



Journeys of Hope

EASTER 2022



Love Never Fails ...

All Things New at Easter

opendoor
MISSION
CELEBRATING 70 years OF RESTORING hope CHANGING lives

156 N. Plymouth Avenue
Rochester, NY 14608
(585) 454-6696
www.OpenDoorMission.com

Director's Message



Anna Valeria-Iseman
Executive Director

*This is My
commandment,
that you love one
another as I have
loved you.*

— John 15:12, ESV

Love Never Fails

Dear Friend,

If you were homeless, hungry and lonely, and came to Open Door Mission this Easter, you would receive a welcome to warm your heart. That's because you would be treated, maybe for the first time in a long while, with respect and dignity.

Someone would smile at you, invite you to sit down and ask how you are doing. You would be offered a hot meal, a chance to clean up and a place to sleep. And that would be just the beginning of your new life.

We understand people who come here have seen hard and desperate days. In time, we hope and pray everyone finds that Jesus Christ is ready to help carry their heavy load.

This is what you make possible for every hurting person who comes to Open Door Mission. Your donations, prayers and volunteer service allow our team here to draw close with compassion, sound advice and physical help. Because you care, individuals and families in crisis can break the cycle of poverty and look forward to stable, secure lives.

It's a great day when a person who came to us beaten down by life is lifted up by our risen Lord. They realize God loves them and they have something to give back to help others, just as you lovingly cared for them.

Love never fails. It warms hearts and renews lives. It's the most wonderful thing to witness! And there's no better time to share God's love than Easter, when we celebrate Him making all things new. May God bless you this Easter and always!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anna Valeria-Iseman'.

Anna Valeria-Iseman
Executive Director

Thank you for your continued prayers and support!

Rooted on the Rock

How You Helped Tom Find Solid Ground

As a young child, Tom had no idea what it felt like to have roots. Raised by parents who were both drug addicts, he drifted from one place to another until he settled in with his grandfather. For the first time, Tom could plant himself and grow. An excellent student, he attended an all-boys high school on an academic scholarship. However, when he left home to attend college, he began smoking marijuana and drinking. He dropped out in his second semester and joined the military.

During his service, Tom stayed clean and sober. It seemed he had found stability again, but it would not last. He came home to learn his girlfriend had cheated on him. Then his beloved grandfather passed away. Tom's foundation crumbled. He began using hard drugs and was hospitalized with mental health issues.

“You gave me a second chance!”

It seemed like Tom was destined for the same kind of life his parents had led. He took on a series of part-time jobs, unable to stay for any length of time. He attended a recovery group and gave up hard drugs, but he continued to use marijuana and alcohol. “It was like giving up a gun for a knife,” he admits.

Finally, facing homelessness, Tom knew it was time to take his recovery seriously. He contacted Open Door Mission and was accepted into the program. Over the next nine months, he says, “I learned what recovery is really about.”

Here, Tom found what was missing from his previous attempts at recovery: one-on-one support — and God. Tom admits his faith had been “shaky” before coming to Open Door, but he learned it was the one thing he could lean on. “It was very much a part of my recovery,” he says. “My belief is what pushed me to take it seriously.”

After graduation, Tom got a job and is saving to buy a house. He has shared his story with other men at the Mission and found it rewarding. Someday, he would like to come back as a volunteer.

Firmly rooted at last, Tom thanks you for helping him through a difficult time. “You gave me a second chance,” he says.



What Easter Means at Open Door Mission

Like any holiday, Easter reminds us of our favorite memories and traditions.

We asked some of our staff what Easter really means to them, and their answers went far beyond brunches and egg hunts. Here's what they said:

“Growing up with two younger brothers and a sister, we would all look forward to receiving our Easter baskets filled with chocolate bunnies, marshmallows and peanut butter eggs. But it wasn't until I was in my late twenties that I learned about the real meaning of Easter and the one who holds my future in His hands.”

— Chris Scribani, Associate Director of Development

“For me ... Easter serves as a reminder that I am loved unconditionally by a God who sacrificed His life for me and then rose again that I may experience that love over and over again.”

— Shawn Baldwin, Volunteer Manager

“As a young boy, to me Easter meant all things new: new suit, shirt and shoes. As an adult, it is the season of the Crucifixion, the Burial and the Resurrection that has made all things new: new life, mercies and graces.”

— Robert Williams, Director of Operations.

Miller Building Renovations on Track

We were happy to report on breaking ground for our Miller Building on October 7 ...

and we're even happier to tell you about the progress made over the winter! Despite the cold, renovation of the building into housing units has continued, including installation of new windows. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of Hamilton Stern Construction, we are on track to reach our goal of welcoming our first occupants this fall.

Located one door down from our Samaritan House emergency shelter, the Miller Building will feature 24 permanent supportive apartments — 13 studios and 11 one-bedroom units for homeless individuals. In addition, we will provide on-site support services for residents including case management, job readiness training, financial management, skill training and job search assistance.

Executive Director Anna Valeria-Iseman says completion of the apartments will not only help residents regain their independence; they will improve and enhance the neighborhood.



Tune In to Hope!

Did you know Open Door Mission has its own radio show called Hope Lives?

The show, hosted by our Executive Director, Anna Valeria-Iseman, discusses our work at Open Door Mission and the issues facing those who are homeless. You can listen to our show on 1040AM / FM 92.1 / FM 95.5 or find our podcast at wysl1040.com

