



# THE OPEN DOOR

*guiding the journey from homeless to home*

Presbyterian Night Shelter | Fall Newsletter 2023



Ken is working hard towards his Psychology degree at TCC.

## A HEART-FELT THANK YOU FROM KEN

**A** Dallas native, Ken has always worked hard; first in college while he studied finance, and then after landing a job at a brokerage firm. But when the pressures of work became too much, Ken turned to substance use in order to cope.

Although he continued to work, the disorder worsened. In the end, Ken lost his job, family, and home, spending 30 years without shelter, seeing firsthand the dangers of homelessness. "I used to sleep in front of this building...just around the corner, on the ground," he shares of his experience.

Still, without the support he needed to recover, he continued to live with his substance abuse disorder.

An acquaintance told Ken about Presbyterian Night Shelter and the services offered at True Worth Place. Right away, Ken realized how many resources were available to help him along the journey home.

The very first class he joined was Alcoholics Anonymous. "I took that class, and I started enjoying it because I didn't want to drink anymore," he says.

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With recovery now possible, Ken found even more classes to enrich his life, from budgeting to computer skills. Ken discovered more opportunities just waiting for him around every corner: like classes at TCC, where he's now working hard to acquire a Psychology degree.

"Look at me...I'm sober, I know how to pay my bills, I know how much I can spend," Ken says. "There's nothing I cannot achieve because of this program."

Now, Ken has his own apartment. He recently celebrated two years of recovery, an incredible feat made possible thanks to friends like you. He also volunteers as much as possible in Presbyterian Night Shelter's mailroom to give back.

Ken is truly thankful for your generosity, which makes it possible to keep our doors open.

***"Thank you for helping me...without you, I may not have gotten back up."***

## PATRICK IS GRATEFUL FOR FRIENDS LIKE YOU!

If you know Patrick, you know that he is an especially kind and outgoing member of our community who loves chatting and listening to 80s rock and country music. "It's just who I am," he says.

In college, Patrick played baseball until a pitching accident shattered his elbow. After that, Patrick and his wife moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he began a 25-year career in the railroad industry. He started as a conductor, then a year later transferred back to Texas and became an engineer.

After enduring the tragic loss of his wife in 2015, Patrick developed a substance abuse disorder. "When I lost her, I got really, really depressed and started doing alcohol bad," Patrick shares.

"I sold my house to get money in my pocket, went through it within 3-4 months," he says. "I hit bottom. I lived [without shelter] for almost a year."

Patrick found out about Presbyterian Night Shelter through word of mouth in 2021. There, he could clean up in a warm shower and access a meal as needed.

***"I had a caseworker that understood me."***

With a reference from the Shelter, Patrick was able to access transitional housing through Casa de Esperanza. The housing program, which focuses on long-term solutions, helped Patrick begin to plan for the future.

"I had a caseworker that understood me," Patrick explains. With her support, and the support of friends like you, he is now celebrating one year of recovery. Today, he is on the cusp of moving into his own apartment.

Patrick's success truly would not have been possible without your encouragement and support! Thank you for being a steadfast partner of Presbyterian Night Shelter.



Patrick is celebrating one year of recovery thanks to you.



Art is a powerful tool Jenny uses in the classroom.

## JENNY CHANGES LIVES IN THE CLASSROOM

Jenny is a loving mother, a compassionate neighbor, and a beloved member of the Presbyterian Night Shelter staff. As the Education & Training Coordinator, she schedules and oversees the classes that run all day at True Worth Place.

"I want this to be a [one-stop] shop for them to take care of all of their needs," Jenny says. "If they need food stamps, if they need to apply for benefits, if they need to... apply for a job or build their resume."

Jenny works tirelessly to ensure that the classes taught at Presbyterian Night Shelter target skills that serve both short-term and long-term goals. That way, someone could learn how to apply for a job today, or develop a budget for rent down the line.

Jenny also plans for classes like art, writing, and book club, which help to teach soft skills and encourage attendees to share their experience. "It's very touching just to hear

their side and their experience with what they are going through," she shares.

Emotional skill-building classes like anger management, meditation, and suicide prevention and awareness are also available at the True Worth Place. With emotional enrichment, life becomes so much more hopeful for many of our neighbors facing homelessness.

Jenny says she has gotten to see community members make great strides in life because of what was learned at True Worth Place. "One lady recently just got a place," Jenny explains. "She came running in [saying] 'I got an apartment!' It's so amazing to see."

Thank you, Jenny, for making such an incredible difference in our community! If you are interested in changing lives just like Jenny, please consider volunteering.

You can learn more at [journeyhome.org/volunteer](https://journeyhome.org/volunteer).



North Texas Giving Day is just around the corner — **September 21, 2023!** Will we meet our \$80,000 goal?

We can with your help! Use the QR code below to make your donation, then be sure to tell all your friends on social media.

Join or follow us throughout the day for sporadic live updates on Facebook and Instagram from our "NTX Giving Day Nerve Center" here at True Worth Place. Be part of the excitement and help us meet our goal!



To make your donation for NTX Giving Day, scan the QR code!



Toby Owen  
Chief Executive Officer

# DEAR FRIEND,

I never run out of reasons to be grateful for you.

With you by our side, we have provided so much hope for our neighbors facing homelessness. The solutions you help fund go far beyond temporary shelter. This past year, we have provided rent and supportive services to 157 people in our permanent supportive housing program, Housing Solutions (HoSo) between June 22, 2022, and May 23, 2023.

That’s 157 people who can now enjoy this season with one less worry. And I’m happy to report that 95% of these households remain stably housed today. That’s a long-term solution only possible because of you.

But our work isn’t over. Now is a critical time for many more vulnerable folks, as moratoriums and other pandemic policies have ended. Facing a housing crisis, many people are worried and coming to Presbyterian Night Shelter for help.

With your partnership, I am confident that we can continue to use our “housing first” philosophy to

remove barriers to permanent housing and end the cycle of homelessness. That includes working to create more permanent housing for people moving out of homelessness.

Because of you, Ken (who you met on the cover) and many more neighbors are looking forward to a bright future.

In this issue of *The Open Door*, I hope you take a moment to celebrate the progress we have made together this year. I am so thankful for your partnership in our shared mission, and I hope you enjoy a wonderful fall.

With gratitude,

**Toby Owen**  
Chief Executive Officer

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**Our Mission:**

*“Guiding the journey from homeless to home.”*

We work to help Tarrant County residents facing homelessness attain stability, independence, and break the cycle of homelessness.