

# The Gatepost

THE NEWSLETTER OF SHEPHERD'S GATE

## Just Trying to be a Kid

**L**AST CHRISTMAS, Santa Claus came to the big Christmas celebration at Shepherd's Gate. All of the kids were so excited to see him. They couldn't wait to hug Santa and tell them what they wanted for Christmas.

Except for Vicki\*.

Vicki couldn't even stay in the room. Everything was too much for her: the noise, the activity, the amount of people. She left the room in tears.

Vicki isn't like other kids. She has mental health diagnoses, but she also carries scars from being homeless. Before she and her family came to Shepherd's Gate

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*(Continued inside)*

\*Names and images changed for privacy

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**Shepherd's Gate**



# Just Trying to be a Kid

*(Continued from cover)*

. . . they lived in their car for a year. That trauma made it harder for her and her family to get the care Vicki needed. But friends like you changed that.

Vicki and her family came to Shepherd's Gate last year. While her mom completed her recovery program, Vicki was able to see a psychologist who helped find the right medications for her. And Vicki was able to receive counseling to help her process everything that happened.

By the time the graduation party came around last spring, Vicki was able to celebrate with everyone and not feel overwhelmed.

## Learning to Trust Her Mom

If you ask most kids who they trust the most, they'll usually answer their mom or dad. But Hannah\* didn't trust her mom for a long time.

Before they came to Shepherd's Gate, Hannah went through traumatic situations and witnessed her mom's abuse. She felt scared and worried that her mom couldn't protect her. She didn't trust her mom to make the right choices.

Thankfully, through the counseling she received here, Hannah was able to forgive her mom. She's learning to trust her mom again. The reunification program is helping them heal and restore their relationship. It's one of our most important programs being so many of our children come from foster care situations.

**Your prayers and support help kids like Vicki and Hannah heal and feel like a kid again!**

*"It's so nice to see her in her imagination and not worrying about someone getting upset about what she's doing."*

— Hannah's mom



# The Cradle



# ‘H’ is for Hands . . . Not Hitting

There are probably many preschools teaching toddlers that hands are for sharing, not hitting. But that lesson lands differently when you know the toddler has seen their dad hit their mom.

Most of the kids at Shepherd’s Gate are traumatized by life. They’ve experienced and seen things no child should have to go through. That means they need a different type of care than other kids do. That’s why we have the “Whole Child” program here. *(Read more about our “Whole Child” program on our website at [shepherdsgate.org/children](http://shepherdsgate.org/children))*

Children like Vicki and Hannah need access to professional counseling and other therapies to help them process what they’ve been through. They’re often behind their classmates at school or behind developmentally. The whole child focus makes sure they get help for every aspect of their well-being.

**Through your partnership,  
these kids can heal and  
have a childhood.**



## Christmas at Shepherd’s Gate

For some of the women and children here, this may be the first happy and safe Christmas they’ve ever experienced. For others, it may be the first Christmas since being reunited as a family. That’s why we do everything we can to help them have a joyful, memorable Christmas.

During the holidays, we plan a cookie decorating day with the kids, a gift-wrapping party for the moms and a big Christmas party with carols, games and snacks. There are also big dinners, breakfast with Santa, Alumni celebrations and intimate gatherings to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

### Want to be involved this Christmas?

To find out how you can be a Christmas Angel through our Christmas programs and bring a smile to a child’s face, visit [shepherdsgate.org/christmas](http://shepherdsgate.org/christmas) or email me at [cpatterson@shepherdsgate.org](mailto:cpatterson@shepherdsgate.org).

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# *Get Involved for the Holidays*

There are opportunities for you to be involved this holiday season! Here are a few ways you can be involved this Christmas:

- Pray for God's peace for the women and children staying at Shepherd's Gate and for those who are still on the streets.
- Host a Blessings Tree and invite participants to join. Go to: [shepherdsgate.org/christmas](https://shepherdsgate.org/christmas) for more information.
- Check out our Amazon wish list on [amazon.com](https://amazon.com). You can send items directly to our campus to help us this holiday season.
- Send gift cards to provide the essential items needed by our residents. Gift cards from Amazon, Safeway, Visa, MasterCard and Costco are the most helpful!

Send cards to:  
1660 Portola Avenue  
Livermore, CA 94551

- Volunteer. If you'd like to find about the volunteer opportunities available at either campus, please visit us at [shepherdsgate.org/getinvolved](https://shepherdsgate.org/getinvolved)

**One Night One  
H♡PE**

# *From My Heart*

By Carol Patterson, *Chief Executive Officer*

## *The True Meaning of Christmas*

One of the things I love most about our campuses is hearing the kids laugh. Seeing their faces light up with joy is so miraculous. Especially when you know what they've been through.

That's part of what makes Christmas so special at Shepherd's Gate.

For many women and kids it might be the first time hearing the Christmas Story of Jesus' birth. It's a chance for the kids to make memories and have fun. For some of them, it's the first time they'll get to unwrap presents or decorate a tree and feel safe. For others, it's a chance to see their mom be healthy and happy.

I'm so thankful for all of the volunteers and partners like you who help make this a special time for the kids. Because of people like you, they're learning the true meaning of Christmas: **God's love.**

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas,

*Carol* 







Each \$32.82 you give will provide life-changing care for children this holiday season.

## Share One Night One Hope with a Child this Christmas

Helping women and children escape abuse, addiction and homelessness is one of the most important things we do at Shepherd's Gate. But helping them overcome that trauma and begin a new life takes more than a place to sleep or meals to eat. It takes recovery programs, life-skills classes, case management, play therapy and so much more.

And none of it would be possible without friends like you.

Will you send a Christmas gift to help them? Your support will make sure they have everything they need, from safe shelter to Christ-centered care.

**Because of you, kids like Vicki and Hannah can have a chance to be like other kids. They can have a joyful holiday this Christmas season.**

### Help Kids this Christmas

Yes, Carol, I will help children and women who are overcoming abuse, homelessness and addiction. I'm sending a gift of:

☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

From:

A Caring Friend

Each \$32.82 you give helps share *One Night One Hope* with kids who are trying to be a kid again.



One Night One  
**HOPE**

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](http://shepherdsgate.org). Thank you.



## Give a Legacy Gift

If you're looking for another way to continue sharing God's love, consider remembering Shepherd's Gate in your will. Over the years, a number of faithful friends have left gifts to us so we can continue to help more women and children for many years to come.

For more information on legacy giving, please contact Carol Patterson directly at [cpatterson@shepherdsgate.org](mailto:cpatterson@shepherdsgate.org).

Shepherd's Gate

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#### Brentwood:

605 Sycamore Ave.  
Brentwood, CA 94513  
925.308.7507

#### Livermore:

1660 Portola Ave.  
Livermore, CA 94551  
925.443.4283

[shepherdsgate.org](http://shepherdsgate.org)



For more than 35 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:  
[onenightonehope.org](http://onenightonehope.org)