

## **The Severe Weather Shelter at Orcas Island Community Church**

When temperatures this winter drop to 32 degrees or below, the Severe Weather Shelter at Orcas Island Community Church is a place for unsheltered and under-sheltered community members to find warmth and hospitality.

The shelter first opened in 2015 in coordination with other churches on the island and with the help of the Orcas Island Community Foundation. Since that time, many different community members have volunteered to check people in, stay the night, or come to prepare breakfast.



Guests must check in by 9:00 pm and check out by 8:00 am. All guests must comply with the "House Rules," which are very specific about quiet times, being respectful of others, and that safety and security for everyone are the greatest concern. A hot breakfast, coffee, and tea are offered in the morning.

In 2019, the church applied for a grant through the Orcas Island Community Foundation for a generator so that lights and heat would stay on for the volunteers and guests. The community generously donated \$10,492 through the Holiday Gift Catalogue.

Kellen Comrie is now serving as the shelter coordinator. He and other volunteers have worked hard to make the shelter a comfortable and welcoming place for all. Kellen explains, "I give because I am fortunate enough to have something to give."

The shelter offers a \$75 stipend for nights served and a \$10/night incentive for signing up in advance. If you want to become a shelter volunteer or know someone who could use a winter reprieve when the weather gets below 32 degrees, please email Ryan Carpenter at [ryan@orcaschurch.org](mailto:ryan@orcaschurch.org).