



# THE OPEN DOOR

*guiding the journey from homeless to home*

Presbyterian Night Shelter | Spring Newsletter 2025

## DAVID SHARES HIS STORY — AND GRATITUDE

**"H**aving a sense of humor will enable you to stand up against the hard life."

That's David, a North Texas neighbor whose positive outlook on life has touched many lives here at Presbyterian Night Shelter.

Growing up, David was extremely close to his mom. As an only child, he says she was his pillar and his friend. They supported each other through hard times, like the death of David's father.

So when David's mom passed away last June, David found the grief nearly unbearable. He became severely depressed, a challenge to navigate while also dealing with homelessness and diabetes.

Thankfully, he found Mimi Hunter-Fitzgerald Safe Haven Center, where staff connected him with much needed relief, behavioral health services, and stable, safe shelter.

The friendships David formed with fellow guests and staff helped him reignite his hope, even through a foot amputation due to his diabetic condition. David still keeps his sense of humor wclose, always trying to lighten the mood or get fellow residents to crack a smile.

"If you want to make God laugh, tell him your life plans," he jokes.

Now, David looks forward to getting fitted for a prosthetic, a step that will open up more



David always tries to share joy through a smile and laugh.

housing options. *"Thank God for the donors, because if it wasn't for them, we wouldn't have this beautiful place."*



## A NEW CHAPTER FOR GLORIA

**G**loria's faith is a cornerstone of her life, even during her hardest challenges. On any given afternoon, you might find her taking a long walk or reading scripture to pass the time, an activity she's done as long as she can remember.

After returning to Fort Worth from Missouri, Gloria spent time seeking stable housing and work, relying on her faith and local homeless resources, including True Worth Place, to survive life without shelter.

Gloria lives with depression and several other mental health challenges, which worsened as her experience with homelessness continued. She searched for a place to live, as well as the resources to help her navigate the housing process, for five long months.

A turning point came when Gloria was referred to the Mimi Hunter-Fitzgerald Safe Haven Center.

While she waited for a room to open up at Safe Haven, Gloria was able to access behavioral



## JOIN US FOR A DAY OF SERVICE

Plans are underway for our next Day of Service, taking place Saturday, October 25, 2025. This is a fantastic day for volunteer groups to come together and accomplish some big projects across our campus. Last year, we installed a new kitchen at Patriot House, refreshed the landscaping at The Morris Foundation Family Services Center, and erected a new pergola for our guests at the Mimi Hunter-Fitzgerald Safe Haven Center.

We are currently seeking both sponsors and volunteers for this event. If you would like your group to volunteer, or if you would like more information on becoming a corporate sponsor, please contact Missy Dock, Volunteer Engagement Manager, at [volunteers@journeyhome.org](mailto:volunteers@journeyhome.org).



At their first Art and Soul Event, participants made "shaggy dog" collages.



services that helped treat her mental illnesses. Then, a space became available for her, and she moved in.

With caring staff, a caring community, the privacy of her own room, and the space to decompress, Gloria could finally catch her breath.

"We have our own room, [which means] privacy," she says, adding, "they see that I get my medication every day."

Not only did Gloria receive safe shelter and basic needs, but she felt her faith renewed by the community, too. "Saturday afternoons they have a bible study meeting here...that's something I really look forward to."

With the help of her case manager, Gloria is now on the waitlist for a new apartment, a step she's eager to take. She also wants to reconnect with her family, especially her sister.

"My sister will be excited for me," she shares.

While she prepares for the move, Gloria is so glad for the support of the community — like Laney at Art & Soul, where Gloria participated in the "shaggy dog" art activity — and friends like you.

*"[Your support] makes somebody's day a little more special...even if [you] only help one person."*

For the first time in a long time, Gloria has rediscovered her hope for the future. Soon, she'll be able to hang her art in a home of her own!



Gloria plans to hang her art on her very own wall one day soon.

## THE POWER OF ART

In January 2022, Laney followed her own artistic passion and opened Art and Soul, an art studio dedicated to sparking children's creativity in Fort Worth. Now that it's been open for a few years, she says, "It's hectic, but really fun!"

A few months ago, our program director at the Mimi Hunter-Fitzgerald Safe Haven Center reached out to Laney asking if she'd be interested in getting involved in Presbyterian Night Shelter's mission through a class or event for the program residents.

"We were happy to do it, and it was quite a rewarding experience," Laney shares. "It was a sweet thing to see them getting back up on their feet and engaging with [art] too."

At their first class, participants from Safe Haven made "shaggy dog" collages out of colored paper. Everyone enjoyed themselves, Laney reports, noting the inside jokes, laughter, and focus on the project.

"You can see the stress release," she says, speaking on the therapeutic power of creativity.

If you feel called to join our work at Safe Haven, Laney encourages you to get involved. "You leave feeling like your shoulders are up higher than they were before," she says.

Visit [journeyhome.org/volunteer](https://journeyhome.org/volunteer) to learn more.

As for Art and Soul, Laney says she's already planning the next event with Safe Haven — abstract face drawings!



Toby Owen  
Chief Executive Officer

## DEAR FRIEND,

**Stability.** It means more than just a roof overhead and food in the cupboard — stability also means safety for our friends and neighbors with mental health challenges.

This May, as we recognize Mental Health Awareness Month, let's recognize how intertwined homelessness and mental health truly are.

Mental illness can be the root cause of why someone isn't able to maintain housing. But it can also come about as a result of the trauma someone goes through from experiencing homelessness, from just trying to survive without shelter.

Either way, Presbyterian Night Shelter is committed to helping our neighbors find stability however possible. One way we do that is through the Mimi Hunter-Fitzgerald Safe Haven Center, our shelter for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and severe mental illness in tandem.

For neighbors like David, who you'll meet on page 1, friends like you are a lifeline to stability and hope.

Your generosity does incredible work through Safe Haven and our other shelters, where guests are able to receive case management to help address issues like mental health.

I am so grateful that you partner with us to help stabilize the lives of our neighbors. Just one gift can better so many lives through life-saving shelter services, permanent housing, community resources, and more.

I hope you're inspired by this spring issue of *The Open Door*. Thank you for making these stories of hope possible!

With gratitude,

Toby Owen  
Chief Executive Officer

### OFFICERS

Amy Brown,  
*Chair*

Rachel Navejar Phillips,  
*Vice Chair*

Kathy Severson,  
*Secretary*

Matthew Loynachan,  
*Treasurer*

Roxanne Ancy  
Larry Anfin  
Dr. Jason Biggers  
Bryan Ballew  
Rev. Dr. Elizabeth  
Callender

Brian Carlock  
Sabrina Conner  
Deborah Connor  
Rev. Dr. Brian Coulter  
Glenda Diaz  
Kim Dillon

John Doumany  
Jamie Downing  
Courtney Estes  
Tiffany Freeman  
Sandra Garcia  
Meredyth Haller

Anthony Hill  
Jim Lacamp  
Joseph Landeros  
Rachel Marker  
Matt Mildren  
Richard Minker  
Philip Newburn

Jeff Postell  
Charlie Powell  
Mark Seher  
Vince Tobin  
Burch Waldron, III  
Roderick White

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Our Mission:

*"Guiding the journey from homeless to home."*

We strive to break the cycles of homelessness and empower our guests through shelter, housing, and employment.