



GOD'S SHELTER OF LOVE

MARCH 2017

SERVING DECATUR SINCE 1991

Hello friends. With last year's closure of Grace House and DCRM, God's Shelter of Love has been full or at near capacity for the past several weeks. Our three transitional apartments are currently occupied as well. Given the lack of emergency shelters in Decatur and Macon County for single women with children, and because we expect to remain at full occupancy for the unforeseeable future, we have decided to refer all men who are seeking shelter to the Salvation Army and Water St. Mission, both of which are excellent Christ-centered ministries to homeless men. For quite some time we kept our family room open in the event that an entire family needed shelter, but because it went unused for an extended period of time, we decided that it was best to open it up to more single women with children.

I am very thankful for your response to this tremendous need in Decatur. Without your support there would be no emergency shelter for women and children in Macon County. We remain open to share the love of Christ with the homeless and hurting because of your donations, gifts and prayers.

Thank you for your support of this much-needed mission!

Ed Bacon, Director

Volunteer [vol-uh n-teer]

noun

1. a person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking.
2. a person who performs a service willingly and without pay.

verb

1. to offer oneself for a service or undertaking.

God's Shelter of Love, like most missions, requires the help of volunteers to accomplish its mission.

Do you have a heart for the homeless?

Has God given you the spiritual gift of mercy?

Is He calling you to be a mentor to a female who is homeless and needs support and encouragement?

If so, God's Shelter of Love has a place for you to serve and use your God-given gifts.

We also need volunteer help at our thrift store, Blessingdales. Can you sort cards and donations? Dust furniture? Price donated items? We need your help!

Please call our office at (217) 422-2790 or e-mail us at Godsshelteroflove@gmail.com to let us know that you would like to volunteer your time for our mission to the homeless.



Meet Gail...

I believe addiction is not something people want. I would always say I did drugs because I liked them, but in reality I was self-medicating to take away all the pain and hurts I have: being sexually abused from age three to five; living with a mother who was always gone so she could pay the bills; married at 16; losing two sons; being verbally, mentally, and physically abused; feeling worthless because that's what I was being told; divorced to get in a relationship that was even worse, because I really loved this man.

The whole time this was going on, one thing was missing and that was a relationship with God. I have always believed in God. But I was not walking with, nor trusting in, him. While I was locked up, I started a 12-step class called, "Walking the 12 Steps with Jesus." This class was the best thing that could have happened to me. For the first time in my life I was trusting in God, who was helping me to see all the wrongs in my past. I, for the first time in my life, admitted I am an addict. I, for the first time, cared and understood how much pain and hurt I caused my children. Not only was I doing time, but so were they.

I was paroled to God's Shelter of Love on August 1, 2016. Celebrate Recovery at First Nazarene Church has been a great help to me, as have Sunday services there. I recently received my 6-year clean and sober medalion. During a Bible study at the shelter, I met Pastor Beth McLaughlin of Grace United Methodist Church. I feel like I have a long way to go to understand the Bible and the Christian life, but I am honored that Pastor Beth believes in me enough to commit to mentoring me individually through a 32-week study.

Now I work at Subway on Mound Road and take all the hours I can get. My long-term goals are to become a closer follower of Jesus, do all I can to be a good mother and grandmother, get my driver's license back, and eventually own a car and a home.

Editor's note: Gail has an incredible work ethic. She is diligent, detail-focused, and persistent in completing any chore or job she is assigned or volunteers to take on. Please join us in praying for her to get a full-time job with hours that coincide with Decatur's bus service. We think she would be excellent at the Macon County Animal Control and Care Center, since she has a dog grooming certificate and an affinity for animals.

As we stand tall

As we grow strong

As we fight pain

As we gain strength

As we end suffering

We now end our dying

We now forgive

We start life over

We love again

And set ourselves free

-Former resident, Sheri Davis Kremitsky

And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.



-1 Thessalonians 5:14-15



A Thread from the Thrift Shop

Friends, we are looking forward to the exciting things that God has in store for us this year. We want to thank all of our faithful shoppers and givers for such a great 2016. We could not do business without donations and we are so grateful to everyone who donates their amazing items to us. As most of you know, Blessingdales has a new store manager, Cassie Bauer. And with that, Blessingdales is starting to look a little different, especially with Spring right around the corner. We've shuffled a few departments around, and we are working diligently to improve your thrift shop experience. Our Spring preview has officially begun with the new items we have put out like shorts, capris, tanks, short sleeves, and even sandals! Make sure to stop in for a visit or two and let us know what you think—we would love to see you!

Volunteer Positions Available

We can always use your help. It doesn't have to be a long term commitment, it can be just for a season. Do you suffer with the Winter Blues? The best way to beat those is to get out of the house and give a little of yourself. Get out of the house and enjoy the rewarding experience of being a volunteer. We are so much more than a thrift shop —our staff and volunteers feel like family. It is truly such a rewarding experience and lovely place to volunteer your time to. Are you good at tidying up? Crafts? Organizing? We can find a volunteer opportunity that fits you.

Blessingdales Thrift Shop

217-358-6124 • 345 W. Eldorado St Decatur, IL 62522 • www.blessingdalesthiftshop.com

Now Open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m.—4 p.m.

Special thanks to ...

Neuhoff Media for a \$2500 microgrant (WSOY community food drive)

WAND TV and the IBEW for a \$1050 gift (JC's 3 degree guarantee in December).

Needs of the Shelter: 2% milk, butter, ground beef, chicken, bacon, powdered or liquid laundry detergent, bleach.

Needs of Blessingdales: volunteers, manila folders, packing tape.

Have you considered including God's Shelter of Love in your will?



Executive Director: Ed Bacon, LPC
 Board President: Harold Batthauer
 Ty Batthauer, Decatur, IL
 Larry Hughes, Warrensburg, IL
 Michael Reynolds, Decatur, IL
 Greg Taylor, Clinton, IL



Jobs for Life addresses the devastating effects of unemployment and poverty by helping men and women experience the dignity of work—through honest relationships, mentoring, Biblically-based training, and an ongoing community of support. Our next JfL and RTI class session is April 4th - May 30th, 2017. It will be held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Decatur. To register or to learn more about being a Jobs for Life champion or to learn more about serving on our leadership team, visit our website... www.Godsshelteroflove.org or give us a call, 422-2790.

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*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

God's Shelter of Love welcomes our newest house supervisor

Evelyn "Christine" Fonville

Christine was born and raised in Decatur and graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1978. She has two sons and six grandchildren. Christine attends Abundant Life Christian Center and accepted Jesus in 2001 when Ambassadors for Christ Ministries stepped into Greenwood Apartments. Christine says, "It was a life-changing experience to meet a man who really loves and respects me. Working at GSOL is a ministry to me; I want to help others have a life-changing experience with Jesus."



Visit us online @ Godsshelteroflove.org and Blessingdalesthiftshop.com

