



HOUSE OF YAHWEH
4046 MARINE AVENUE
LAWNDALE, CA 90260

December 2016

Volume 9 Issue 1

Newsletter

"THE HOUSE OF YAHWEH'S RULES FOR ACCEPTANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN OUR PROGRAM ARE THE SAME FOR EVERYONE WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, SEX, OR HANDICAP."

An Open Letter from Sister Michele Marie Morris to the House of Yahweh's devoted, generous and beloved supporters

Dear Friends,

I want to share briefly with you the House of Yahweh's and my story at the present time. The House of Yahweh is entering Phase 3 in its growth pattern. Phase I – many of us lived through the adventure together of starting a soup kitchen and "getting planted" in the community by serving the "dear neighbor" with hot meals and clothing. Phase II – we slowly evolved from being a small soup kitchen to a social service center supplying clients with food and clothing outreach and transitional shelter. We opened our first Thrift Store. After 22 years of serving across the street from the Lawndale City Hall at 4430 W. 147th Street we experienced the upheaval of being uprooted and relocated to our present location at 4046 Marine Avenue. Denied our soup kitchen by the City we lost many of our loyal donors but still continued operating these past 12 years. We are now entering another challenging phase, Phase III – maintaining and restoring the physical assets of the House of Yahweh and most importantly being able to sustain financially our Mission, our call to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless..."

For Phase III to be successful the House of Yahweh Board of Directors has made some significant changes in our organizational structure. I am stepping down as the Executive Director and will serve in the newly formed board position of Founder. The Board appointed our President, Joe Hughes, to be our acting Executive Director while the Executive Search Committee performs its task of screening and selecting a permanent Executive Director. Joe is responsible for the day to day operations of the House of Yahweh. Dick Williams has been appointed acting President of the Board while Joe Hughes is acting as Executive Director.

The Founder's position suits me well. It will allow me to focus on donor relations, fundraising, community outreach and relations, on teaching, mentoring and assisting with event planning. My goal and purpose is strengthening the House of Yahweh by heightening peoples' awareness of "the House of Yahweh's mission to serve the economically exploited and the impoverished..." thus making it a beacon of light to caring persons to follow and support. I am hoping that you readers of my letter will become more involved with the House of Yahweh as a donor, sponsor or volunteer. I need your help; the poor need you. For you who already donate I ask you to consider increasing your support if you are able. If you do not already donate I invite you to become a donor and support our Mission. You can make a difference! The House of Yahweh has always been a partnership – we are all in this together – called to serve and reach out to persons/families in need. I will be actively seeking and praying for increased cash donations, new donors, grants and creating endowments that will help the House of Yahweh's future. I ask for your prayers, blessings and support as I adjust to this exciting new Founder position. God bless all of you and have a Merry Christmas filled with Love, Peace and Joy!

Sister Michele Morris, C.S.J.

Inside this issue:

Makes the Impossible Possible! 2

A Smile at the End 4

Open House Next Spring 5

Year of Mercy 6

Sandpipers do it again 6

Twas the Night Before Hunger 7

Do This and More... 8

Special points of interest:

- Open Letter from Sister Michele
- New Executive Director
- Farewell Tony Brown
- Summer Treasure Sale
- Post Office Food Drive

Getting Acquainted

By Joe Hughes, Acting Executive Director

I live in Lakewood CA with my wife Mary and sons Stephen and James. I retired from Northrop Grumman Corporation in 2011 and shortly thereafter started volunteering with the House of Yahweh; doing a bit of carpentry work and providing information technology support. In August 2015 I was invited by Sister Michele to join the House of Yahweh Board of Directors and serve as its President. I served in the U.S. Navy and presently volunteer as a Tour Guide, Project Manager and Newsletter Editor for the Battleship IOWA Museum in San Pedro, CA. When not occupied with my volunteer activities I enjoy traveling with Mary, building things around our home; remodeling, furniture, etc. I like to stay busy...

It has been just over a week since becoming the acting Executive Director (volunteer) at the House of Yahweh. Sister Michele, Donna Quirk (our Social Service Coordinator) and I have jumped in to the transition and are making great progress. There is a lot of work to accomplish and we will get it done with your help.

In her letter, Sister Michele said we needed your help and I wish to add to her call to "service". Increased cash donations are a must for the House of Yahweh; we have a monthly negative cash flow even though we are a very frugal operation – yes that is right, we are dipping into our savings every month to pay our bills. We need increased cash donations and we will be actively seeking and praying for generous endowments to help secure the future for our charity. Please help us by donating now and spreading the word about our charity and its mission. Over 500 families a week are served by the House of Yahweh; let's continue that great work together. Check out our web site for more information on our mission, www.hoy-southbay.org

Another big item on my to-do list is increasing the ranks of our exceptional volunteer force. If you don't currently volunteer with the House of Yahweh, then please call me to talk about how you can help. Whatever your skill or interest we will find a rewarding volunteer opportunity for you – you can and will make a huge difference in the lives of our clients. I am particularly interested in finding volunteers with skills and experience in operations management, retail store operations (especially thrift shops), web site design and development, advertising and marketing, and customer or food service. These are at the top of our very long list of volunteer needs; all knowledge, skills and experiences are welcome. I look forward to your call at 310-675-1384.

I will be happy to meet you soon and I wish you, your family, friends and business associates a blessed and joyous Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

There is a lot of work to accomplish and we will get it done with your help. Call us today!





House of Yahweh Makes the Impossible – Possible

By Donna Quirk, Transitional Housing Coordinator

Leslie Bourgois came to the House of Yahweh in the summer of 2015. Leslie was a United States Citizen that was born in Canada.

Thirty-five years ago, all his important papers which proved his citizenship were burned in a trailer fire. He never thought it would be a nightmare trying to prove his citizenship so he could get his retirement which he was entitled to.

Leslie came to the House of Yahweh and explained the entire story. He came to California from Canada at a very young age with his parents and sister. Leslie's parents became US Citizens when he was very young, before his 9th birthday. That is when he became a US Citizen.

Leslie strived for a long time to get his documentation problem solved. He became frustrated and tired because no one listened to him. Leslie contacted the Department of Homeland Security and all he got was a run around from them. He had no money and was basically on the streets.

The House of Yahweh gave him the opportunity to use our computers and try to locate his sister who he was sure had all the information he needed to prove his citizenship and get his benefits. Leslie contacted the Burbank School District, where he attended school from grade 1 through 12, to see if he could get his transcript. While on the streets, Leslie kept his important papers secured at the House of Yahweh. He was placed in our Food Outreach Program and received a box of food every week and participated in our Men's Outreach Program on Tuesdays.

In December 2015, Leslie was contacted by his sister. He was able to get his identity documents, prove his citizenship and is now receiving his benefits. Leslie was so grateful and thankful to the House of Yahweh. He said Thank You, "Thank you for keeping me mentally alive! Thank you for listening and believing in me".

How Can You Help?

Volunteer to provide a smile and a friendly word as you answer phones, drive our trucks, sort clothes, cashier, or sort, distribute and deliver food.

Apply your retail and marketing knowledge, skills, abilities and experience to enhance our Thrift Stores and make them financially successful.

Organize a clothing, canned food, or toiletries drive through your group or school class.

Collect recycling as a class or group fundraising project.

Develop a special project (such as an Eagle Scout project).

Assist with grant writing or web page updates.

Call Joe Hughes at 310-675-1384 to talk about volunteer service at the House of Yahweh.



Cash donations are desperately needed. We dip into our savings every month to make ends meet. Please consider sending your end-of-year gift to the House of Yahweh today!

A Smile at the End

The process of gathering food donations is complex and must be coordinated. Store managers, receivers and associates approve and gather food donations for the House of Yahweh's Food Outreach Program.

Drivers and helpers gather the donations and deliver them to HOY. Employees and volunteers ensure the deliveries are stored to maintain freshness and sorted into boxes and bags for each day's Food Outreach distribution. For those clients who are unable to pick up food at HOY, home delivery is arranged. At each step, the individual tasks are performed cheerfully, for this is truly God's work.

Learn more about our Food Outreach, Transitional Housing and other programs which give help to the needy by visiting our web site at www.hoy-southbay.org



Sister Michele makes a phone call. "Jerry, can you handle some home deliveries this afternoon?"

Jerry turns to Rod. "Rod, up for some home deliveries the afternoon?" "Sure!" Rod replies.

We'll be there, Sister Michele."

Jerry and Rod look like an unlikely pair. But circumstances have put them together, they focus on their similarities including age, military service and growing up in Southern California. Most importantly, they share a desire to be of service. So, like Batman and Robin, they rush off to help Sister Michele at the House of Yahweh in Lawndale. Except their Batmobile is a white Prius and Rod and Jerry can't agree on who is Batman and who is Robin. One is thin, the other big enough to be an NFL lineman, as he indeed was.

At HOY, Jerry and Rod receive names and addresses of delivery recipients and they load boxes and bags of food packaged by the HOY employees and volun-



Mary lives alone, except for her beloved dog. She may be infirm, without a car and not able to go out much. Her visitors may be few. One afternoon, she hears a knock at the door. Mary cautiously asks, "Who is it?" Rod, ex-NFL lineman, booms, "House of Yahweh Food Delivery". For the large man outside Mary's door is holding a box of bounty. Mary catches her dog and opens the door with a smile. Rod brings in the needed food with a greeting and a smile. And on the team goes to the next delivery. Always, after a long chain of handling, from store to doorstep, at the end there is a smile.



A Major Achievement for One of Our Clients

By Donna Quirk, Transitional Housing Coordinator

Congratulations to our De Shaun Hudson a client in our transitional housing who graduated from Cal State Dominguez Hill with a Bachelor of Science in Physics.

De Shaun will start his master’s program at Cal State LA in January 2017. De Shaun has expressed an interest in teaching and making science fun for students. Good luck to you De Shaun in striving for and achieving your goals. You are a House of Yahweh success story.

Congratulation De Shaun. We are very proud of you!

House of Yahweh Say Farewell to Tony Brown

By Donna Quirk, Transitional Housing Coordinator

Tony Brown, a transition housing client, passed away in October. He had no family so the House of Yahweh became his family. Sister Michele wanted Tony to have a dignified burial. She reached out to the county and a local funeral home and arranged a proper burial for Tony. On November 3, 2016, the House of Yahweh held a memorial service for our friend led by Deacon Dick Williams, a House of Yahweh Board member. The memorial was well attended. Beautiful memories were shared regarding Tony during his memorial. So, Dear Friend you will be missed but we know you are in peace.

Announcing the House of Yahweh Open House Next Spring

By Joe Hughes, Acting Executive Director

In 2017 the House of Yahweh will celebrate 35 years of service to the people in South Bay Los Angeles. We have gone about the business of feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and alms giving in a quiet and consistent manner. From very humble beginnings we have expanded to help over 500 families each week. It’s time to celebrate that success and let more people know about our help to the poor of your community.

Our doors are always open and we welcome all to come visit us at any time. But on Saturday, March 11, 2017 we will host an open house to celebrate our 35th year of service to the community. Please mark the date on your calendar and join us between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. You will see our charity operations in full-swing, meet our terrific employees and volunteers and come away with an understanding about how we help our neighbors with small donations and a lot of hard work. We hope to see you then.

In 2017 the House of Yahweh will celebrate 35 years of service to the people in South Bay



HAPPENINGS – Past & Present

By Sister Michele, Founder

Year of Mercy and Summer Treasure Sale

Pope Francis declared 2016 to be a Jubilee “Year of Mercy” and invited each of us to personally celebrate it. The Summer of 2016 at the House of Yahweh was definitely a Season of Mercy.

The hungry fed, the needy clothed, the homeless housed. We also hosted a special event on August 8th spearheaded by Diane Cravat and Trish Hoying. With volunteers and staff they combined their efforts holding a summer “Treasure Sale” at HOY made possible by a variety of generous, quality donations.

Sister Michele greeted guests and shared the story of House of Yahweh with them. Mirna Anaya. Food Outreach Program Coordinator fed them her famous homemade tamales. Donna Quirk. Social Services Coordinator teamed with staff and volunteers selling the treasures. The venture was a grand success. House of Yahweh learned a lot, built community and produced sales of \$1,200!

Post Office Food Drive - Food, Fun & Friends

The Summer of 2016 at the House of Yahweh was definitely a Season of Mercy.

The House of Yahweh distributes groceries to hundreds of families weekly; Monday through Saturday. To do this we need lots of food. One of our direct food suppliers each May is the U.S. Post Office and indirectly YOU, the public. The P.O. coordinates the Food Drive- advertises it, supplies a brown grocery collection bag at each house for your food donation and lastly collects the food bags on “D-day” and unloads at the Post Office to be picked up by invited non-profit organizations. The House of Yahweh is one of the invited non-profits. Teamwork makes the workload light and its fun loading our trucks and van along with other organizations doing the same thing. The Post Office’s special chefs barbecued hot dogs and hamburgers with all the trimmings for us. Great potato salad, cold drinks and potato chips enhanced the on-going feast. When we left we had the food, had fun and made new friends. Who can beat that?

Sandpipers Do It Again

One of the most heart touching events of the year is the Sandpiper’s “Back-to-School Shopping Day”. This year the House of Yahweh was invited to select up to 7 children (ages 6-12 years) for the Shopping Day. And what a day it was! Each child had their own personal Sandpiper shopper mom to help them spend \$200 on new school clothes between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. Seventy Sandpipers shopped with more than 65 children! Parents and representatives were free to go and enjoy themselves until the shopping concluded at 9:00 a.m. What a difference- the **before** when the children began their shopping spree wondering what to expect and the **after** when they finished rushing out of the store to their moms all aglow and excited wanting to show off their school clothes that they got to pick. As they left for their cars each child received a back pack with school supplies.

T'was The Night Before Hunger

By Marilyn Marquez

T'was the night before hunger
And all through the town,
There was no laughter not even a sound,

Only an echo of stomachs a growl,
Making music to the sadness all around,

People so helpless and so run down,
From the harshness of this little home town,

Old worn dresses and torn old gowns,
Men so desperate who had fallen to the ground.

Along came a lady passing through town,
Saddened by the cry of those people around,

A teacher of children filled with youth,
Eager and ready her destiny is true,

Small and mighty in thought she knew,
How lovely a lady to start anew,

Dressed in a crown so special and true,
A beautiful NUN who was sent by the SON,
To a new life that had just begun,

A new people so happy not blue,
From the new life that had just begun,
of the work the Catholic Sister—NUN had done,
who's battle for that town she had won!

**Along came a lady
passing through
town...**





**HOUSE OF YAHWEH
4046 MARINE AVENUE
LAWNDALE, CA 90260**

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Feed the Hungry, Clothe the Naked, Shelter the Homeless

Give Compassion, Build Dignity, Offer Peace

Get Joy and Satisfaction from Helping Others

The House of Yahweh can help you do this and more...

Visit, call (310-675-1384) or checkout our web site www.hoy-southbay.org