

Myra's Story

My 3 children and I fled to the Sheepfold when my prematurely born son was only 8 weeks and my daughters were 4 and 8 years old. I still remember that day so clearly, it was raining and the whole world seemed so gray. It was as if we were holding our breath and were only able to breathe when we walked into the Sheepfold home.

We were in the Sheepfold 1st Step program a little over 2 years. We graduated from the 2nd Step program about 5 years ago. Looking back now, God leading us to the Sheepfold truly changed the trajectory of all of our lives. My daughter, who is now 16 years old, still remembers the terror we felt before we left. We were so afraid of the sound of my husband's keys opening the door. I can't even imagine how our lives would be if we had not made that leap of faith. It was like leaving a very dark place and stepping into the light.

Being a single mom is never easy, but the foundation I learned from our daily Bible Studies at 1st step and the advice from the mentors that I've met while at the Sheepfold carry me through even to this day. I remembered one of the House Managers at 1st Step reassuring me that God will always be with me even when it was time to "leave the nest." I can still hear her words of comfort in my head when I doubt myself "out in the world."

I remember early on in our stay, we went swimming at one of the Sheepfold supporter's home. All the moms and our children spent the day swimming, having fun and eating so much food. Near the end of the day, the lady that hosted the event invited everyone to plant succulents. She showed us her mom's beautiful big plants and she provided cuttings, pots of different sizes and soil for us to plant our own to take home. I remember thinking, I can never grow any plants anyway so why bother. It didn't dawn on me at the time that in our former hectic life of moving from one place to the next and living in fear every day, I still carried the mind set of just being in survival mode. I killed all the plants I ever tried to grow so why would it be any different now. Luckily my four-year-old was curious and joined the group. She planted 2 little baby succulent plants and put her name on them. I brought them back to the 1st Step house and placed them in the backyard, watering them occasionally when I did my outside chores.

When we moved to the 2nd Step apartments my daughter took her plants and placed them outside our front door. I forgot to water them most of the time but being succulents they survived. The same lady came to visit us at 2nd Step with a group of



*Myra, (rt.) her brother,
her children and grandchild*

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For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

—2 Corinthians 3:17 NLT

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volunteers and she brought us more plants and offered bigger pots for the ones we already had. My daughter again joined the fun and re-potted her little plants into a bigger pot and amazingly they survived my occasional neglect and grew even bigger.

Right before we moved to our own apartment, Mariners Church started a vegetable garden at the 2nd Step property. I was inspired, and when we moved to our own apartment we brought my daughters 2, now medium sized plants home with us. We had a little patio and I started to grow some vegetables, I was on a tight budget but I was excited to grow more plants. I remembered how easily the succulents grew from little cuttings, so I cut a few branches from my daughter's plants, planted little pots of succulents and my garden seemed that much fuller.

While sitting on the patio, looking at my little garden, I realized that God was teaching me a very important lesson. I was just like this little succulent plant. When I stayed in a little pot and was neglected, I almost died but with a little water and tending to I survived and grew. When I stepped out in faith and let God move me into a bigger pot, I continued to grow. When I planted little cuttings, and gave the plants as gifts it was like when I shared my experiences with others and it felt like I grew even more.



Myra's daughter's plants today



Myra's daughter's family portrait

My son who was 8 weeks old when we moved to the Sheepfold is now 7, the little plants my daughter planted, that I kept replanting to a bigger pot, are now also 7 years old. We have since left our little apartment and are blessed to move into our own home. When I water the same succulents that started out in a cute little pot, I am amazed at how thick and strong those plants grew.

I still remember how I felt when I first walked into the Sheepfold House. Now, 7 years later, as I walk into our own peaceful home my heart is filled with so much gratitude. I'm grateful to Fran for obeying God's leading and those who followed in her footsteps, who are faithful, even to this day, to keep the light of the Sheepfold burning. A light of hope for so many families just like ours.

Thank you so much!

—*Myra*, Sheepfold Graduate (2013)

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

—*John 8:32 NKJV*

Shop or Donate New or Gently Used Goods at
Sheepfold Boutique, 810 N Tustin Street, Orange CA 92867

Thanks for a Wonderful Cinco de Mayo Party!

Thank you, Regenerate Church for hosting a great Cinco de Mayo party for our Saturday Night gathering. The decorations, crafts, music, gifts and yummy food were wonderful and a good time was had by all. It is so kind of you to take your time to share with all of us! God bless you!



To make a donation, please use the enclosed envelope or visit thesheepfold.org/donate.

Thank You for your generosity!!

The Sheepfold



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*Sin is no longer your master,
for you no longer live under
the requirements of the law.*

*Instead, you live under
the freedom of God's grace.*

— Romans 6:14 NLT

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A Note to Belinda (our court advocate)

Hi Belinda,

You've been on my mind the last few days and I just want you to know you were, and are, a very special lady in my life. I appreciate everything you and the ministry did for me and my daughters and it's something I won't forget.

I am holding a good job and I'm in a good place in my life because of your help.

Thank you so much for your support, your advice and your listening ear!

Love and Blessings,

—Elizabeth, Sheepfold Graduate (2016)



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