

# Journeys of Hope

WINTER 2025

## Comfort and Joy for All!



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# Message from our CEO



Anna Valeria  
CEO

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

— Romans 15:13, ESV

## You Bring Comfort and Joy at Christmas

Dear Friend,

Very likely, your Christmas will bring family gatherings, joyful worship and delicious food. It will be a time of light and warmth during a dark and cold season.

However, for many people in Rochester, Christmas is much like any other day. They struggle to get by, with no money left for presents or a tree. Some have no home at all. Others haven't seen their family in months or even years. It's heartbreaking to think of anyone spending the holidays in such hardship.

The good news is that Open Door Mission is here to help those same men, women and children. We have the resources and care they need to heal, recover and transform their lives. Carolyn and Tim, in this issue of Journeys of Hope, are wonderful examples of that. Thanks to you, they'll enjoy the holidays in homes of their own!

A gift this holiday season will bless more guests and residents with the vital services and support they need to recover from addiction, abuse or homelessness. I see the transformations firsthand, and I invite you to come see your gifts in action by taking a tour with us. The holidays are a wonderful time for that!

Thank you for your support. Your generosity brings comfort and joy to those who need it most. May God bless you this Christmas!

Sincerely,

Anna Valeria  
CEO



# You Helped Carolyn Find Independence at Coldwater House

Most people migrate south to escape harsh northern winters. But after living in Florida all her life, Carolyn made the trek north, all the way to Rochester. It wasn't entirely by choice. Carolyn had lost her job and then her home. She came up here to see her family and look for a second chance.

Carolyn stayed with her niece briefly, and then tried various shelters. None of them offered the support she needed to reclaim her independence. She heard about Open Door Mission, made a call and came to Coldwater House.

Here, Carolyn received a warm welcome. She knew right away she had made the right decision. She tells us, "I can't believe all this stuff they gave me to start off with, the resources. They were willing to go over and beyond helping me get back on my feet. I enjoyed it there."

A lifelong believer in Jesus Christ, Carolyn immediately felt comfortable in the Christian environment of Coldwater House. "It's what I needed. I found positive people here."

***"I came here with nothing, and I got ahead a lot better than I thought I would."***

Carolyn made it through the program with flying colors. She especially enjoyed the Bible studies and life management skills classes. She found a job at a staffing company, saved her money and moved into



her own apartment in February of this year. "I've already got two raises," she says proudly of her job.

Coldwater House will always hold a special place in Carolyn's heart. "I keep in touch with some of the residents and staff members," she tells us. "I call them twice a month or so." She also hopes to find time to volunteer in the donation room.

Carolyn is grateful to God, Coldwater House, Open Door Mission and caring people like you who helped her make tremendous progress in less than a year. "I came here with nothing, and I got ahead a lot better than I thought I would," she says. "God is in the midst of everything."

# “I’m living proof that this program works!”



Tim looked up to the older kids in high school. When he started hanging out with them, he picked up their habits. That meant having his first drink. “It was all fun and games,” he remembers, “until I ended up addicted.”

For the next thirty-plus years, Tim managed to live with his addiction. He had a home and a car, made good money. Then he started drinking during the day and lost his job. “Everything went downhill after that, a domino effect,” he says.

Eventually, Tim only kept a roof over his head by sleeping on friends’ couches. “Things got really, really bad. I just numbed myself with alcohol.” Tim was fast on his way to hitting rock bottom, but a broken foot slowed his descent.

*“Thank you! I’m living proof that this program works.”*

In the hospital, Tim had a chance to reflect on how he’d been living his life. “I asked myself, ‘What have I become? What led me to this?’ I started looking at how far I fell down that hill. Enough was enough.” Tim turned to his brother, who worked at Open Door Mission. “I asked him, ‘You have room in that program?’ He asked me if I was serious, and I said, ‘Yeah, man, come and get me.’ I packed a suitcase, and that was it.”

It was the best decision Tim ever made. Finally sober, he has regained his health, reconnected with his family and restored his relationship with God. Tim is active in his church, playing bass in the worship band. He is living on his own, studying to be a radiology technician. And he gives back by doing outreach to homeless individuals and sharing his testimony with young people.

Tim has a message for friends like you who keep the lights on at Open Door Mission. “Thank you! I’m living proof that this program works. But there’s a whole lot more that needs to be done. Lives need to be saved. People need to know there’s a program out there and people who really care.”



And we thank Tim for spreading the word about the good you do through Open Door Mission!