A PUBLICATION OF BETHANY HOUSE SERVICES

FALL 2015

A Year of Growth and Transition

2015 has been a year unlike any other in the 31-year history of Bethany House. In January we more than tripled the capacity of our shelter services when we assumed responsibility for the Mercy Health St. John Housing program, growing from 30 beds to 130 beds and adding three more shelter locations to our Fairmount shelter.

In June we added a Shelter Diversion program, also as a result of the closing of Mercy Health St. John. As the name indicates, Shelter Diversion diverts families at imminent risk of homelessness from shelter and puts them directly into permanent housing. Considered best practice in homeless prevention, Shelter Diversion conserves shelter beds and assistance for those who truly have no resources of their own and no options other than a homeless shelter or the streets. Most importantly, this strategy

avoids the trauma of homelessness for the children and parents.

In 2015 we also saw a 35% increase in our Rapid Re-Housing programs with the addition of a new HUD contract and an increase in two other HUD contracts.

Why all of this growth?

Because it is our mission and because there are families in need. Had Bethany House not stepped up to take the Mercy shelter beds they would have been lost to the community.

At a time when overall homelessness is decreasing, family homelessness is increasing. Bethany House was the best positioned agency in the city to take on this growth—having been rated #1 out of 12 local shelters in 2014 based on our outcomes.

But it wasn't only about the mission—it was also a business decision to grow. The bottom line is that in today's economic and funding environments we needed the economies of scale - we needed to grow and diversify our funding streams - and that is what we did this year.

Equally exciting and also positioning Bethany House for the future is the newly released Solutions for Family Homelessness—a community wide, multiyear plan designed to solve critical issues for homeless and at-risk families. As BHS prepares for 2016, our Board and staff are energized and committed more than ever to ensure all families have a place to call home and no one spends a night without shelter.

Solutions for Family Homelessness

On October 19, 2015, Strategies to End Homelessness, the Family Housing Partnership (Bethany House Services, Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati, The Salvation Army and YWCA of Greater Cincinnati) and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul announced the release of the Solutions for Family Homelessness community-wide plan.

The participation of more than 60 key organizations led to the development of Solutions for Family Homelessness, a collaboratively developed, multi-year plan designed to solve critical issues for homeless and at-risk families. Solutions for Family Homelessness is a plan to identify how we, as a community, can proactively address the needs of families. Recommendations are focused in four key areas - Prevention, Capacity Building, Policy Change and Housing.

Bethany House staff is proud to have played a part in the development of the plan and will be taking an active role in its implementation going forward. "As a team, we have identified three priorities, including expanding homelessness prevention services, offering specialized services for homeless children and targeting existing housing resources toward at-risk and homeless families so that we can minimize the trauma of homelessness," said Kevin Finn, President and CEO of Strategies to End Homelessness.

In spite of the fact that the plan was just released, we have already realized several positive results:

- The city has approved \$100,000 for Bethany House for pre-development and development costs to address the Shelter capacity issues we are currently having.
- · Hamilton County is considering a \$1M request for Case Management, Child Coordinators in every family shelter, and Early Childhood Services

Taking Action









Solutions for Family Homelessness Cincinnati/Hamilton County 2015

• Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority is prioritizing homeless families for Housing Choice Vouchers. The **Solutions for Family Homelessness** Executive Summary and Plan are available online at www. strategiestoendhomelessness.org.

Dear Friends,



As the Transitions cover story reports, 2015 has been a vear unlike anv other in the 31year history of Bethany House. Overnight growth in shelter capacity, a new shelter

diversion program, and expanded housing programs have contributed to the most significant growth in one year that the agency has ever seen. Last year, our Fairmount shelter served 1 out of every 10 homeless families; this year, our four shelters serve 5 out of every 10 homeless families.

I am thrilled to report that our Board is the most dedicated, committed and energized Board I have ever worked with, stepping up to tackle a myriad of issues. Our committees are actively involved in assessment, evaluation and planning, and our Facilities Committee meets weekly to assist and advise on the seven buildings Bethany House now operates.

So why in the midst of all of this growth are we spending time revising our Mission and Vision Statements, Core Values and our Strategic Plan? Because we need all of these foundational pieces to reflect the growth we have experienced as well as our new short term and long term goals.

As you will read, Bethany's growth has been perfectly aligned with the October release of the new community-wide plan,

Solutions for Family Homelessness. The goal of this plan—to make family homelessness rare, brief, and nonreoccurring—aligns with Bethany's mission to ensure our families "achieve housing stability and long-term selfsufficiency." The release of the Solutions plan has also given us the opportunity to connect with elected officials at both the city and county as well as gain media attention focusing on the increased family homelessness in our city.

While the families we serve have experienced many tragedies this past year, your support and prayers have sustained our parents and our kids, our Board, staff and volunteers. Words cannot convey our heartfelt thanks to each of you.

Gratefully,

Susan S. Schiller Executive Director

Updating our Mission and Vision Statements and Core Values

This past spring an ad hoc Committee of the Board of Directors began work to update the Bethany House Mission and Vision Statements and Core Values to ensure each reflected the agency's expansion of services and guided our work and our behaviors.

The Committee wanted the new mission to focus on the outcomes of the "housing, education, and assistance services" that we have been providing for decades, plus be inclusive of all of our programs, including our new Shelter Diversion program. They also wanted the mission statement to be aspirational, inspirational, using as few words as possible and easily memorized.

At their June 2015 meeting, the BHS Board approved the following MISSION STATEMENT:

Bethany House Services empowers homeless and at-risk families with the solutions to achieve housing stability and long-term self-sufficiency.

Next the committee reviewed the Vision Statement. The goal was to ensure that our Vision defined the Desired End-State. They wanted our Vision to describe the clear and inspirational long-term desired change resulting from our work. Once again, it had to be inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise.

At their August 2015 meeting, the BHS Board approved the following VISION STATEMENT:

Our Vision is to live in a community where all families have a place to call home and no one spends a night without shelter.

The Board committee then turned their attention to reviewing the agency's Core Values and sent their draft to the staff for their input. Staff made recommendations and then went one step further preparing a list of "Positive Behaviors" and "Behaviors to be Avoided" based on the identified Core Values.

The Board of Directors approved the following **CORE VALUES** at their October 2015 meeting:

- Respect—We value, listen to, learn from and appreciate each other, our clients, our board, our donors and our community.
- **Empowerment**—We encourage, build confidence, inspire, and promote each person's right to self-determination.
- **Integrity**—We insist on absolute honesty, the highest standard of conduct, and accountability to each other and to all of our stakeholders.
- **Excellence**—We demonstrate exceptional performance and service.
- **Collaboration**—We work with each other and our community to fulfill our mission and achieve our vision.
- **Hospitality**—We welcome with compassion those in need of housing and services.

New Shelter Diversion Program Prevents Homelessness

What if—we could prevent the trauma of homelessness to a family AND save money too? Sounds ideal, doesn't it? Well, that is exactly what our new Shelter Diversion program does!

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, shelter diversion programs are best practice for the prevention of homelessness. When a family calls for emergency shelter, they are assessed to determine if they qualify for the diversion program, and if eligible, they are diverted from shelter—hence the name. If a family is able to stay in their temporary housing for just 1-2 more weeks, our Diversion Case Manager, Mary Singer goes to work. Mary will help the family find an apartment while connecting them with the services

and the financial resources needed to maintain housing permanently.

Shelter Diversion conserves shelter beds and assistance for those who truly have no resources of their own and no options other than a homeless shelter or the streets. Most importantly, this strategy avoids the



The favorite part of my job is seeing the success of my clients" shares Mary Sinaer. Shelter Diversion Case Manager.

trauma of homelessness for the children and parents.

BETHANY IMPACTS FAMILIES

FINDING A HOME AT BETHANY HOMES

Moving back home to Cincinnati seemed to make the most sense to Rosezetta. Her goal was to make a better life for herself and her two children. Living in North Carolina with relatives was not working-she couldn't seem to get ahead. However, upon her return to Cincinnati, Rosezetta found it impossible to find a decent affordable apartment on her salary. Months later she and her kids were homeless, which is what brought her to the Bethany House Services shelter on Fairmount Avenue.

Within four weeks of arriving at the shelter, Rosezetta found a safe, decent and affordable apartment at Bethany Homes in Westwood, BHS's 24 unit apartment complex. It has been 21 years now that Bethany Homes has helped fill the community's need for affordable housing in Cincinnati. Some tenants come directly from the Bethany House Shelter and others through the Housing Choice Voucher program.



The Nixon Family Front, L. to R. Ja'mar and Ty'shawn, Back: Rosezetta and J'lynn.



A cookout is just one of the family activities held at Bethany Homes throughout the year.

Linda Klems, Bethany Homes Property Manager shares that "safe, secure and family oriented housing is difficult for low income families to find. Bethany Homes provides all that, as well as a caring, community like atmosphere for the tenants to enjoy."

"Linda goes above and beyond in the care of Bethany Homes," say Finance Director Kelly Freyler. "She regularly volunteers at Bethany Homes, organizing Easter eggs hunts, crafts for the kids, summer picnics and holiday parties for the tenants."

Rosezetta has been back in Cincinnati

It's clean and safe and most important, it provides a positive and supportive environment for my children. Bethany Homes is a real home for me and my family."

almost six years now and says "I am so

thankful to have found Bethany Homes.

Thank you Bethany House

August 22, 2015 Dear Bethany House,

I would like to thank Bethany House Services for all the help that they provided to me and my children. On June 1, 2015 I went through the hardest time of my life. I was living and working in Florence KY at the time. It was my day off on a Monday when I was surprised with a terrible car accident that morning. I found myself losing my job as well as caring for two of my three children who suffered serious injuries. Without a place to go after about two weeks out of the hospital I found myself suffering and desperate, along with practically two handicap children and another half scared to death. I did not know where to turn in my time of need.

I called and spoke to a wonderful lady who heard me out and told me not to worry that she would do whatever she could to help me. It was then that She connected me with Gwen Green from Bethany House Services. I am very grateful for all the help you provided me throughout these three months. With your help I had a shelter for my children and me. I was able to save up enough for a deposit and first month's rent with the help that Bethany House provided to my family.

I am more than grateful and in great debt with all of you, especially with the wonderful case manager, Cynthia Kimber, who helped me tremendously throughout all of our needs.

Thank you so much. I do not know what our lives would be without you guys. God bless you all!

Yours truly, Joanne V

BETHANY CHANGES LIVES

Ms. R was several months pregnant and had a 3 year old son when she lost her job because of hospitalization for a gunshot injury. She could not return to her previous housing because the apartment belonged to her fiancé, who was responsible for her injuries. She was discharged directly from the hospital to Bethany House. Case managers supported her decision to leave the dangerous relationship, facilitated entry into a certified nurse assistant program, and found funding for her until she was employed. Our housing specialist identified rental properties that Ms. R could afford and assisted with security deposits, initial utility costs, negotiations with landlords and clarification of contract language. Ms. R has now been living independently for several years and her son, now a student at Purcell-Marian High School, is an athlete who volunteers at the Bethany House Shelter on Fairmount Avenue.

When asked about her experience at Bethany House, Ms. R replies simply, "They saved my life."

Bethany House Appreciates an



Alison Cucchetti (center) delivers donations form Oak Hills High School to Courtney Parker (left) and Chana Wilson (right)



TruGreen Ben Fogel (left) and Ben Suer (right) present \$500 check to Susan Schiller



Volunteers Mary Farmer, Elaine Jackson and Renee Wilson are three amazing women who organize files and supply cabinets, assist with special events, and compile statistics all with a smile and an eagerness to help.



Angels Among Us

For over 31 years Bethany House has been blessed with amazing volunteers and donors whose support has impacted the lives of our families. This year so many of you have jumped in to help and as staff, we are incredibly blessed to witness the outpouring of love day after day as you appear at our door to share your time, talent and treasure.

Two of these special volunteers are retired nurses who have made it their mission to ensure that our families have "the basics" when they leave our shelter and move into their new homes. These "angels" wish to remain anonymous but insist they have "a ton of fun" shopping for our families. Every couple of weeks they arrive at BHS with an SUV full of brand new supplies including toiletries, bedding, baby clothes, pots and pans, dishes, shower curtains, small appliances, winter coats, brooms and dust pans—and that is only a partial list!

We thank these two women and ALL of our Bethany Angels who help our families get back on their feet. Our parents are grateful for this support as they work towards independence. If you are interested in helping a family by providing some "basics", please call Lisa at 557-2403.



Volunteers from Ameritas painted the 2nd floor of the shelter.



Oaks Hills High School students painted a mural in the children's playroom at the Fairmount shelter.



Seven Hills Chi landscaped

nd Celebrates Our Volunteers





Indian Hill Primary Kids Who Care donated love boxes of personal care and hygiene items.

Vision One presents their donation raised during Casual for a Cause Days.

Children Helping Children

Dear Bethany House,

For our 7th birthday our friends brought us money instead of gifts. We collect money for a different charity each year and this year we chose Bethany House (with help from our Mom).



Lucy and Cassidy Wales decided to help the children at Bethany House rather then get gifts for their 7th birthday!

We are learning to be good citizens of the world. We hope this money can help children and parents find a home.

your Friends, Lucy and Cassidy

Lucy and Cassidy Wales are 7 year old twins and 1st graders at Parker Woods Montessori....and they are quite the fundraisers! Their mom, Erin Wales, said "we came up with the idea about collecting donations instead of gifts for their 6th birthday. Instead of getting tons of junk, I mean toys, why not use that money better?" The girls still get gifts, just not from friends....and they raised over \$150 for the children living at Bethany House and Ronald McDonald House. Erin said she picks the charities based on their descriptions of problems they see in their communities and the world at large. "My husband and I really want our kids to understand they can help others (and animals!) and be good citizens. We will encourage volunteerism as they grow older but right now they will collect money." Lucy's and Cassidy's generosity have inspired the other families that came to their birthday party and they have done similar collections.

Facebook Posting on November 4, 2015

Bethany House Services - THANK YOU for all that you are doing to help fight homelessness in Cincinnati! To all the individuals who work for this amazing organization, thank you for putting in the long hours, dedicating as much time as you do on an ongoing basis & all of your efforts to help support those in need! You truly do make a difference! A special thank you to Ms. Liz & Ms. Lana who always have a smile on their faces & have helped those of us who come to prepare dinners there make sure we can pull off a successful event!

If you're reading this & you have friends/family; a network; an organization or any other group and are looking to make just a small difference, please consider donating a few hours of your time and sponsoring a dinner one night of the week at BHS! It takes very little to bring the items & cook a warm meal, but it makes a big difference to those women & children at BHS who walk into the kitchen smiling when they see the meal is prepared!

Homelessness is a real thing, it exists in our city & if it wasn't for organizations like Bethany House many more people in need would not have anywhere to go!

Help when you can, give what are able to, donate what you may not need but someone else can use, but please consider supporting Bethany House Services any way that you can!! Alenka Marik

Thank you Alenka! We couldn't have said it better!



irch Heart of the City volunteers **Bethany Homes apartments**



St. Ursula sophomores donated blankets they made to the families at the shelter.

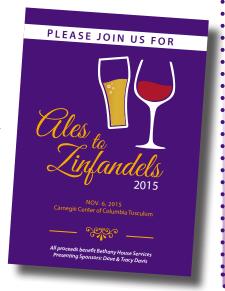


Seton High School students made masks for our Mardi Gras 2015.

Ales to Zinfandels 2015

Nearly 200 guests filled Carnegie Center of Columbia Tusculum on November 6 for "Ales to Zinfandels" Bethany House Services' (BHS) 12th Annual Wine & Beer Tasting. Guests enjoyed artisan wines from world class wineries, delicious food by Jeff Thomas, the music of pianist Marty Cunningham and scenes from current shows by Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati. The event's Master of Ceremonies was local celebrity Mike Brown, "Man About Town." Attendees bid on auction items ranging from fine wine to trips to gift certificates from area restaurants and much more.

Sponsors for the event included Presenting Sponsors Dave & Tracy Davis; Gold Sponsors Mercy Health and TQL; and Silver Sponsors Mike & Megan McCuen and Ultimate Rehab, Ltd.





Bethany House lpk Selected for LPK **Design Blitz**

We are thrilled to announce that Bethany House Services has been selected as one of three non-profits in our city to be a participant in LPK's 24-Hour Design Blitz!

LPK will assist in updating and evolving our brand expression, including an evolved logo, a new tagline, and a new brand expression toolbox (brand color palette, photo principles, patterns, fonts, and other related new equity elements). We're excited about the possibilities of an updated brand expression and thrilled to be selected for the Design Blitz!



BHS Wine Tasting Committee 2015: (left to right) Karen McHale, Erika Meyer Judd, Lynne Whang, Gail Myers, Mary Alice Koch, Susan Schiller, BHS Executive Director, Julie Ross, Chair, Katie Coughlin, Megan McCuen and Kelley Carrier. Not pictured: Tracey Griggs and Beth Kasson.



Ensemble Theatre at BHS: Members of Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati perform a vignette from one of their current shows.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

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Darlene D. Guess, MSOL, LSW, Director of Client Programs

Gwendolyn M. Green, MEd, LSW, Shelter Director

22nd Annual Golf Outing - Sun, Fun, and Support for Homeless Families

The sun shined brightly on Shaker Run Golf Club on a comfortably cool August 14th as golfers headed to the tees for the 22nd annual BHS golf outing. Committee members Sean Mullins, Grant Cooper, Art Hathaway, T.J. Davis, Ryan Edwards, Jack Cameron, Jason Beccaccio, Butch Rowekamp, and Mike Haverkamp orchestrated a great day of golf and fun while raising funds to support families experiencing homelessness.

Congratulations to all of our Winners! Lisa Owendoff, Robyn Orner, Anne Ernst, and Anjie Britton were the 1st Place Women's Team and the 1st Place Men's Team included Art Hathaway, Ed Feldmann, Todd Johnson, and Scott Winfield. The 'Longest Drive of the Day' was won by Michelle Flannery for the women and Todd Johnson for the men. Roseanna Lakeman and Todd Johnson won the accolades for coming 'Closest to the Pin'.

Special thanks to our sponsors, golfers, volunteers, and our hard-working Golf Committee, who made the day such a success!



Congratulations to 1st Place Women's Team, I to r. Lisa Owendoff, Anjie Britton, Robyn Orner and Anne Ernst



Congratulations to 1st Place Men's Team, l. to r. Art Hathaway, Todd Johnson, Scott Winfield and Ed Feldmann

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Eating Right - Tasty Bites!



When frightened, hungry, homeless children arrive at Bethany House, most are not used to eating hot meals. They have survived on a diet of snacks and sandwiches and are a bit leery of vegetables and grains. During their time with us they learn how to make healthy food choices through the efforts of Liz Matthews, Shelter Coordinator, and the Nutrition, Health & Safety program.

"When they first come in, the children will say they won't eat this and they won't eat that. But when they smell the food and see the other children eating it, they want to try it, too – and then they like it. We teach moms and children how to eat nutritious meals and not to let the children eat snacks right before dinner," Liz says.

This year the Nutrition, Health & Safety program has been enhanced through participation of community groups such as the Nutrition Council, which provided a nutrition intern to develop child-parent cooking activities, and the Western Hills Garden Club.

By working with the Garden Club volunteers, children are learning where their food comes from – and are therefore more likely to eat it. Children assist the volunteers to plant and tend a vegetable garden behind the Fairmount shelter.

We are very grateful to the Western Hills Garden Club volunteers who have done such a tremendous job for our families this summer, and to the funders who make the Nutrition, Health & Safety program possible: the Charles H. Dater Foundation, the Spaulding Foundation, TJX Foundation, and the General Mills Community Action Council Foundation.



SUMMERTIME MEMORIES

When the teacher asked in September, "And what did you do on your summer vacation?" – Bethany children had a lot to say!

With the support of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation's Summertime Kids program, the Spaulding Foundation, TJX Foundation, and the General Mills Community Action Foundation, our families shared the same experiences as many others who are not homeless or economically disadvantaged. Under the supervision of Shelter Coordinator Liz Mathews, shelter guests enjoyed field trips to several family-friendly attractions.

School children attended the Project Connect and UpSpring summer camps to help them remember what they learned during the previous year and also enable them to participate in all the fun and friendships of a day camp experience.

This summer our families also visited the Zoo, Coney Island, COSI, the Indianapolis Children's Museum, King's Island, and Build-a-Bear. The shared experiences promoted parent-child bonding as they explored and learned together. The tornado

simulator at COSI was a popular activity for our kids and they also enjoyed the adventures in which they helped to find clues and solve mysteries. At the Indianapolis



The Indianapolis Children's Museum was a hit with our children and their parents!

Children's Museum our children had the opportunity to dig for dinosaur bones, become train engineers, explore The Health House and experience everything from the five-story Chihuly blown glass masterpiece to an Indy race car.

Thanks to the foundations and individuals who funded our summer program. You made it possible for Bethany's homeless children to create memories that will last a lifetime!

MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES SUPPORT BETHANY HOUSE MISSION

Memorials and Tributes allow you to express your support, respect, gratitude or love through a gift that honors an individual while furthering the mission of Bethany House Services. Gifts can be made in celebration of a special event, such as a birthday or anniversary, in honor of an achievement or in memory of a loved one. When your gift is received, an acknowledgement will be sent in your name to the individual you are honoring or the family of the person remembered. All gifts will also be acknowledged in the Bethany House newsletter.

Memorials and Tributes received February 1, 2015 to October 31, 2015

IN HONOR OF: Cecil C
Bethany House Staff
Joanne and Sidney Cohen
Nancy Cooley
Steve Cooley and
Cecil C
Jimu
Check
Sara

Lisa Joliat James P. Goetz Catherine Goetz and

Catherine Goetz and Connally Edozien Dr. Robert and Julia Heidt, Jr Anne Heidt Mary Lou Kern

Mary and Mario Roberto

Isabelle Rivera

Donald and Susan Clancy

Carmen and
Gabriel Deguia
Marjorie and Paul Francis
Amy and Richard Giradot

Erin Schultz
Gregory and
Sherry Schultz
Sisters of Charity – 60
and 65 years

and 65 years
Sr. Lynn Heper, SC
Sr. Mary Stanton, RSM
Johanne Armstrong
Jerry Wilkerson and

Cheryl Meadows
Sr. Martha Walsh
Steve and Lisa Walsh
Bob and Janice Wassler

Bob and Janice Wassler Earl and Eileen Kisker Women of Montgomery Presbyterian Church

Montgomery Presbyterian Church IN MEMORY OF: Shirley Auciello Frank Auciello

Norbert Brinker Lydia Brinker Jill Brown

Eileen and Russell Brown
Judith C. Brown
Russell Naber and
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Robert H. (Dizzy) Brown Susan Schiller Cecil Cerroni
James Eure
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Christopher

Hilda Schaefer

Jane Schehl
Peggy Smith
Clifford Sucietto
Hannah Stanton

Julie Evans

James and Julianne
Stanton

Sherri and Timothy Jablon **Laverne Tarpley**

Bob and Terri Lessnau

Pamela C. Taylor

Susan and Mike Schiller

BETHANY WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Working to advance the independence and housing stability of homeless families, Bethany House is proud to announce the following new Board members:

- Michael F. Haverkamp, Retired Senior VP, Ohio National
- Steven Hengehold, Attorney with Rendigs Fry Kiely & Dennis, LLP
- Sr. Lynn Heper, SC, Retired COO, St. Joseph Home
- **Rob Poulos,** Vice President of Recruiting with Total Quality Logistics

BETHANY HOUSE SERVICES

Bethany House Services 1841 Fairmount Avenue Cincinnati, OH 45214 513-921-1131



www.bethanyhouseservices.org







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1841 Fairmount Avenue Cincinnati, OH 45214

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Want to Make a Difference in the Lives of Homeless Families?

There are many ways to support Bethany House and help homeless families.



Name BHS as the beneficiary of your Kroger Rewards card.



Make your Amazon purchases by using AmazonSmile.



Use Goodsearch as your search engine.

Invite your business, church, school, family or friends to do a dinner or a brunch, painting, or fall clean-up at our shelters.

Plan a special event, promotion or fundraiser to benefit Bethany House Services.

Make a monthly gift, a one-time gift or a planned gift in support of our mission.

With Your Help, Santa Claus IS Coming to Town!

So many stockings this year! Because we are serving almost three times as many families as last year, we need your help more than ever. The numbers make it impossible to hold our annual holiday party but we still want to be sure that EVERY child and adult receives presents under the tree. Please share your holiday spirit by contacting Courtney at 513-557-2402 to find out how to brighten the lives of homeless children and parents this season.



Please consider a planned gift to Bethany House Services and become a **BETHANY BENEFACTOR** ensuring shelter and support for our homeless and at risk families.

