



OPEN DOOR
ministries
high point, nc

2020
Annual Report

MISSION STATEMENT

To serve, empower, and minister to clients in order to prevent and end hunger and homelessness through advocacy, education, housing, and coordination of services.



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Executive Director's Report

New challenges bring new opportunities. In June of 2020, when I took over the role of Executive Director at Open Door Ministries following the retirement of long time Executive Director Steve Key, I didn't know how much of a challenge we would be facing in the coming months. Within my first week we had a COVID-19 outbreak among our clients. Fortunately, none were very sick and all recovered quickly, but this event forced us to start thinking outside the box and to come up with new ways to keep everyone safe in the ever- changing world of a pandemic. Thanks to our dedicated and outstanding staff, we immediately began writing and implementing new policies and procedures to keep our staff, volunteers, and clients as safe as possible during these trying times.

We worked closely with partnering agencies and began pre-testing and quarantining procedures for anyone staying in the shelter. We added Plexiglas partitions between beds, hand free sinks and switches in the dorms, and sanitation stations. We also contracted with professional cleaners to do deep cleaning of the entire facility two days a week, and prepared meals to-go to feed those in the community. We have continued to provide all of our services and programs throughout the pandemic while expanding our food program to reach even more of those who are in need. Many of our methods have become the model for similar organizations in North and South Carolina. We continue to learn and adapt daily to the ever-changing needs of our clients and the world around us. This is what makes Open Door special.

The most important thing that I have realized in the past few months is the overall goodness of people. Often in today's world we are inundated with negativity, but what I have witnessed over the past few months is that people are good and caring and desire to help others. Our donors, churches, businesses, and volunteers are what enables Open Door Ministries to make such a positive impact in our community. The clients we work with are often at a low point in life and struggling just to meet essential daily needs, but through Open Door we are able to help meet those needs. Our staff continues to work daily on site to provide the best experience possible for all of those we work with. We never forget our mission: Food, Housing, Healing, Hope.

Ryan Ross
Executive Director

Board Chairman's Report

It is my privilege to be serving as Board Chair since July 2020. Back in 2019, when I said "yes" to serve in this way, I had no idea what kind of year we would be facing. The major reason for my serving on the Board and then saying "yes" to this new role is Steve Key. Steve, after 19 years as the first and only Executive Director, retired in June. It was not his retirement that inspired me to serve - rather it was his passion and his non-anxious steerage of the ministry that challenged me to serve. This community owes Steve a great deal, his ministry has been a healing balm undeterred by the many changes this community has experienced.

We all know too well the unique changes and adaptations that everyone has faced these past 12 months. The impact of the pandemic has touched clients, programs and staff. To add to the challenges, we began in June the transition to a new Executive Director, Ryan Ross. Ryan hit the ground running. He has been a blessing in the midst of the whirlwind - showing steady leadership and commitment to the ministry. We are in good and gracious hands as we go forward.

In order for Open Door Ministries to continue the vital services this community needs we have been challenged to adapt our facilities, our methods of client contact, our volunteer procedures, and more. I am amazed at the agility of the staff, interns and volunteers to modify and not lose sight of the goal to serve others.

Our facilities have been stressed as we adapt to the pandemic, requiring more immediate and strategic planning than ever before. In the midst of this we continue striving to make the spaces we invite clients into as safe and as comforting as any home.

I am thankful and in awe of the staff of Open Door. Every hour of every day this ministry is staffed by dedicated people. At our main campus on Centennial street and at our Arthur Cassell House there is no holiday or day off for the ministry we provide. This is the heartbeat of Open Door Ministries: people serving, planning, teaching, assisting, encouraging, feeding, housing and more.

I am grateful for the undergirding of Open Door Ministries through the efforts of the Board and Advisory Board. These folks are indispensable, providing guidance, hands and feet on the ground, monetary support and creative wisdom. The mission has benefitted from the diverse and talented Board members who volunteer their time.

We also are indebted to the congregations, students and various businesses that are steadfast in making themselves available in support of this ministry. Just one example is at the beginning of the pandemic when St. Mary's Episcopal Church graciously opened up their facility which allowed us to conform our shelter to the social distancing requirements.

Our fundraising events for this past year were severely impacted by the pandemic. Yet so many of you continued to make sacrifices and contribute to the ministry. Thank you! We still face the challenge of in-person events this year. I hope you will be both patient and responsive to our virtual efforts. We all eagerly look forward to safely getting back together for fellowship and fun.

You will see in this Annual Report a mosaic of stories and statistics that make up the larger picture of changed lives and improved community. What I witness is the hopes and dreams of persons who are served and those who serve coming together to grow a new community, one more caring and more secure.

Open Door Ministries is leaning into the next challenges and opportunities of serving the "least of these." From its inception, the mission has not changed the circumstances have. We are still committed to the Good Samaritan model of meeting people where they are and helping to move them to higher ground. We will accomplish this together with a community of givers, thinkers, and doers. I invite you to join in the ministry in any way you can, giving and serving with others joyfully. Thank you!



Rev. Joe Blankinship
Chairman, Board of Directors

Services provided by Open Door Ministries in 2020

Men's Homeless Shelter

- Provided emergency housing for 315 homeless men
- Assisted 108 men in obtaining jobs

Father's Table

- Served 77,000 meals to homeless and low-income individuals

Permanent Supportive Housing

- Provided permanent housing and supportive services to 24 chronically homeless individuals

Rapid ReHousing

- Provided permanent housing and supportive services for 68 homeless individuals and families

Transitional Housing

- Provided transitional housing program for 29 homeless veterans

Emergency Assistance

- Assisted 186 individuals or families with rent or utility assistance
- Assisted 1,978 households with food assistance

Open Door Ministries Events

Our annual events are key to our fundraising efforts, but also a great chance for us to get to know our community supporters.

Annual Luncheon *High Point Country Club*

Our Annual Luncheon is a time of celebration, highlighting our work and ministry over the course of the prior year. It is an opportunity for us to share some of the personal stories of our clients and the impact Open Door is having on their lives. We deeply regretted having to cancel our Annual Luncheon, Shared Blessings, in March 2020 due to Covid-19.



Feast of Caring

The Feast of Caring is a fun, delicious way to support Open Door Ministries. Homemade soups, breads, desserts, and live entertainment by the Major Sevens Band make this one of our most popular events. We also sell a wide variety of pottery donated by local potters. Though we had to cancel the event in 2020, we look forward to seeing everyone again in November of 2021 when we can gather in person.



Crop Hunger Walk

For over 30 years, churches, families and friends have gathered to raise awareness and money for local and world hunger. The three-mile walk symbolizes how far someone might walk to obtain water in a third world country. Crop Hunger Walk 2020 was virtual, but still a success! We had 14 teams and over 200 walkers participate. Most groups and individuals walked on their own as they felt comfortable. Thanks to Daniel Hall, board member, who chaired the event.



PTI Run on the Runway

Held each year at the Piedmont Triad International Airport, the PTI Run is a unique event drawing elite runners and families with strollers to support Second Harvest Food Bank, Greensboro Urban Ministry, and Open Door Ministries. The Run will be held in September 2021 (rescheduled from March 2021). We look forward to seeing everyone on the runway again!

Homeless Memorial Dinner

Each December the community gathers to remember those in the homeless community who died that year. A candle is lit to honor their life. This also gives the homeless a chance to enjoy a nice holiday meal, served by volunteers who support our mission. We look forward to honoring those lost in 2020 and 2021 in December of 2021.

Ilderton's Harvest Fest

2018 was the first year for Ilderton's Harvest Fest held at the High Point Public Library Plaza, and it was a great success! Kicking off the fall season, this fun outdoor event features the Mighty Fairlanes, food trucks, beer and wine, vendors and artists, and a children's area. This event was rescheduled to June 2021 with a new theme and location—stay tuned!



William Mangum Honor Cards

The William Mangum Honor Card is a special way to honor a friend or loved one during the holiday season while also supporting Open Door Ministries. Each year the painting on the card is different, reflecting a theme of hope for the homeless. These are sold at businesses and churches throughout High Point. 2020 was our best year yet for Honor Card sales. The theme for the 2020 Honor Card was *You're Gonna Be OK*, a very fitting theme for such a difficult year.



Spotlight on Our Clients



Desiree Watkins was in a difficult situation like what many other women have experienced—she was in a toxic relationship that was affecting her and her children, and it seemed she had no way out. She pointed out that “you don’t think it will happen to you.” She made the heart-wrenching decision to leave, not even having “a trash bag full of clothes.” Being homeless with nowhere to go, she was assigned to Tonya Clinard and the Rapid ReHousing program at Open Door Ministries.

Tonya provided support in many ways — being like a grandma, mentor, counselor, and offering strength to Desiree and her five children. Tonya helped Desiree find child care through the YMCA so Desiree could work as a medical technician. She began to work and save money. Desiree pointed out that when the stresses were lessened, she was freed up mentally to improve her life. Tonya helped Desiree to set goals, but Desiree had to do her part.

Desiree tapped into her many talents by starting three business ventures — Décor by Des, a home décor staging business; One Stop Clean janitorial service, and Careful Hands Solutions, an insurance referral service for autism behavioral therapy. Desiree’s oldest son is on the autism spectrum. She is excited to see how these business ventures will take off—and says with Tonya’s continued support, she has the accountability she needs to persevere and stick to the goals she and Tonya have set in place. “If you do what you’re told, it benefits you in the long run.”

Most importantly, Desiree says she has a friend in Tonya. Open Door Ministries is all about offering hope and second chances, and Desiree Watkins is an inspiring example of fresh beginnings.



My name is Ronald Johnson. I was recently released from incarceration on June 1st, 2020. I served a lengthy prison term for various crimes ranging from robbery to assaultive behaviors. My criminal liability spans 2/3 of my life. This made acclimating into mainstream society very difficult to achieve. I consistently felt like the "elephant in the room" around my family. I was spiritually and emotionally bankrupt when I was released back into society. On top of that, my perception of myself was very skewed, leading to morbid and toxic depression. But what ultimately became my life-line, my source of hope, was Open Door Ministries and the staff there.

Not only was I provided the necessities to gain a solid footing, but I was provided the greatest asset going forward—daily selfless direction by the staff at Open Door. I was given the chance to grow into my new life with their support and encouragement, which helped me see myself differently. This caused me to stop beating myself up for who I had allowed myself to become, someone that was not truly me. I am a friend, a father, and a valuable man in society.

Today I am not who I was — one placed in a life of crime and self-induced self-destruction. I had not had the opportunity to feel that my growth was possible. Now I know that all I had to do was allow others the chance to help me. And help me they did! They provided me with medical assistance, counseling, and put me in contact with service agencies I needed to get even more help, so that I could rebuild my life.

I come from a childhood background that I feel no one on the planet would volunteer for. It literally was a house of horrors. Loneliness and feeling unworthy of love were all I experienced. Today I have a strong support base, full-time employment, and a renewed sense of self. I was given time to heal and to forgive myself for my past deeds and subsequent prison sentences. I feel I am a man of high character and integrity, who has learned to give himself a break. The encouragement from the Executive Director to the volunteers has been a blessing.

When you come from a 20+ year prison sentence like I did, you feel that the staff at institutions will be jaded by the ones who don't make it. Open Door gave me the tools I needed to succeed. Along with their support, it has been an epic experience!

With my goal of working towards a functional life, I can keep myself balanced, and it encourages the selfless things that have been incorporated in my life by Open Door. I am grateful for this, as it makes me humble and encourages me to match all their support. I now take their suggestions they have offered and pay it forward to the next person.

The greatest lesson I've learned while here is that there's a different choice from who I believed I was. Looking back, I see someone who was trapped in his own self-seeking behaviors, never giving real change a chance to happen. Looking forward, Open Door has restored my faith in people, and myself. My growth as an individual can be directly attributed to the staff here who encouraged me to realize that the face of a miracle looks just like me! And for that, and the little things along the way, I am grateful.

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Vicki and David Miller
Rena and Mark Norcross
Nancy and Lin Amos
Stephanie and Michael Beaver
Barbara and Tom Eller
Carroll Ann and Jeff Miller
Mariana and Nido Qubein
Susan and Mark Clark
Kimberly Crews
Catharine and Frosty Culp
Martha Yarborough
Susan and Mike Samuel
Sandra Winebarger
Foundation (Anonymous)
Teresa and Ray Bretzmann
Sallie and Bob Amos
Kimi and Graham Culp
Bonnie and Tom Broadwater
Helen Godwin Runyon
Linda and Tim Ilderton
Jordan Washburn

Thank You!

VISION STATEMENT

Open Door Ministries alleviates the pain of homelessness and hunger by offering our neighbors hope and healing.



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