely amazing what God has provided for us. We love to show it off, so if you would like a tour, please sign up by calling Heather at 503-492-3046 x224. Tour dates are listed on our website, www.familyshelter.org.

Reservations are required.

Maybe you're looking for that end of the year gift to give and thought about us. If so, and you would like to give financially, we'd love to have you partner with us. You can give any amount in any way that you would like. We take all major

credit cards; we can debit your bank account; you can make it a one time gift; or you make it a recurring gift each month. Oh, we take cash and checks too. Of course all your donations are tax-deductible and we send you a receipt to make it easier. If you would like to give, please call Cindy at 503-492-3046 x223 and she will be happy to assist you.

Again, thank you for rejoicing with us! We are so excited to have you as part of our vision of "Helping Families and Transforming Lives".

God bless you & Merry Christmas!

~Cathe

Cathe Wiese, Co-founder and Executive Director



DON WE NOW... apparel from Shared Blessings, an on-site "store" for residents. More photos of the new house inside!!

House Tours

Beginning in January, you can tour our new facility and learn about our program the third Thursday of each month from 7-8 pm. Reservations are required. Call Heather to sign up! (503) 492-3046, ext. 224.

My Father's House is
OPEN!
... just in time for
Christmas. Look inside for
photos and Q&A about
our brand new building!

Our First Five Families

Mom & 2-year-old daughter **b** Mom with two boys **b** Couple with 3 young children **b** Mom with two teens **b** Young mom and new baby

Questions from You, about our New Home

How long can a family stay? Families can stay up to four months. In fact we encourage it! Many times a family may get in a hurry and want to rush out as soon as they have a job. But we encourage them to stay and take advantage of all our classes, especially our finance class.

How many family members can stay in a room? We designed the shelter so that each room can hold up to five people. However, there are few rooms with doors between them, just like a hotel. So if the family has six or more people, we simply take a door off and give them two rooms. Our ongoing goal is to keep families together, while working on their homeless issues together.

How many families can MFH hold? We can house up to 30 families. But realistically we need to fill the building up slowly. Not just to give us time to adjust to the huge jump but also due to finances. The community has been wonderful, but times are tough. We have to pay electricity, gas, water and insurance. The more people living here, the more utilities we consume. The good news is that you can help. For just \$35 per month, you can sponsor someone at the shelter, providing all the housing needs... from water and electricity to life changing classes and case management.

What about donations? Yes, we have a nice new huge garage and a shopping room as well, but the community has been so generous (nice problem to have) that we're full clear up to the legal limit (24" from the ceiling). We are sorry for the inconvenience but for right now, we have to say "please wait". Oh, and if you'd like to volunteer in our donation center, we'd be happy to have you! Contact Heather at heather@familyshelter.org, or call her directly at 503-492-3046 x224.

Questions and comments are always appreciated. You can ask your questions by phone, 503-492-3046, by email, cathe@familyshelter.org, or on our blog, www.familyshelter.org and look for the link on the left side of the page.

*Christmas is forever, not for just one day,
for loving, sharing, giving, are not to put away
like bells and lights and tinsel, in some box upon a shelf.
The good you do for others is good you do yourself...*

~Norman Wesley Brooks,
"Let Every Day Be Christmas," 1976

www.familyshelter.org

Home for the Holidays: Photos from our New House



TRULY HE TAUGHT US... The Learning Center will provide training in many essential subjects.



LET YOUR HEART BE LIGHT... The Counseling Center: important to those rebuilding their lives.



SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE... Residents sleep easy in apartments like this one, knowing their family is safe.



ALL FOR THE LITTLE ONES... The Children's Center is perfectly equipped for the youngest residents.



LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM ROOM... The Chapel has room for many hearts.



BRING US SOME FIGGY PUDDING... Each apartment has its own kitchen area.

503-492-3046

My Father's House

Mark Your Calendar

December 10-31

Canned Food Drive at Mini Storage Units in surrounding Portland area. Drive by and donate today!



December 1-21

Purchase your Christmas Tree at the East Hill Church Lot on 5th & Miller (by the library and support My Father's House!

December 13-14 & 20-21

Come by and have some hot spiced cider at Gresham Station. We will be wrapping gifts raising money for My Father's House. Come by, shop and have us wrap your gifts.



February 15

February is just around the corner and we'll be having a raffle drawing for a re-built 1980 T-top Sting-Ray. Everything rebuilt from the inside out.

We're excited to offer you tickets, just in time for Christmas and Valentines Day. \$20 each or purchase 5 and get one free. Who wouldn't want a chance to win this awesome car?

July 20

Yes, July seems like forever... but it's not if you're planning a golf tournament. My Father's House has been offered to join Columbia Edgewater Country Club for a Golf experience you won't soon forget. Join us for our very first golf tournament!



Items We Need

- ☆ Kleenex (it's cold season!)
- ☆ kitchen towels (fabric... for our learning center)
- ☆ bus tickets (for job interviews)
- ☆ \$10 Safeway gift cards (to buy milk for the kids)

Volunteer Opportunities

- ☆ December 1-21: volunteers for 3-hour shifts at our Christmas Tree lot
- ☆ Hosts and planning committee for our Annual Benefit Dinner, happening April 24
- ☆ Golf Tournament Team Leaders needed immediately for July 20 event

Call 503-492-3046 for further information.

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