



JESUS CENTER

1297 Park Avenue, Chico, CA 95928

AUGUST 2019

Dear < First name >,

I am often asked to describe the work that is being done at the Jesus Center and there are lots of terms you've heard me use, *evidence-based, person-centered, or best practices*. But in a recent conversation about our staffs work, I was struck by the word *nurture*. As a verb, nurture means to care for and encourage growth or development. Nurturing means to combine providing basic provisions, such as the meals and offering shelter; but it also means being able to have tough conversations about long-term goals, independence and responsibility. And as you can imagine, traction is generally not immediate; nurturing is a process. Most of us have had a personal experience of watching somebody you care about begin to make decisions that we feared could lead to real problems, and in response, we focused on nurturing them, not solving the problem. It's the development and growth that comes from nurturing that could lead to a new life; and we recognize that we're often running life marathons with people more than we are sprints!



As a parent, I understand that nurturing may not always be our first response, there are some 'fixers' in our camp. We learned long ago that when we nurture our kids through tough situations or decisions, they feel connected to the outcome and have the ability to feel proud of how they've navigated a situation. But I admit that it can be a discipline! Just this morning as I was working at my desk, I received a text from my husband exclaiming that our 24-year-old daughter had finally landed a lease in Berkeley where she is headed for grad school this fall. I spontaneously erupted in praise to God!! *Woohoo!!! Miracles upon miracles!!! She has housing!!* And while we had many conversations about neighborhoods, public transportation, and the like, she did the actual work, and she is elated. Watching her enjoying the fruits of nurturing and developing her independence is honestly a bit emotional for me. But it is a sign that she's launched and off to her next chapter. This is good news.

I am amazed at the nurturing I see from our staff every day; maybe it's when somebody is late for meals but really needs a hot plate, and even during a heated argument that may be occurring in the dining room. I am grateful for a staff that knows how powerful that each of these opportunities can be for our participants. I am grateful for the calm, nurturing approach even when it means having difficult conversations, but also in times of celebrating good news such a 30-days of sobriety, or a job interview.

TURN OVER PLEASE

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1297 Park Avenue
Chico, CA 95928
jesuscenter.org

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YES, I want to support the Jesus Center's work to help the vulnerable with a financial gift of:

- \$35.00 to help feed and care for 14 people
- \$50.00 to help feed and care for 20 people
- \$75.00 to help feed and care for 30 people
- I am interested in giving regularly through Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)

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Join us in celebrating some great news!

We're celebrating that four of our participants have moved on to permanent housing!! Not just shelter, not just transitional: Permanent. Each of these participants started at the Jesus Center with a simple meal, then they moved into our emergency shelter, and then became part of our transitional housing program. And recently they have each secured a place of their own. We sat down and talked to them about their journey through the Jesus Center, and here is what they shared:

Q: What advice or wisdom would you give to someone who is just starting out on the road to permanent housing with the Jesus Center?

A: Give everything 100% even if you really don't want to. Really try to follow the advice given from staff and other support people even if it makes you uncomfortable. Change doesn't happen within your comfort zone.

Q: What are some skills you have gotten during your time being a part of the Jesus Center?

A: Becoming more sympathetic and understanding of how others handle situations.

Q: What is your favorite thing about your new home?

A: Honestly, being able to take a shower for as long as I want. When you're in a shelter or transitional, there are always more that need to shower; now it's just me!

We know the path to permanent housing isn't easy and the process is as unique as each person we serve. Once a person loses their housing, their dignity, a job and often key relationships, it's hard for them to do much more than survive. We use this opportunity to listen to them, nurture them and encourage them to view themselves and their future in a new way. We are often thanked for our role in helping people recover from their lives, but I am quick to give the credit to the participants, because they are the ones doing the heavy lifting.

Your support allows us to offer a robust, individualized path to housing for dozens of beloved children of God. Right now, we have almost 60 people in shelter and housing moving day by day to stabilize, reunify their families, secure stable employment, heal from what ails them and find a life of independence for themselves.

Please continue to support us with a gift today. The Camp Fire has deeply changed our community and services at the Jesus Center are more critical than ever. What you give allows us to come alongside those who are taking steps forward and to nurture those who need to find health. What you give today will change lives.

Blessings,



Laura R. Cootsona
Executive Director

"This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God."

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8-11 (MSG)
