



30 Years.

We are celebrating our 30th year of ministry this year, and we are excited to be doing it with all of you. We have asked you to come forward with your stories of how Friendship House has affected you, and the response has been beautiful. We have received stories from former clients, residents, volunteers and staff.

Each week, we have shared these stories on Facebook. We are still looking for more stories and would be honored if you would share with us how Friendship House has affected you. Email friendshipousede@gmail.com with your story and picture if you wish and keep an eye on our Facebook page!

Below we are sharing with you stories from our transitional housing program staff and residents on how Friendship House has affected them. Enjoy!

How has Friendship House affected me?

~ Marcy Perkins

Over 23 years, I have watched Friendship House grow and change, then grow and change some more, all the while preserving its integrity, its commitment to God's people and its reliance on faith. I have seen beloved residents rise beyond their wildest imaginings and I have watched them fall and even die. My heart has been expanded and crushed and then restored to try again another day. I have always known that it is God who gives us, the staff and the residents, the courage to keep on trying. On several occasions, God's actions have left my mouth hanging open in amazement.

My father passed away in 2003. That Fall, our former Epiphany House, located at 4th and Rodney Sts., also began to die. We had to move. We had no money and didn't know what to do. A month after my Dad's death, our dear friend Jane Ashford died in the same ICU department, a few rooms down from where my Dad had been. Jane's family asked for donations to Friendship House in lieu of flower money. Friendship House received \$100,000 in "flower money." Tragedy

became miraculous bounty as we purchased the house at 720 N. Union Street, which is now known as Jane Ashford House. Our first residents moved in on April 13, 2004.

The only drawback to our new abode was that it was significantly smaller than our former residence. The Assessment Committee recommended we search for another house in Little Italy close enough for staff to supervise both properties. As I returned from that meeting, I noticed a "For Sale" sign on 718 N. Union Street; the house next door. When we approached the seller, he said, "I would love for Friendship House to buy this house." Again, we had no money. However, within a short while, Frank Patterson approached Bill Perkins to say his recently deceased daughter's trust fund was available to Friendship House. Frank asked if we might want to "buy a house or something in honor" of his daughter.

The trust fund was generous but Friendship House was still about \$50,000 short of the asking price. Two couples familiar with Friendship House came together with the rest needed and Friendship House purchased the house now known as Patterson House. Our first residents moved in during the summer of 2005.

Along with these two properties, we had Palmer House, making four houses available for women. I was content; I was ecstatic. All four properties were located within 3 blocks of one another. I did not want any other properties.

We had enough, so I thought. I was wrong.

Early in 2009, the owners of 722 N. Union Street told me they wanted to sell their property and, again, they would love to sell to Friendship House. "Oh," I said. "We are not in the market for another house." Shortly thereafter, Christ Church Christiana Hundred asked for agencies to submit grant requests. They were tithing their capital campaign and expected to have \$100,000 to give away. Friendship House was blessed with the grant and we bought a former barber shop which is now known as Epiphany House. Our first residents moved in on June 7, 2010.

God was still not through. One of our Lincoln Street neighbors asked if we were interested in another property, this one on 9th Street, right between our Lincoln and Union Street properties. "No thanks," I said. Then, Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church tithed their capital campaign and, voila, Elizabeth House was born.

I have always considered myself a pretty down-to-earth believer. I am not a mystic (much to my chagrin). I believe God is always present, always loving, but not really taking a direct hand in our affairs; at least, not in my affairs.

I can no longer make that claim. I have watched our dear God stretch us and grow Friendship House. I have watched as God has given us beautiful houses with wondrous gardens in safe neighborhoods. And I have felt God say, "These houses are for my beloved children. They are for the poor; the lost; the abandoned; the wounded. Treat my children with respect and reverence."

How has Friendship House affected me? My faith is deeper; I have seen a glimpse of God's infinite compassion and love for all of us. I pray to be faithful to this miracle-making Creator.



Mother's Day Garden Fundraiser

Our Transitional Housing program costs \$750,000 annually, \$62,500 monthly, and \$2,055 a day. We spend about \$6,000 per resident to transition them from their own dependency to a self sustaining way of living. This transformation can only happen because of the generous support of our community.

From grants, to individual donations, to volunteer hours - we are supported by all of you.

One of the ways we fund this program is through our Mother's Day Garden Fundraiser. Started over 25 years ago by our dear friend Jane Ashford, this fundraiser is an opportunity for you to celebrate someone in your life, whether alive today or gone on before us, by making a donation to our housing program. With each donation, we send a beautiful and colorful floral card to that person with your personal message acknowledging your donation (no dollar amount is listed). A card can also be sent to a family member of someone honored who has died. Many use this opportunity to celebrate a woman on Mother's Day. But some will also do this for a special man for Father's Day or even a way to honor a recent school graduate.

Every fall and spring we plant bulbs, flowers and lay mulch in our gardens with funds from this fundraiser. These gardens have become a place of sanctuary, rest, prayer, and a place of beauty for our residents. This year, you can honor a special person in your life with a donation to a living flower that will get planted in one of these gardens.

Please click the button below to send us your Mother's Day, Father's Day, or graduate gift. Thank you for your continued support and love for this ministry.

[DonateNow](#)

Or [Click here](#) for the Mother's Day Garden fundraiser website.

I am currently in Stage Two of the Women's Transitional Housing program. I can hardly begin to explain what this program has done for me and the extent of my gratitude for the staff and other women here.

I transitioned from the "Six for One" program in Baylor Women's Correctional Institution to a residential inpatient program through Connections for women. Then I came to

Friendship House.

At the beginning of my journey, I was broken, at my rock bottom and hopeless. I am proud to say that today I have almost ten months clean time. I actively participate in the NA and AA programs. I do one-on-one treatment through Connections' Outpatient substance abuse treatment. I am compliant with all probation requirements, have paid off all fines and fees that I owe to the state. Most important, I am gradually becoming more active as a parent to my two-year old daughter, who is allowed and encouraged to stay with me. Last, but not least, my focus and determination allowed me to accept a position as Assistant General Manager at a restaurant where I have been working on and off for five years.

From planning out my days one week ahead of time, the responsibility of being home for dinner every night in Stage One, to allocating my money by writing out my financial plan, saving money, meeting program requirements and setting short-term weekly goals, I am learning a lot. I feel that with hard work and constant determination I can accomplish anything I put my mind to. In a nutshell, I've been guided in the right direction to live a more structured, responsible and successful lifestyle which, to me, is key after living a chaotic and unproductive life of drug use and crime for a long time.

I plan to stick and stay as long as I am allowed. I am so grateful for all the love and support I have been shown and for my daughter being allowed to come here. Coming to this program is one of the best decisions I've made thus far in my life.

~Ashley S.



Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

Join us for a morning of family fun as Friendship House walks in the 2017 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. 100% of the money raised by teams walking for Friendship House goes to the Friendship House programs. Join your favorite ministry team or form a team of your own. If you can't make the event, donate to your favorite team or better yet, participate as a virtual walker; you will be counted as one of our walkers and the money you raise goes directly to Friendship House.

Help us reach our goal of 300 walkers and \$30,000!
For more information go to the events section
of our web site by [clicking here.](#)

Approximately 10 months ago, I came into the Friendship House Men's Housing Program. I felt blessed when they told me I was accepted into the program because, frankly, I had no where else safe to go. Had I not been accepted in the program, I could not say with certainty I would still be in recovery or even alive.

You are around people who become like family, so you have a network before you are even introduced to the AA or NA meetings. They show you how to balance and save your money to prepare you for when you complete the program. There is such a bond you grow into with your counselors; they help guide you and help you. They are spiritual guides that can bounce ideas back and forth. The actual housing is just one small part of a bigger program. In all aspects of your life, you have people who can/will help you as long as you put in the action required. I never felt unwelcome or out of place, which is a big deal for me. I feel like this is the first home I've had in a long time-not because of the building but because of the positive vibrations the staff projects.

I still have a lifetime to live, thanks to the help of Friendship House and I believe I will have a lifetime of friends/family because of this program.

In December, we had a Christmas Party; some of us don't have family. The staff and volunteers made sure we came together; we had dinner and shared good times, laughing with each other. The gifts they gave were very cool. Material things are not what I focus on as much in these days, but it was very nice and it made me feel loved to receive them. It made me cry tears of joy because I haven't felt love like this in a long time.

Tonight, I know I will sleep with a roof over my head, warm in bed, in clean clothes, clean body, happy with a group of people who have my best interest at heart, who I can talk to anytime. Thank you, God.

~ Chuck D.



Annual Meeting

The Friendship House Annual Meeting is Sunday, April 23. Come and meet Kim Eppehimer, who our board appointed as the next Executive Director (effective January 1, 2018). Join us as we talk about what's next for Friendship House! We will start with an open house of our administrative building and Men's Housing 12:00 PM (1503 W. 13th Street, Wilmington DE) followed by our meeting at 1:30 PM across the street at Westminster Presbyterian Church (1502 W. 13th Street, Wilmington DE).

Friendship House has given me freedom from a life of Pain! I was accepted into the Friendship House Program after graduating an eight month stay at The Salvation Army. I got sober there, but that was just a beginning.

Realizing I needed more support I entered Friendship House. I started off in Andrews Place where I was given a hot shower, a warm family-style dinner each night, and a safe place to sleep. Morning comes early at Andrews Place; I was up and ready to start my day before the sun was up.

Friendship House stresses the importance of Recovery meetings and I would go to "Early Risers," starting at 7:30 am. After that I would pound the pavement and look for work. It took weeks to find a job, but I didn't lose faith because of the support from my counselor, with whom I would have weekly sessions.

The great thing about the counselors here is they are always present even if you don't have a scheduled session with them. This was-and is-extremely beneficial to me in helping stay focused.

After showing I could work and follow the rules, I was moved over to Criswell House, where I was allotted a little more freedom. You have responsibility to keep the house clean and welcoming for the next candidate. It was instilled in me the importance of setting attainable goals. I set goals for my physical, financial and mental health and-sometimes to my surprise-I achieved them!

Now I'm at Daughtry House. Here I've been afforded the opportunity to grow even more. I've had "time," which is something the Friendship House has given me: time to really reconnect spiritually with God; time to improve my self-esteem, time to build friendships that will last a lifetime. And, most of all, time to realize I'm no longer a strung out junky. I'm a Human Being just doing the very best I can with what God has given me.

I plan on returning to college in the near future to finish my Behavioral Science degree. My hope is that I will be able to give back what was so freely given to me!

~ Todd G.

Wilmington Garden Day Saturday, May 6th

Wilmington Garden Day supports Friendship House with its proceeds. On May 6, take a tour of beautiful local gardens with your friends or family while supporting a great cause! Volunteers are also still needed.

[Click here for website.](#)



Save The Date!

The **Annual Party** is Thursday, June 8th. To receive an invitation, call (302) 652-8133. All are welcome! Proceeds go to Friendship House.

We are hosting a 30th Anniversary Party the evening of Friday, October 6th at:
Christ Church Christiana Hundred
505 Buck Rd.
Greenville, DE 19807



ANNUAL VOLUNTEER PICNIC

Sunday, July 23rd
1:00-4:00 pm
Brandywine Springs Park
3300 Faulkland Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19808
Please come and bring a friend!

Friendship House, Inc. | friendshipoused@gmail.com | (302) 652-8133 | www.friendship-house.org

See what's happening on our social sites:



