



March 2024

MISSION *Messenger*

ASHLEE FINDS ACCOUNTABILITY AT OPEN HEART

YOU HELPED A YOUNG MOTHER
FOCUS ON HER PURPOSE

“Open Heart has always opened their door to me,” says Ashlee.

In fact, Ashlee has been to our Open Heart Women’s Shelter three times. The first time, deep in addiction, she had recently lost her daughter to foster care. “I was just hopeless. I had nothing left in me.”

After leaving Open Heart that first time, Ashlee struggled. She got into trouble with the law and ended up in drug court. But despite some setbacks, she eventually got clean and found a good, safe place to live.

Keep reading Ashlee's story inside →



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR:

Amy Downing • Prearrangement Counselor
adowning@armeshuntfuneralhome.com
765-948-4178

ASHLEE FINDS ACCOUNTABILITY *continued from cover*

And she had a strong motivation to stay sober: she was pregnant again and vowed to give this child the best start in life she could.

Sadly, Ashlee ran into more problems. “I did a month in jail and I lost my job. I wasn’t able to catch up after I got out, and I lost everything I had worked so hard for,” she recalls. “It sucked me down into a depression. I felt like I didn’t care and I just wanted to give up.”

But Ashlee didn’t give up. She knew help waited for her and her baby at Open Heart.

“I knew going back to Open Heart was the best thing for me. I knew, where I was at in my life, if I’d gone anywhere else, I would have fallen back,” she says.

“The last time I was there, I didn’t see the purpose in it. Maybe I needed to venture off and find my own purpose. But I learned that doing it my way wasn’t working anymore.”



Ashlee stayed at Open Heart and took classes to help prepare her for being independent and caring for her baby. She was determined to stay as long as it took to give her child a better life than she’d had. “I grew up around nothing but drug addicts. My mom’s been an addict my whole life. My dad was never there. I don’t remember having a happy time as a kid.”

The key to Ashlee’s success at Open Heart this time around was keeping an open mind. “I used to not believe in God,” she admits, “but I started going to church.

“And God told me, ‘If you give everything to Me, I’ll take care of it.’”

Ashlee’s faith inspired her to reach out to other women at the shelter and encourage them on their journeys. “I noticed a lot of the girls coming in might not believe in God, and I would offer to take them to church with me. And if I see them doing something wrong, I try to help them out with being accountable.”

Just days before Christmas, Ashlee gave birth to a daughter, Acaysia. And weeks later, Ashlee had another reason to celebrate: a whole year of sobriety!

Today, Ashlee is in a committed relationship, and she and her daughter are safe. “I’m really focusing on the purpose I have in life,” she says.

Ashlee can look back on the rough road she traveled to get here, and offer some advice to those following in her footsteps at Open Heart. “You get a lot of accountability at the shelter, so you can get on your feet and do the things you need to do,” she says.

“It may take some time to change, but change is here if you want it.”

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MISSION



Marion Made Fashion Show

Renewed Boutique & Thrift and Renewed Gas City provided the found treasures to build from in this sustainable show as IWU Art + Design, Marion Design Co., Carey Services and Grant County Rescue Mission, as well as so many individuals and teams, had fun partnering together. With donated clothing we were able to reduce, renew... re-purpose! The art installment began on February 10 in Downtown Marion at the Kennedy Arts Center and runs through April 10.



Little Caesars' Love Kitchen

Little Caesars partners with the Grant County Rescue Mission every week locally, but recently there was a special national engagement as the Love Kitchen came by for a visit. Fresh pizzas were cooked right onsite in the Love Kitchen for dinner, serving guests of the Mission.

Life Change Program Graduation

It's a year of your life that you'll never get back, but you might just get your life back for doing it. Our most recent graduation was held on January 25; we hold these joyous events every three months. Please watch social media for upcoming dates and join us in celebration!





Rev. Brad D. Terhune
Executive Director/CEO

CELEBRATING NEW LIFE

Dear Friends in Ministry,

There is no better time than spring to celebrate new life. After months of cold and snow, we finally see patches of green grass and last fall's tulip bulbs coming up. It is inspiring and encouraging!

I think many here at the Grant County Rescue Mission feel the same. But for them, springtime can come at any time of year, whenever they overcome the hopelessness of their spiritual winter.

The warmth of God's love breaks through the ice of despair and new life is ready to burst forth.

Through our risen Lord, relationships are restored. Relationships broken by addiction or abuse are made strong by healing and hope. No matter what trials our guests have endured, whatever mistakes they have made, God, in His mercy, makes all things new.

Your gifts and prayers give our hurting neighbors a place to experience that renewal, to become the men and women God created them to be.

Like Ashlee in this issue of *Mission Messenger*, some of them might have to pass through our doors several times before they embrace the new life God so freely offers. But once they do, their lives are transformed.

I pray that everyone who joins us for Easter dinner this year is open to new life in Christ. And I thank you for making that possible. May God bless you this Easter season and always!

LAST YEAR, YOUR KIND SUPPORT HELPED TO:

- Serve almost 55,000 nourishing meals to hungry neighbors.
- Provide more than 16,000 warm, comfortable bed stays to men, women, and children seeking warm, safe refuge.
- Assist 47 individuals in our recovery programs — providing men and women with life-changing tools for stability and lasting change.



423 S. Gallatin St.
Marion, IN 46953

765-662-0988

mygcrm.org
info@mygcrm.org

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Brad Terhune,
Executive Director/CEO



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