“Hi Chris, welcome home,” I hear Morgan call out from the front desk at the shelter. “How was your day?” With that simple greeting, Chris visibly relaxes after hours walking the streets. They share stories of the day’s highs and lows before heading downstairs for a hot dinner served by one of our wonderful volunteer groups.

“Hello, Nora! Welcome back to class!” I hear Tim in the hallway outside my office. Enthusiasm and excitement abound as student and teacher greet each other, catching up on all that has happened during the last month of school break. “And how are your children?” They chat like old friends.

A heartfelt welcome may meet a less tangible need than a bed to sleep in or an English class, but it’s every bit as critical to our residents and students. It sets the tone for everything else to come. To be known and to recognize that others are glad to see you, warms the heart and makes you feel safe – at least for a while.

Take a look at the words of students, residents, and volunteers included in these pages, and you will see what “welcome” looks and sounds like. While responses vary, I think you will find the big picture clearly shows how very important welcome is to us all.

You, dear friends, make it possible for us to extend welcome. Your volunteer hours, financial support, and encouragement of our mission (and, yes, voting in the recent Cub Foods contest!) keep us going so that the work of our programs can continue. I hope that you will continue to join us in welcoming all those who come through our doors—including at our annual benefit on October 25th, “Welcome the Stranger!”
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WELCOMED?

Our Saviour’s Community Services is a place of welcome - all too difficult to find for many immigrants, refugees, and those who struggle with homelessness. But what does it really mean to be welcomed? We asked students, residents, and volunteers how they’ve experienced welcome at OSCS. This is what they had to say!

“When I am welcomed, I feel appreciated. All my life, I have not felt welcomed or considered. But the first time I came to OSH, it was calm, quiet, peaceful, respectful, and clean. Everybody was happy, and everybody’s needs were responded to accordingly.”

- **SHIMOY**
  - **FROM** SOMALIA
  - “I felt welcomed at school the very first day. I didn’t know A or B or even my address. But everyone was so kind to me. Even when I didn’t know one word, they still wanted to help me. I remember my first goal was to learn how to write my name.”

- **MORGAN**
  - **OSH VOLUNTEER
  - “I am very content here at school. I can’t think of [just] one moment because I always feel welcome here. All of the teachers are so nice. They ask about your weekend and are interested in your life. Thank you to all of my teachers for the help. Thank you to the other students for being in my class and for welcoming me, even though I am different.”

- **KAREN**
  - **OSH VOLUNTEER
  - “My husband and I enjoy hosting bingo at OSH the second Thursday evening of every month. We feel very welcome even before we enter the building when folks greet us outside the door. Guests frequently express their appreciation for our involvement, and we receive many thanks for coming.”

- **CHRIS**
  - **EMERGENCY SHELTER
  - “I love volunteering, and I’ll continue to do it as long as my work schedule allows me to. When I welcome a new resident, I’ll ask them their name and help them get situated with their room – whether that’s getting them bedding, hygiene products, or food from the meal that night.”

- **KELLY**
  - **ELC VOLUNTEER
  - “Most of the students are quick to greet me in the hallways and ask how I’m doing. I’ve had students ask me about my life and share pictures of their children with me. I love it when that happens because we’re connecting as people and not just as student/teacher.”

- **SEGU**
  - **FROM ECUADOR
  - “When I welcome a new resident, I’ll ask them their name and help them get situated with their room – whether that’s getting them bedding, hygiene products, or food from the meal that night.”

Our Saviour’s Community Services is a place of welcome - all too difficult to find for many immigrants, refugees, and those who struggle with homelessness. But what does it really mean to be welcomed? We asked students, residents, and volunteers how they’ve experienced welcome at OSCS. This is what they had to say!
It makes me very happy when I am welcomed. I’ve felt very welcome by the staff. They are helpful and engaging. And have been very open to assisting me in moving on from the [transitional housing] program to permanent housing.

A warm personality goes a long way when I am being welcomed - someone with a non-threatening presence and calm tone, who’s willing to meet me where I am and work with me to new heights in my life.

When you are my age [71], it’s hard to fit in. I’m surrounded by young folks. When I am welcomed, I feel safe. Compared to other places I’ve stayed, [OSH] is safe, warm, and meeting my needs.

Support from my friends makes me feel welcome. I don’t have children here, so it’s lonely at home. I like to be [at school] more than at home alone.
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Web | www.oscs-mn.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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DON'T FORGET!

WE THANK OUR RECENT GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

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Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie
St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, Minneapolis
St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Bloomington

Foundations and Charitable Orgs:
Ancient Landmark Lodge No. 5
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TCF Foundation
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Register Today: www.oscs-mn.org/welcome