

THANK YOU to the Spokane Regional Health District for including The City Gate in the administering of Covid-19 vaccines to any of our guests that chose to receive. It was a beautiful day to set up outside and offer the Moderna vaccine. About 40 people received their first dose and were scheduled for their 2nd. SRHD will return to complete the vaccine next month.



Easter Celebration



This year was a beautiful Easter Celebration at The City Gate. Knowing we would be serving outside, we were counting on good weather. We were not disappointed! The weather was perfect!! 125 meals were served to-go style. Guests enjoyed a traditional meal with ham, homemade cheesy potatoes, rolls and veggies. THANK YOU to all who came to serve and worship with us.

My name is Mavis, I am a recovering drug addict. I want to share my story with you about my time at The City Gate and my stay at the Alberta House. To fully bring you to how I ended up there, I must take you back to my life before. I will try and condense this into information as it pertains to what led me to the office of The City Gate and meeting Pastor John. I will also share with you how my life has continued to change since then. I grew up in a low socioeconomic household, and my mother was married 5 times. My father was husband number 3. I never met my father until I reached 13. My 2 step-fathers were abusive physically, mentally, and sexually. I came to know Jesus when I was 13. I was baptized by water and then by the Holy Spirit, receiving the gift of tongues. I was like the seed that was sprinkled amongst the thorns. The world choked out the Word of God that I received. I quickly became concerned with things of the world. I enjoyed the "goth" scene, heavy metal music, and drugs became introduced to me at the tender age of 14. I began drinking, smoking marijuana, and became promiscuous. My mother died when I was 18 of lung cancer, being a lifelong smoker. Not knowing what to do, I married the man I was in a relationship with, even though we were unequally yoked. After my mother died I did a lot of soul searching and tried to get close to God, but my lifestyle impeded that relationship. I also had numerous infidelities in my marriage that separated me from God. I continued to smoke pot, drink, and began taking prescription adderral (amphetamines). I knew that I didn't want to continue on living like my mother had financially so at the age of 18 I decided to go to college. I pursued a nursing degree. I got pregnant and gave birth to 2 children during my time in college and before graduating. After I graduated nursing school I got a job in ICU and became married to my job. I desperately sought financial security, and God was nowhere in my life at this time. I worked many hours of overtime, and became deeply concerned with the things of this world. Most of my value came from what others at my work thought of me. Many of the people at my job were unbelievers and were going through divorces, infidelities, and drank and partied. I cared about appearances, having a big home, nice car, and even entertained the idea of cosmetic surgery. At the age of 30, my father passed away. I had had a relationship with him for 17 years, but the last 2 years I really started to grow close to him. I was devastated. He was an active member of AA and at his funeral many people showed up and it was apparent his life had true meaning. I didn't realize this at the time, because he was "poor" as the world would see him, but he was spiritually rich. I handled his death poorly and had further infidelities. I started to have panic and anxiety attacks from concealing the lies from my husband. I couldn't take it any further, living a life of lies so rather than come clean to him, I abruptly decided to divorce my husband of 13 years. This is when life really began to spiral out of control. I met a man at a bar who was much younger than me who introduced me to street drugs. I began abusing methamphetamines and heroin intravenously. Within 1 year I had lost my job, and shortly following, my 2 children got taken away. Within another year I had lost my home, my car, my retirement account and my self respect. My worst fears had come true and I had nowhere left to look but to my God. I was living in Oregon at the time, and my kids had been sent to Spokane to live with their aunt and uncle. A series of events occurred including my brother being jailed, which enabled me to have his vehicle. I had a warrant out for my arrest, I was spiritually bankrupt, so I decided I needed to leave my hometown and try and get my kids back. I left my town high and paranoid, scared I would be taken into police custody. I arrived in Spokane with 2 days clean and sober. I stayed at the Hope house and I was fortunate enough to have landed a job while staying at the Hope House. Now I needed to find a stable place to live. I also needed to eat and a quick google search revealed numerous soup kitchens in the downtown Spokane area. One of those places was The City Gate. I knew I needed stable housing so I called around to Oxford houses, but kept coming up with dead ends because I didn't have any way to afford my first month's rent. One day when I went to eat at The City Gate I inquired about a place to stay and had the pleasure of getting to meet and speak with Pastor John. We met in his office and I told him my situation, and that I had already landed a job. I believe I had about a week sober at this time. He told me they had a "shelter room" and I could stay there while I got on my feet. It was such a relief to be able to have somewhere to go where I could put my belongings. Everything I owned consisted of about 4 big totes in the back of my brother's car which I had inherited after his incarceration. I brought my belongings up to my room and remember feeling so very grateful. I had gone from living in a 2000 square foot home in a nice neighborhood with an incredible career, yet I couldn't remember ever feeling the gratitude I felt when I settled into the Alberta House. I knew in some strange way, that I was right where I was supposed to be. I went to an AA meeting and approached a woman I had never met who appeared to have joy in her heart, and I asked her to sponsor me. I began going to a meeting at least every day, sometimes several a day. My job hostessing at a restaurant began and I showed up to work every day on time. I got a gym membership and started going 3 to 5 days a week and went regularly. I could feel my strength increasing every month. The muscle atrophy from years

of addiction, laying around for my next hit, began to disappear and I felt light on my feet and with so much energy. I began sharing at meetings and doing step work. I was hungry for emotional healing so I poured through NA and AA literature and averaged completing about 1 step a month. I began volunteering at The City Gate in my free time and became very close with the other Alberta House residents, many of whom work at The City Gate. I began going to church and started tithing. I didn't even have my first paycheck yet, but I put \$5 into the collection plate and my anxiety was through the roof! I was choosing to put my trust in a God I hadn't ever truly known, but somehow I knew it would be okay. Each month my tithes got bigger and so did my blessings! The tithes doubled and doubled and it was synchronous with my faith! I was blessed with the chance to stay in the shelter room for 4 months free of rent while I continued to go to my part-time job and work on myself, going to meetings, going to the gym, and attending church. I won't lie, it was a struggle and I cried myself to sleep many nights. I started listening to Christian music a few months into my journey. I tried listening to my old music, pop music, rock music, but it brought me back to a painful time in my life, and many of the lyrics were of this world, drug related, or codependent in nature when describing love. The Christian music journey was something that came about while living at the Alberta House and my Christian life grew and grew. I began checking out books from the library by Christian authors and poured through 5 a week on average. The more I read the books the more I realized that these amazing authors had one source that propelled their wisdom and success and it was the bible! I had access to the bible too, so I set aside my library readings and grabbed hold of the Word of God and I soaked it up like a dry sponge! I read throughout the day, I read at night. I began to look forward to going to bed early so I could curl up with my Bible and grow close to God. Within 3 months of returning to Spokane, I had a sponsor, a job with steady hours, a place to live, a network of people in recovery, my children were returned to me, and I had a relationship with God! In my 3rd or 4th month in recovery I was moved from hostess to server at the restaurant where I worked. My income doubled or tripled at this time and many "God moments" occurred where I would be blessed with a big tip from a random customer or things would just line up in such a way that there was absolutely no other explanation. This happened so many times that I was convinced it wasn't a coincidence. People I worked with told me they had worked there for 10 years and things like that didn't happen for them, but it was happening for me on a weekly and monthly basis. I continued to tithe faithfully and increase my tithes and my faith continued to grow. Suddenly I found myself facing situations that would have baffled me, but I gave them over to God. I lived at the Alberta House for about 7 months and was able to move into my own apartment with my children in their school district. A few months later my brother's car died, and I had the financial means to purchase a nice used car that has been reliable ever since I purchased it 2 years ago. I continued to work at the restaurant and humble myself. It was difficult at times, going from ICU nurse to restaurant worker, but I asked God to help me with each shift and guide my words and relationships. I worked there for nearly 3 and a half years and I learned so much during my time there. I learned about humility, about relationships, about surrender, about judging others, about kindness, about principles before personalities. I was able to incorporate much of what I had learned in NA and AA and practice it at work. I grew fond of the people I worked with and the customers I served. I prayed for strong female friendships, and I was blessed to receive 3 of them! I have the privilege of having a full and abundant life today. If I feel alone I turn to God, or I reach out to one of the many women God has blessed me with! Last year I began the journey of seeking to have my nursing license restored. It's been a long journey with many hoops to jump through, but I am now working as an RN and have been abstinent from drugs for 3.5 years. I sponsor 4 women and I get to share all the wonderful things I have learned on my journey with them as they continue to heal from their hurts as well. My 2 children are thriving in life and my faith continues to grow. There is unexplainable joy, a hope for things unknown, that I have never experienced in my life before. I have learned to find gratitude in the trials, because by staying sober and doing the best that I can I have learned that something valuable is always gained through the trials and tough situations. In summary I would like to say that what I have learned through all of this is that we are never too far gone for God to use us and bring good from what we have gone through. He loves each of us so very much and He wants to bless us and love us. If our earthly parents are capable of desiring good for us, how much more so would our Heavenly Father desire good for us. I will continue to put my faith in Him and move forward. I still haven't felt like I have dug myself completely out of the hole that I created for myself, but I do feel I am nearing the top and I can only imagine what the view will look like from up there.



The City Gate

To Reclaim, Rebuild and Restore, Lost and Broken Lives

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The City Gate



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A Gathering Place...

"Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" — Matthew 11:28

Continuing needs:

- Coffee
- BLANKETS
- Styrofoam to-go boxes
- HAND WARMERS
- 33 gal heavy duty garbage bags
- Finances
- Prayer

Inside this edition of our newsletter is a letter written from the heart of one of our guests. It is raw & honest. It is a long read, but well worth it! Please take time to hear Mavis' story and join us in continuing to pray for her.

EMAIL: thecitygate@qwestoffice.net

OR



CALL: (509)455-9670

To request our newsletter by email



Without the support of volunteers who give their time and energy to this ministry, The City Gate would not be the haven it is to so many people. Whether you come once a week or once a year, you have contributed to keeping this place up and running. Your donations, regardless of time, money, food, prayers or clothing, have done so much to help the people who walk through our doors everyday. As pastors and as Christians, we want to thank you for heeding the voice of the Lord and ask you to keep us in your prayers as we continue this journey.

Love, Pastor John & Shirley