



# Lighthouse

Portland Rescue Mission | Holiday 2024

## HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Annette's Path from  
Lost to Found

Giving Hope. Restoring Life.

# THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT!



Eric Bauer,  
Executive Director

*Dear Faithful  
Partners in Ministry,*

Since 2006, I have had the great honor of shepherding Portland Rescue Mission as the Executive Director. During this time, my wife, Ruth, and I have witnessed our community generously provide hope and vital care to countless neighbors in great need. We have seen so many lives transformed, families reunited, and fresh starts leading to self-sufficiency and renewed purpose.

The work is holistic, marvelously messy, and fueled by God's grace. Every day our staff and volunteers walk alongside men, women, and children as they courageously choose to make the arduous journey away from homelessness and addiction.

***"It never gets old. Compassionate care ignites hope and extinguishes despair."***

The love and truth of Jesus are proclaimed, and faith is born. Trust is built, and people are drawn from isolation into caring community. Life skills and vocational training lead to fulfilling work. Addiction recovery programming facilitates deep healing, sobriety, and freedom. Financial and legal entanglements are resolved through advocacy support. Bodies are nourished and nurtured to health. And much more.

Ruth and I have loved being immersed in this dynamic, life-giving ministry for the last 18 years, so it was bittersweet when we felt our season of service at Portland Rescue Mission was coming to an end. In late February of this year, I notified the Board of my decision to retire from my position. A national search for a new Executive Director is underway. My last day of service at the Mission will be November 1st.

The transition planning since February has gone smoothly because we have an exceptional leadership team with decades of experience and an extraordinarily vibrant ministry culture of highly-relational, Christ-centered, joyful servants. We also have a passionate community of volunteers, donors, churches, and neighbors who are committed to this vital ministry. I am deeply gratified and very confident that the light of Portland Rescue Mission will shine brighter than ever.

Thank you for your partnership in lifting and transforming lives!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Bauer".

Eric Bauer, Executive Director



# Eric Bauer, Executive Director 2006 - 2024



# From Lost to Found

## Annette's Path to Independence

Annette first reached out to the Mission in 2023. Having lived on the streets, Annette was finally at a place where she would feel safe and obtain the support needed to overcome years of trauma and addiction.

***"I prayed to God to please guide me where I need to be," Annette said. "The next day, I was led to Shepherd's Door."***

Before reaching out to the Mission, Annette was in and out of her addiction, living on the streets in survival mode day to day, constantly looking over her shoulder. As a woman, she was among the most vulnerable of the population who were easy prey and often victims of extreme violence. Annette lived on the edge, constantly doing double-takes to ensure her safety – she never felt safe.

"I didn't like who I was, my life was out of control, and I had no purpose," expressed Annette.

Annette entered the New Life Program, our one-year program that offers holistic care to help people overcome addiction and negative life



patterns. Within the first month of the program, Annette prayed to God, "I give my will over to you." From that point on, her false belief of being unworthy and unfit slowly began to diminish. Over the next year, Annette prospered into a woman who fundamentally knew she was worthy of loving and being loved.



As Annette's time at Shepherd's Door progressed, she began to cultivate vocational skills and participate in our job readiness opportunities. These programs are designed to help people obtain practical on-the-job experience, career planning, and job search skills while ultimately becoming more independent upon graduating from our program.

The only hiccup? Annette did not have a birth certificate. Something that had plagued her life. Over the years, she floated from one low-income job to another taking odd-end jobs that would pay the rent. Annette could never obtain secure employment without proper identification.

"Before receiving support from Shepherd's Door, I was a lost soul with no direction in my life," Annette explained. "Without a birth certificate, I never felt like I had an identity. I didn't feel like I was a real person."

Since birth, Annette had never been able to show proof of her birth certificate, which meant that she could not plan a career that lasted longer than one year. After a year of employment, she was inevitably laid off without being able

to produce true identification. The saga that she endured over her adult life led to the trauma and addiction issues she faced.

The Advocacy Team at Shepherd's Door immediately knew that it would take a deep and time-consuming process to obtain proof of Annette's birth. And that process was worth it! After two and a half years of championing Annette through the process, we are pleased to share that earlier this year, she obtained her birth certificate!

"By working through the process of obtaining a birth certificate, I feel like a lot of doors are opening for me," Annette explained. "And my confidence has increased drastically."

And today? Annette is living in a stable community, where she is active in supporting others and walking alongside those who've had similar experiences. "I'm excited to start a new journey into living the life God has planned for me!" exclaimed Annette.

And, we are excited to walk alongside Annette as she embarks on this new journey!



## An Advocacy Specialist's Perspective

As an Advocacy Specialist at Shepherd's Door, my goal is to support guests at the Mission who are rebuilding their lives after suffering from trauma, homelessness, or addiction. When we first found out about Annette not having a birth certificate two years ago, everyone at the Mission was heartbroken. We could not imagine how much of a daily struggle it must have been for her to survive and make a decent living.

When we first began to support Annette through the process of obtaining her identification, our immediate desire was to serve as a knowledgeable guide and steady support to ensure she was informed and empowered throughout the legal process. In the end, it was immensely gratifying to see Annette beaming the day the judge told her that she would receive a birth certificate.

Every day, the Advocacy Specialists at Portland Rescue Mission work alongside legal aids or legal counsel to help our guests maneuver complex legal systems to secure

essential rights and services. Through consistent advocacy, our team works to ensure that men and women address their current legal challenges with as much care as possible. It took many advocates and support specialists to walk Annette through this journey. Annette is just one of many whom we feel honored to help build a foundation for a healthier and more stable future.

- Taylor  
Advocacy Specialist



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# ***RUNNING*** Towards A New Life

Participants in our New Life Programs at Shepherd's Door and The Harbor have embraced training for events, like a local 5K and the Beaverton Half Marathon, as a crucial element of their recovery journey. Engaging in structured physical activities provides a healthy outlet for stress and builds individual confidence. Both are critical factors in overcoming addiction and trauma.



race fosters teamwork and a sense of belonging, which are essential components of a supportive recovery environment. The bonds formed during these training sessions extend beyond the track, providing a network of support that participants can rely on throughout their recovery.

Moreover, the training programs align with the holistic approach of the New Life Programs, addressing not just physical health, but also mental and emotional well-being. With the help of training programs, such as **Up and Running**, participants establish routines and develop a sense of responsibility and accountability. The endorphins released during exercise contribute to improved mood and reduced anxiety, aiding in emotional stability. By participating in events, like the 5K and the Beaverton Half



The discipline and commitment required for training mirror the dedication needed in their recovery, fostering a sense of accomplishment and purpose. These events offer participants an opportunity to set tangible goals, track their progress, and experience the thrill of crossing the finish line, all of which boost their self-esteem and confidence.

In addition to the physical benefits, training for these events creates a strong sense of community among participants. They train together, support, and celebrate each other's milestones, building relationships based on mutual encouragement and shared experiences. This camaraderie is vital in combating the isolation often felt during recovery. The shared goal of completing a



Marathon, individuals in the New Life Programs learn to channel their energy into positive activities, creating a foundation for lasting recovery and a healthier, more fulfilling life.

We are so proud of the participants, and can't wait for the next event we tackle together!

# What are You Thankful for This Year?

*"Without Portland Rescue Mission, I had no hope. They saved one life, and it was my time. That's what I'm thankful for, that they took time, an effort, to put into me to make me to where I can take time and effort to put into somebody else."*

**- Mark**

*"I'm thankful to be alive. I know personally how close I came to dying. I'm thankful for the love of Jesus Christ who directed me and led me on this journey, and has been with me every single step of this journey."*

**- Michael**

*"I am most thankful for the community, the people that have walked through this, also my counselors and my chaplain. I could go on for days about my gratitude. My gratitude list is huge"*

**- Royal**

*"I'm just so grateful for Shepherd's Door and Portland Rescue Mission, and I know it's the donors that make it happen because it's all free to me and I'm thankful to God and without this place, I would still be out there and I might not be alive and so I'm just grateful that they gave me my life back."*

**- Jody**

*"Thankful for this opportunity. I'm thankful for finding this place, finding Yuri. Thankful for all the work that the staff put in. That's pretty big. There's a lot to be thankful for."*

**- Brandon**

*"I am most thankful for the opportunities that are coming, for prayers being answered, for having a relationship that I now believe is real. Hearing people God spoke to me, God this, God that, I didn't understand it before so I was skeptical about it. Yeah. That's what I'm most grateful for that it is real, that I do have one."*

**- Timothy**

*"I'm most thankful for the opportunity to get my life back together."*

**- LJ**



# HOOD TO COAST



This August, a group of Portland Rescue Mission program graduates, staff, and volunteers teamed up to run the 2024 Hood to Coast Relay in hopes of raising funds and spreading awareness about our highly successful recovery programs. Under the banner “Sober and Thriving,” these 12 runners told inspiring stories of men and women who broke free of the chains of addiction and found freedom at Portland Rescue Mission. While Oregon bears the devastating rank of being among the most plagued by addiction, this team shined a light that sparked hope for many along the racecourse of the world’s largest relay this year.



“Time and time again, I have seen God meet our guests in the midst of their suffering to bring redemption and hope.”

– **Beth, Staff**

“I have seen lives radically changed. I’ve been blown away ...”

– **Krystal, Staff**

“I was so touched when one of the women shared with me how the knowledge she gained from my presentation helped her have the courage to walk into a bank and open a bank account. I chose to join this team because I have seen how effective Portland Rescue Mission is in helping people celebrate victory over homelessness and addiction.”

– **Sandra, Volunteer**

“I was in their program with my three young children. I gained many life skills & a new life.”

– **Elaine, Graduate**

“When I first came to Portland in 2016, I was shocked at how many people had no roof over their heads, were in the throes of horrific addiction, and saw no real future for themselves. I started volunteering at Portland Rescue Mission to do what I could to help. Portland Rescue Mission is such an incredible place because they help break the cycle of addiction and help people get better.”

– **Bryan, Volunteer**

“I have seen people celebrate victory over homelessness and addiction, and this team is part of the reason I am where I am today. It is a powerful thing to witness, and I want everyone to know there is hope and room for more people to find freedom.”

– **Chad, Graduate**

“I see how hospitality builds bridges into the hearts of hurting people, and our programs give them a safe place to sort through their lives, find sobriety, hear about God’s love, and experience true healing.”

– **Erin, Staff**



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