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The Gatepost

THE NEWSLETTER OF SHEPHERD'S GATE

Little Steps Toward Healing

A letter from Carol

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Shepherd's
Gate

"The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease." — Lamentations 3:22

Little Steps Toward Healing

A Message from Carol

I OFTEN NOTICE the quiet children first. The ones who linger at the edges of the room... watching, waiting, unsure if they belong.

That's how I first noticed Katy* in our afterschool program. She walked in with her jacket still on, her backpack clutched tightly, hands in her pockets. There was no smile. Very little eye contact. She stayed on the outside of the group, taking it all in.

After a while, snack time drew her closer. As the children gathered and picked out their favorite things, I saw her slowly inching toward me. Before I knew it, she was right in front of me — her little face just inches from mine.

I gently whispered, *"You can ask me anything. You won't get in trouble."*

In a quiet voice, she said, *"Do you know I slept in a car?"*

"Do you know I slept in a car?"

As I began talking with her, something beautiful happened. Another child spoke up and shared that he had slept in a truck. Then another child quietly said she had to live with her grandmother because her mom was sick. One by one, they began to open up.

In that moment, they weren't alone.

* Name and image changed for privacy



Many of our children have experienced things no child should ever have to carry — fear, confusion and pain they didn't have words for. The first thing we help them understand here is that they are safe... and that what happened to them is not their fault.

That truth can be both painful and freeing. I've seen children cry as they begin to understand it, but I've also seen the relief that follows.

In a safe and loving environment, children begin to find their voice again. Through simple routines, caring staff and time together, they begin to express what they've been holding inside. They start to see their own strength, their goodness and their worth.

Shepherd's Gate is the best place where a mom and her children can heal together.

Memories That Last a Lifetime

For many kids at Shepherd's Gate, good memories are rare.

Some are waiting and hoping for their families to be made whole again. Others are quietly struggling just to keep up in school. Their days can feel uncertain... heavy... even lonely.

That's why moments of joy matter so much.

Because of friends like you, a child can experience a birthday that finally feels special (and safe) or the pride of a good day at school being noticed. A simple trip — to the zoo, the pool or out into the sunshine — can become a memory they carry for years.



And then there are the moments that mean even more. Time with a parent. A long-awaited hug. The day they step into a place they can finally call home.

These are the memories that begin to heal a child's heart. You make those memories possible.

Will You Join Us in Prayer?

At Shepherd's Gate, care goes far beyond meeting physical needs — it reaches into the heart of each child.

Every day, staff and volunteers walk alongside these children with deep compassion and intention. They listen closely — not just to words — but to what's felt beneath them. They pay attention to how each child experiences the world, offering encouragement, wisdom and the tools they need to grow in confidence and strength.

This kind of care helps lay the foundation for healing. But it's not something we take lightly — it's something we pray daily about.

Would you join us in praying for these children — that they would feel safe, known and deeply loved as they continue on their journey?



The Craterpost

From My Heart

Love Will Find a Way

My heart breaks for the children at Shepherd's Gate. They are the innocent ones — carrying burdens no child should ever have to bear. Many have lived in silence, holding the weight of family struggles, fear and confusion they didn't know how to express.

When they arrive, it can take time for them to feel safe again. Some children struggle to find their voice, and others have stopped speaking altogether. In those moments, we gently surround them with care through professional counseling, play therapy and the support they need to begin healing. Little by little, they start to open up and express what has been hidden in their hearts.

We plant seeds of hope here every day. And my deepest prayer is that each child leaves knowing they are never alone and that Jesus is with them in every moment, just as He promises:

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." — Matthew 28:20

With a grateful heart,



Carol Patterson
Chief Executive Officer



Hope Corner

A Place to Grow

At Shepherd's Gate, we believe every child is a precious gift from God. That belief shapes everything we do — especially the way our childcare team cares for each child who walks through our doors.

From the very beginning, their journey is about more than safety. It's about healing.

Our staff creates a space where children can begin to move out of survival mode and into a place of growth.

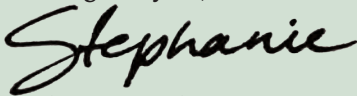
Through steady routines, gentle care and intentional support, children begin to experience something many have never known before — consistency, peace and trust.

Over time, you can see the change. Walls begin to come down. Hearts begin to open.

We also walk closely with mothers as they rebuild relationships with their children. It is a beautiful thing to witness a child cheering on their mom, both of them moving forward together.

Moments like these remind me that hope is growing here every day.

Blessings to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie". The script is fluid and cursive.

Stephanie Fischer
Executive Director





Each \$36.35 you give helps provide child-centered care, school supplies, meals and more to help kids find healing.

You Can Help a Child Feel Safe

For children at Shepherd's Gate, life hasn't been safe.

Many have lived through trauma that no child should experience. But your compassion can begin to change that.

Each \$36.35 you give provides a full day of care — warm meals, safe shelter and the Christ-centered, nurturing support children need to begin healing.

Your gift creates more than safety. It creates a place where children can learn, play and be reassured that mom is getting the help she needs in our program too.

Will you help provide that today?

Because of you, these kids can break the cycles of abuse, homelessness and addiction. They can discover God's love and build a future full of hope!

Give a Child a Day That Changes Everything

Yes, Carol! I want to help kids at Shepherd's Gate find healing and joy! I'm sending a gift of:

☐ \$ _____

From:
A Caring Friend



Please write your prayer request on the back of this form. See back for credit card gifts.
Please enclose this form with your gift in the envelope provided. To give securely online, please go to shepherdsgate.org/give. Thank you.



A Summer to Remember

During the summer, children at Shepherd's Gate are filling their days with fun, learning and the chance to just be a kid!

- Vacation Bible School (VBS)
- Ice cream outings
- Swim lessons
- Horse experiences
- Farm visits
- Library visits and reading challenges
- Bowling and miniature golf
- Oakland Zoo trips
- Gardening
- Sports
- Hiking and nature walks

Thank you for making these moments of joy and growth possible for each child.

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shepherdsgate.org



For more than 40 years, Shepherd's Gate has served women and children trapped in abuse, addiction and homelessness. Our mission is to provide safe refuge, restore hope and dignity and rebuild lives through the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

You can also give securely online at:
shepherdsgate.org/give