

December 2019 Newsletter



Bringing Families Home

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Message from Sherry

Welcome to December! It is hard to believe that another year is almost over and FPSC will soon enter the fifth year of operation! Families in Shenandoah County and surrounding areas continue to struggle with finding and maintaining affordable housing and so FPSC exists to shelter, love and support families who find themselves without a home.

We have seen the number of calls for help increase steadily over the years - in 2017 we received 137 calls; in 2018 - 161 calls; and in 2019, as of October 31, 175 calls. And recently we have become aware of a growing trend across the region - people living in tents or campers in national forest campgrounds or just in the forest or fields. Many agencies are working hard to address these situations on a case by case basis and to provide assistance when possible.

As you get ready for the holidays, please keep all the folks without homes in your thoughts and prayers. Have a very merry, blessed Christmas!

*Sherry Arey
Executive Director*



Case Manager's Corner

Another holiday season is upon us! It seems like the last quarter of the year quickly rolls by! Thanksgiving is just days away and I think back over this last year and how thankful I am for all the volunteers who have given their time so freely for our guest families. Volunteers are the backbone of our program. A lot of preparation goes into getting ready to host our families. Each week at the host site, the coordinators and volunteers greet our families, prepare and serve meals, plan activities for the children, eat meals and talk with the parents and children. Volunteers help around the Family Center throughout the week organizing various donations, assist with mailings, spend time with the parents and children, and staff the Family Center on weekends.

So far this year 1,576 volunteers have logged approximately 8,900 volunteer hours. Our program would not exist without the generous amount of time our volunteers give to us. As of November 25, fourteen families have been in our program this year. On their behalf, I thank you for your compassion, commitment, and continuous service; I am thankful for all you do! Blessings to all!

Diane Wittreich

Seen Around FPSC



Dinner time -so yummy!!!



*Amanda gets her phlebotomy certificate.
Congratulations!*

*ADK Sorority packs
welcome bags for adults
and older children.
They were a huge hit
with our 14-year old!!!*



*Belk donated 165 blankets for the homeless. Great
blankets & so generous. They have been shared
with Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter.*



Thank You From Our Board of Directors

We are grateful to all those who support us through contributions, attending our fundraising events like our recent Golf Tournament, the annual Steak Dinner in March, the new Barn Dance and Barbecue in May and Cardboard City. We also recognize that we rely on the ongoing support of Valley Health, which provides our Family Center day location.

But as you know, the Family Promise shelter model – of which Shenandoah County was the 200th affiliate nationwide – depends on local churches and other organizations providing a warm, safe place to sleep and a satisfying dinner and breakfast for our homeless children and their families, one week at a time.

Thanks to our Host Congregations and their volunteers we have become the source of shelter for homeless families not only in Shenandoah County but in Warren, Page, Frederick, and Clark counties and the city of Winchester. We are serving as a model for those localities to develop their own shelter programs.

Excerpted from remarks by Katherine Morrison, Vice President, at our Celebrating Family Promise event.

Wish List

Paper Towels
Toilet Paper
Cross Necklaces
Laundry Detergent
Dryer Sheets
Antibacterial Wipes
Hand Sanitizer (10 oz size)
Air Freshener
Shower Curtains
Dishwashing Liquid
Liquid Hand Soap
13 Gal. Trash Bags
Toilet Bowl Cleaner
Liquid Cleaner (like Mr. Clean)

THANK
YOU



Christmas Concert
Jimmy Fortune

Baked Goods
Light refreshments
Coffee & Water for
Purchase

December: Monday 2nd 2019
Time 7 pm
Antioch Church of The Brethren
Woodstock, VA

Tickets: 540-325-1660 Tara Bowman
OR www.shencocares.com

In case of Bad Weather (NO) refunds given.
Proceeds will be donated to these Non- Profits.

Benefit: (4-H * Shencocares * Family Promise * Just Because * GAP
Strength in Peers * Response * Virginia Poly Institute Karen P *

Family Promise 2019 at Mt. Hermon United Methodist Church

(A note from Alesia Foltz to her volunteers.)

We have just finished our final rotation for Family Promise for 2019. It has been a somewhat different year for us. Our first two rotations were pretty normal and almost at capacity. Our last two rotations really challenged our flexibility.

When getting ready for our third rotation, there were no families. However, each day we were expecting a new family to come into the program. As it turned out, we had no families for the entire week. That was the first time since the beginning in 2016 that we had no families.

Our fourth and final week started with two families but when Sunday night came we only had one family, a mom and sweet little two-year old. On Friday afternoon we were notified that there was a family in need, and we would be getting a mom and 14-year old daughter. I must admit this made me a little nervous. I wasn't sure that we would be prepared for a last-minute family. However, when I arrived at the church around 5 pm, the room had already been set up nice and cozy. When the food arrived, there was more than enough for everyone. When the family arrived, it was very emotional and humbling. The family had never been in this situation before and did not know what to expect. We shared our love and compassion with them, as we always do, and what a blessing it was for all of us.

I cannot take credit for making this program work at Mt Hermon. I could not even begin to do it without my amazing support group. Everything from set-up to meals to soliciting volunteers to doing the dishes and laundry or just being there with a hug and a listening ear. This is definitely a team effort. Thank you so much for everything that you do to support me and this program. We are making a difference!

May you have a wonderful Holiday season and remember that the very best blessing is to be a blessing to someone else.

Share the News!

Recently one of our board members met a gentleman who was visiting from Oregon. She told him about Family Promise, and a few weeks later we received a check and this note:



It was a pleasure meeting you a couple of weeks ago at the Caroline Furnace Fall Festival. As I said then, your work with Family Promise sounds impressively compassionate & helpful to your community.

Enclosed is a small donation to support your work.

Through the FPSC website, I learned that yours is a new affiliate, Family Promise's 200th.



That's a large network, and a tidy round number for you. There's also an affiliate here in a Portland suburb near me that I may also look into. Homelessness is widespread here, and I've been able to support those programs through various ways in past years.

Please keep up your good work, and thank you for giving me a chance to support it. Best wishes to you and the Family Promise community in the months and years ahead.

We so appreciate his donation. And more than that, we are also excited that he wants to check out Family Promise in his community.

At the Edinburg parade, we got to talk with folks from South Carolina. And at the Family Fun Fest we talked with a family from New Jersey (where Family Promise Headquarters is located) who didn't know about the program.



Please share the Family Promise story with others, and remember – it is a national organization!

Eagle Scouts to the Rescue

Kason Wright and Micah Wages recently completed their Eagle Scout Service Projects and FPSC was the lucky recipient.

Kason built wooden shelves for one of our storage rooms and put together shelving for light-weight items using old children's cots.

Micah cleaned up our playground and installed netting to keep balls and other toys from rolling down into the wooded area below. Many thanks for your support of Family Promise & congratulations on completing your projects!!



Seeing Jesus

George Bowers
November 2019

Some people search for Jesus, in visions and in dreams,
But He is right before us, though different than it seems.

He is the homeless beggar, standing by the road,
And He's the struggling addict, beneath his heavy load.

He is the single mother, trying to feed her kids,
And the strange mental patient, living on the skids.

He is the little child, longing for your touch,
And He's in the nursing home, that we despise so much.

He is the hungry family, just a block away,
And the sad and lonely widow, facing each new day.

Our Lord is all around us, if we have eyes to see,
"For when you've loved each one of these, you've done it unto Me.



Please share this newsletter with friends.
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please send your email address to
shenfamilypromise@gmail.com



*Recent prayer in The Upper Room: Dear Lord Jesus, help us to know that we are still under construction.
Give us patience and courage to embrace the new life you offer. Amen.*

Thanks for your support of all our families - they are starting over and need patience and courage!
Your encouragement and support helps!

Save the Dates



- Jimmy Fortune Concert, Antioch Church of the Brethren, Dec. 2, 2019, 7 pm
- Edinburg Christmas Parade, Dec. 5, 2019, 6 pm
- Woodstock Christmas Parade, Dec. 6, 2019, 6:30 pm
- Strasburg Christmas Parade, Dec. 7, 2019, 5:30 pm
- Steak Dinner & Silent Auction, Mar. 28, 2020
- Barn Dance & BBQ – May 31, 2020
- 2nd Annual Golf Tournament, Oct 10, 2020
- Cardboard City, Fall 2020, date TBD

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