

SPRING 2025



NEWSLETTER

We have been dedicated to serving with compassion and dignity the immediate and long-term needs of those facing unplanned pregnancies for 27 years!

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FRONT DESK RECEPTION

Dear Friend of Next Step,

“Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song.” ~ John Paul II

“We are many parts. We are all one body.”

So, says one of my favorite church hymns from way back in 1980.

Hello ardent friends of Next Step. I wanted to share with you our answer to a very common question I get asked. And it's a very good, very valid question.

Why doesn't Next Step move to a more comprehensive women's care clinic model?

Why not offer a more robust menu of services that includes pap smears, well women exams which usually include pelvic exams, breast exams, and even the very simple, but much needed, UTI care. It is not because we do not believe wholeheartedly in the importance of and fundamental need for such care. Because we do! The ability to maintain good overall physical health, especially for young people, who most likely do not have insurance let alone funds for such care, is a gift not to be undervalued.

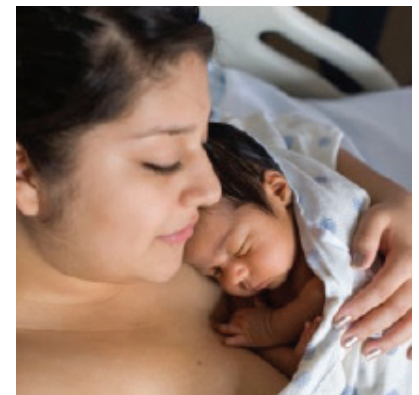
However, as St Paul teaches, 4 *“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.”* ~ 1 Corinthians 12: 4-6

My dear executive assistant Marta immediately made this connection. We all, each of us in the pro-life ministry, from women's clinics to

(Continued inside)



Heather M Vasquez
Executive Director



Dear Friend of Next Step... (Executive Director message continued from cover)

pregnancy clinics, to maternity homes, to support groups like Prepares, have our purpose set before us. We all have our distinct gifts. We all have our mission which embodies our core principles.

And ours, Next Step's mission, is to promote the sanctity and flourishing of human life by centering on the reproductive health, gifts, and intrinsic value of women. Girls just entering womanhood, women in pregnancy, in early motherhood, and following loss.

The services and care offered by our unique clinic encompass our values. It's what we do in service to God and His people. Just as our other exceptional partner ministries are placed where He wants doing the work He commands. Different work, same spirit.

"If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many

parts, but one body." - 1 Corinthians 12: 17-20

And further, *"If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."* - 1 Corinthians 12:26

We are honored to work alongside organizations like 3W Woman's Medical, Abundant Life, Prepares, CareNet, Two Hearts Pregnancy Aid, LifeHouse, Embrace Grace, 40 Days for Life, Acres of Diamonds, Antioch Adoption, and many, many more that to list would take too many pages of our newsletter! We are all one body, but many, many, gifts!

Take a moment to pray for the wellbeing and resilience of each of those working in defense and celebration of life here in Washington State alongside Next Step Pregnancy Services.

"We are many parts, We are all one body, And the gifts we have, We are given to share. May the spirit of love make us one indeed!" - (Marty Haugen, 1980)

~ Heather Vasquez

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



God's timing is perfect! As a single working mom - to a hockey player no less - my discretionary time was even less than my discretionary funds! However, my son had just left for college when a friend mentioned an opening on the Board at Next Step. Yes! A chance to serve women and babies and the pro-life cause - and now I had the time to do it! I was thrilled to hear of my acceptance onto the Board - and honored to later be elected as Board secretary.

I first learned of Next Step when I saw their sign at their former location on Highway 99. That, too, was God's timing; not long afterwards, a high school student of mine thought she might be pregnant. I was so grateful that I could give her the name of a place I knew would take good care of her. Now, our school nurse and counselors also know of Next Step and the compassionate medical care and material resources we provide - all free of charge. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of this fabulous, supportive, loving community: the Board members, the nurses, the staff, the volunteers ... and the entire environment. If you haven't had a chance to visit the clinic, I encourage you to stop by during our Open House on Sunday, April 27 to see first-hand the wonderful services Next Step provides to the women, babies, and families in our community.

~ Keleigh Muzaffar

THE DAY YOU ARRIVED

The day you arrived the world grew quieter and louder all at once. Tiny fingers wrapped around mine, holding on like you'd always known me. Your first breath stole mine away, and in that moment, everything changed.

I watched you sleep, wondering how someone so small could carry my whole heart. You didn't just enter the world—you built a new one for me. With every cry, I learned patience. With every smile, I discovered joy. You taught me how fierce love can be, how soft strength truly is. And though you were new to this world, you showed me who I was meant to be. Forever grateful, forever changed— because of you.

~ Unknown



Did you know?



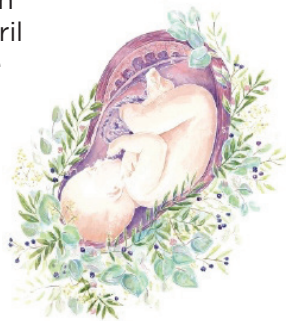
- The average cost of an ultrasound in 2025 is \$230-\$600 depending on insurance, location, scan type, and gestational age. That's a fairly large gap!
- 45% of our ultrasound clients in 2024 were listed as bringing home under \$29,000 annually and were uninsured.
- 91% of our scans were in the 1st trimester (up to 12 weeks) which is the most common time women decide whether to abort or continue their pregnancy.
- There were 269 ultrasounds at Next Step in 2024 - on the lower end (\$230/scan) - that's over \$62,000 worth of scans and fees you saved our clients!

SPRING OPEN HOUSE

Sunday April 27th
1pm - 4pm

Never visited the Next Step clinic?

Well now is your chance! We will be hosting a Spring Open House on Sunday, April 27th. Drop in anytime between 1pm - 4pm for tours, Q&A with our exceptional medical staff, and light refreshments.



FEMM™

FERTILITY EDUCATION & MEDICAL MANAGEMENT

By the time of this newsletter's release I will have, hopefully, achieved the designation of Certified FEMM Instructor and will be able to utilize my knowledge and the materials provided for our clients. Ovulation is normal, beautiful, and healthy. It does not need to be "stopped", as proponents of the "pill" push. The "pill" will never address the root causes of chronic pain and discomfort. For young women, understanding their cycle and seeing it as a gift will have them walking away with a deeper understanding of their own femininity and intrinsic value.



Recent Reviews of our small but mighty clinic!

My wife and I went here for an initial pregnancy test and an ultrasound appointment. Both Carrie and Barbara were incredibly kind and helpful. They taught us what to expect, showed us a to scale model of what the baby looks like at this stage, answered all our questions and even left a phone number for anything that may come up. While in the waiting room, we also saw many people donating things like diapers. The whole place feels like a small community where expecting and early parents can come to help each other out. So glad we came here to start our parenthood journey." ~ T.K.

"Exceptional staff, setting, and resources! Welcoming, free baby items, clean, and well organized. Friendly, compassionate, and supportive environment! Its clear Next Step loves and values the unborn and brave Mom's! I highly recommend this gem of a pregnancy resource center!!" ~ Patti



Little Flora is one of our first Next Step babies of 2025!



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SAVE THE DATE!

The 2025 Next Step Pregnancy Services Gala will be held on Saturday, September 20th!

Details to come!

Accreditation News

Next Step is deep into our 2nd full year of Accreditation – set to renew next Summer! The team continues to do an exceptional job on following policies, keeping logs, continuing education and welcoming new referrals from Swedish Edmonds and the surrounding local clinics. Oh, and sorting donations!!

Volunteer Gardeners Needed

If you love gardening, but don't have a plot of your own, we could use your expertise. Our garden beds require periodic maintenance—mostly weeding---especially in spring and summer. We'd love your help with this, even if it's just for one time. If your only free time is after clinic hours or on the weekend, we'll arrange to have someone from Next Step there with you. Also, we're planning a work party--most likely on April 12th--to spruce up our garden beds and add some colorful new plants. Please call Marilyn Thornton (206-355-6540) if this is a way, you'd like to support Next Step.



Thank You's are in order!

- St. Thomas More Church - Bottle Drive and Lenten Drive
- St. Mark Church - Bottle Drive and Giving Tree Gift Collection
- St. Brendan - Bottle Drive / St. Teresa of Calcutta Church Drive
- St. Monica's on Mercer Island - Baby Clothes Drive
- Blessed Sacrament - Bottle Drive / St. Timothy Lutheran Layette
- North American Martyrs Schoolhouse Service Day!
- Maplewood Church Foundation - Filled Diaper Bags
- Holy Rosary KOC Council 12591 - Bottle Drive and Crab Dinner!

