

RACHEL — Winter 2019

“Unraveling.” That’s Rachel’s one word description of her life not long ago. Escaping with teen children from an abusive marriage meant leaving a three-bedroom home and turning to rented rooms, couch surfing and camping by the Deschutes.



Through it all, Rachel kept her job and the kids stayed in school. A compassionate employer helped her get a car and her license. He also suggested Bethlehem Inn. Rachel worried about those words, “homeless shelter.”

She says, “I knew I’d made some poor choices and needed help,” but a homeless shelter? Then she and the kids got to Bethlehem Inn. There was warmth. And hope. There was safety and stability: stepping stones to a new life. There were rules, some strict for sure, but, in Rachel’s words, “...all focused on helping me make changes.” Connections were made by staff with Deschutes County Behavioral Health. She was shown paths to find housing. There was unstinting staff support.

The kids say over and over, “So many nice people...so many generous volunteers. They’re only there to help you.” Her son says, “As long as my family is with me, I will be okay.” He no longer worries about his family. Rachel and the kids are in safe, stable housing. Rachel is working. The children are in good schools. Three lives that had been unraveling are now knit together, stronger than ever as they move toward tomorrow.