

JANUARY 2025

LIFE WITH THE MISSION

2024 Year in Review

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OPEN DOOR MISSION



2024 IMPACT REVIEW

As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude and hope. This year, Open Door Mission has been a place of profound transformation, where homeless and addicted men took courageous steps to rebuild their lives.

Through our DoorWay Drug and Alcohol Recovery Program, participants gained not just the tools for sustainable recovery but also spiritual guidance that renewed their faith and sense of purpose. Our Education and Job Readiness Programs empowered men with the skills they need to find meaningful employment, fostering independence and self-sufficiency.

Our community outreach brought smiles and connection. Programs like Toys 4 Kids and Thanksgiving Outreach made the holidays brighter for families, while the Run for a Reason 5K united our community around the shared mission of recovery. And through the Mission Kitchen Catering Program, men developed culinary skills, with proceeds directly supporting our life-changing programs.

Because of your generosity in 2024:

- Over **95,000** meals were served to those in need.
- More than **1,500** men received compassionate patient care.
- Over **360** men gained mentorship, life skills, career training, and spiritual guidance.
- An incredible **3,490** volunteers donated **12,793** hours to help us bring hope and healing.

These numbers represent real lives forever changed. Men rediscovered their faith, reconnected with loved ones, and began building brighter futures—and none of it would have been possible without you.

As we look ahead to 2025, we invite you to continue being part on this journey of transformation. Your support—whether through a donation, volunteering, or simply spreading the word—can make an incredible difference. Together, we can ensure more men take the courageous steps toward healing, hope, and independence.

Let's make 2025 another year of life-changing impact. Every dollar, every volunteer, and every prayer makes a difference. Will you join us?





Tommy Thompson
President and CEO



President's Letter

2025 Greetings to the Friends of ODM:

It is impossible to reflect on the past year—and my last Christmas at the Mission—without first speaking of what a tremendous honor it has been to serve the Open Door Mission for the last twelve years.

In March 2023, I gave my 2-year resignation notice to the board to be certain that we have everything in place to make my March 5, 2025 exit day come and go. This date coincides with my 80th birthday. When one reaches this age, it is time for change—for ODM and for me. We are now down to less than two months to go and the preparation is surrounded by changes. All for the good of the Mission.

Thanks to our strategic planning retreat last April, our board has never been more active. It was one of the two objectives of the retreat. The other being to search for a new CEO.

The board has asked me to assume the newly created position of **CEO Emeritus** to develop an **endowment and legacy giving program**.

As we prepare for the opportunities the new year will bring, our mission remains steadfast to serve and graduate more clients with great jobs that provide health and retirement benefits. There is no other facility in this country that does **ALL** that ODM does.

Over the last twelve years, we developed the Four Pillars of Open Door Mission that rest solidly on education: Recovery Education, Spiritual Education, Academic Education, and Life Skills Education. Our one-year DoorWay/Transitional Living Programs provide residential treatment and career guidance. **Our graduates go to work!** They have transformed from homelessness to sober, employed, tax-paying citizens at no cost to them.

As I transition from CEO to CEO Emeritus, I ask that we maintain our relationship I consider to be priceless. My legacy salutation applies here:

"I love you and you can't do anything about it".

I am wide open to talking about endowment and legacy giving with you and anything else you'd like to visit about. My email remains the same: **tthompson@opendoorhouston.org**.

God bless you.

THE WORLD-FAMOUS ODM ENSEMBLE



The World-Famous ODM Ensemble is more than just a musical group, it's a testament to resilience, renewal, and hope. Comprising men currently in the DoorWay Rehabilitation Program and alumni who have completed their journeys, the Ensemble shares powerful stories of triumph over addiction and homelessness through the universal language of music.

Performing uplifting and soulful pieces at **over 50 shows a year**, the Ensemble's members weave personal experiences into every note, inspiring audiences and raising awareness about the life-changing work of Open Door Mission. Their performances grace hospitals, clinics, churches, private events, homes, parties, celebrations, graduations, holiday events, galas, and more. Each soulful performance is a celebration of transformation, reminding listeners of the profound impact Open Door Mission has on the lives of those it serves.

Founded in 1954, Open Door Mission has grown from a downtown homeless shelter and soup kitchen into a beacon of hope, offering holistic programs for recovery, learning, career and spiritual guidance, and healing. The **World-Famous ODM Ensemble** embodies this mission, creating connections, fostering community, and bringing joy to the greater Houston area. Available year-round for special events and engagements, their performances support the Mission's broader goal: to transform lives through a holistic mind, body, and spiritual approach to recovery.

To bring the World-Famous ODM Ensemble's inspiring voices to your event, visit www.opendoorhouston.org or email fsmith@opendoorhouston.org. Join us in celebrating stories of resilience, redemption, and the transformative power of music.



Fred Smith Ensemble Director

For the past eight years, Fred Smith, Director for the Open Door Mission Ensemble, has led with passion and purpose, inspiring hope and transformation in the Houston community. With over 35 years of experience working with men in recovery, Fred mentors and uplifts the Ensemble's members, helping them harness their talents and share their stories of resilience through music.

His role extends beyond directing—he instills confidence and a sense of purpose, empowering the men to make a positive impact in the community. Under his guidance, the ODM Ensemble has become a beacon of hope, demonstrating the life-changing power of recovery and connection.

Fred finds great joy in witnessing the Ensemble's impact, saying, "The blessings these gentlemen receive are as transformative as the hope they bring to others." For Fred, leading the Ensemble is both a privilege and a source of profound gratitude. Fred, we thank you for all that you do for the men at ODM!

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBER'S OF THE ENSEMBLE

Tyrese Poole
Andrew Peralas
Derrick McKeller
Paul Levigne
Paul Cart
Cannon Hughes
Horace White
Bobby Foster
Jose Martinez

Richard Chandler
Frank Howell
Thurman Norton
James Perritt
Timothy Jones
Carl Wilson
Richard McKinsey
Leonard Geters
Anthony Watkins

Kelly Saski
Kristopher Cain
Earnest Polk
Jonathan Clifton
Garrett Van Gilder
Joseph Weakly
Thomas Eibell
Garrett Davis
Zac Brown

Jeffrey Garland
Charlie Walker
Miguel Valencia
Richard Hernandez
Roman Barraza
Christian Loyd
Grelylen Elder
Andy Shaw
Kevin Lumback
Ricardo Hernandez



REMEMBERING OUR EVENTS

- 2024 Chevron Marathon
- Driving For Change Golf Tournament
- Christmas In July
- Bowling "Fun" Raiser
- Safari To Sobriety Gala
- Rock The Shelter
- Toys 4 Kids
- Monthly Family Day
- ODM 4th Step Retreat
- Monthly Lunch With A Mission







VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Margrit McCray & Boomers

God Using Volunteers: A Story of Connection and Generosity



In 2009, **Margrit McCray** and Tommy Thompson collaborated at Main Street Ministries (MSM), the outreach arm of First Presbyterian Church, where Tommy served as CEO. Margrit volunteered with MSM's Operation ID (OPID), a program helping individuals secure photo IDs and birth certificates, a service essential for many, including Open Door Mission (ODM) clients.

In 2013, Tommy became ODM's CEO, maintaining the strong MSM-ODM connection. This link grew into a musical bond when **Maestro Fred Smith** introduced the ODM Ensemble to MSM, performing at various events. **Soon after, John and Margrit McCray welcomed the Ensemble to their annual Christmas parties.**

Inspired by these connections, Margrit and John's 30-year-old Sunday School Class, "Boomers," began assisting ODM clients during the holidays. They wrap Christmas gifts for clients' families, fostering reconciliation, and donate to the **Toys 4 Kids Drive** and ODM's operational needs.

This collaboration, spanning over 15 years, exemplifies the power of Christian relationships. The bond between First Presbyterian Church, Main Street Ministries, the McCrays, the "Boomers," the Ensemble, and Open Door Mission demonstrates how faith-driven generosity can transform lives.

Open Door Mission deeply appreciates these enduring partnerships and the heartfelt service of Margrit McCray and her community. **We love and thank you, Margrit, for your dedication and support.**

WE LOVE OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Second Baptist Church
Grace Bible Church
Seven Mile Road Church
Community of Faith Church
Trinity East End Church
New Covenant Church

Episcopal High School Seniors
Second Baptist School Seniors
Angela James & New Fisher's Church
Starlite Recovery Center
The Alexander House
Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

First Presbyterian Church
One Church @Bethal's Family
Good Hope Missionary Baptist
Memorial Drive Presbyterian
Grace Church Houston
Macedonia Worship Center



CALL FOR ACTION: HELP US DO MORE

YOUR IMPACT AS A RECURRING DONOR: SIGN UP NOW



\$50/Month
or
\$1.66 a Day

Can provide hot meals for men on site to nourish their minds and bodies back to health.



\$100/Month
or
\$3.33 a Day

Can provide clothing, shoes, and personal needs to restore men's dignity and confidence.



\$250/Month
or
\$8.33 a Day

Can provide men that are averaging a 6.1 grade level with educational supplies so that they can receive the best chance at success.



\$500/Month
or
\$16.66 a Day

Can provide education, job training, and spiritual support programs that will prepare our men for a prominent future.



\$1,000/Month
or
\$33.33 a Day

Can provide men who were formerly homeless with a complete recovery program that includes on-site shelter and an opportunity to transition into independent housing.

PLEASE VISIT OUR NEW DONATION PLATFORM FOR ONLINE PAYMENTS

Givebutter: <https://givebutter.com/open-door-mission> to sign up to become a recurring donor. Click donate, monthly, enter amount & continue with your payment. We accept credit or debit, PayPal, ACH, Venmo, or check



Yes! I want to support the men of Open Door Mission in their transformation

Thank You!

Your gift is tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to

Open Door Mission

You can also donate online at
OpenDoorHouston.org/donate

Enclosed is my gift of: \$50 \$100 \$125 \$250 \$500 \$ _____

I would like to commit to a monthly recurring gift of \$ _____

Email me the latest news & updates from the Mission

VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Credit Card No: _____ Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Billing Zip Code: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Cardholders Name: _____

(As it appears on card)

Cardholders Signature: _____

Open Door Mission
P.O. Box 849
Houston, TX 77001-0849
713-921-7520

In Honor

TOMMY THOMPSON

The Paula and Jeff Paine Family Fund
Arlo & Janet Weltge

EDUARDO MORREO

John Ellis

TONY MONACO

Harris Punyon

MAX TRIOLA, SR.

Anonymous

RICHARD & JUDY EBLING

Angie Foster

RICHARD EBLING

Walter Going

CHARLES CHAFFIN

Walter Going

DENNIS R. ELOIS

Burnis Thrash

MATT BLADES

Valach Family Foundation

COLE MILNE

Darla Milne

STUART SCHOFIELD

Kyle Haraughty

SAMMY FREEMAN

Matthew J. & Emily L. Linehan

ANGUS (SCOT) COTTON

Caribe Hourigan

BILL MILLER SR.

Eric Chan

THE YOUNG FAMILY

Kris Dill

DONNY BENNETT

Shelley Bennett

BILL WHITE

Charles Akers

RICHARD SCOTT

Rick Cousins

TERRY PALMER

Helen Treacy

BHARGAV PATEL

Phil KUNETKA
Cecily Gilmore

AARON

Mike Smylie

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR ADULT LITERACY

Horacio F Salas-Isnardi

ENSEMBLE CHOIR

Anthony Gray
Milner Partners LTD
Verity Group, LLC
James D. Pitcock, Jr.
John & Margrit McCray

MARIE CARLISLE

Ronald R. Carman
Ruth Keogh

KELLY & MARY LYNN RUSHING

James Fortescue
Susanna Kartye
Leslie P. Teel

In Memoriam

DR. TAJDIN R. POPATIA

Jenny Popatia

JUDY JOY

Glenn Edgecomb

MARVIN CHERNOSKY

Daniel Ellwood

SUSAN H. REDFIELD

John S. Redfield

JOE TAYLOR

David Mauney

V, L, J

Walter J. Linoski

PAUL T. RUOTSI

David Palmer
Paul Ruotsi Sr.

DAVID MICLETTE

Susan Miclette
W. Russell Brown Jr.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO BELOW

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIPCODE: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____