Tabitha (name changed) is a military veteran with a strong determination and heart for her family and others. She came to Ruth’s House seeking shelter from a life-threatening domestic violence situation. She has three children, two with special needs. Ruth’s House provided her and her family with a safe and loving place to stay in our shelter. Later, with the support from the staff and programs at Ruth’s House, Tabitha was able to move out on her own. With her determination and self-confidence renewed, she secured a steady job where she worked for over 5 years, even walking to work each day.

A few years later, Tabitha’s worsening mental health caused her to be admitted into the hospital several times. Because she wasn’t able to return to work, she lost her job and wasn’t able to afford her rent. Tabitha found herself and her family homeless once again. Ruth’s House was there for her and encouraged her to seek a diagnosis for her mental health issues. Although Tabitha was surprised to learn that she had autism, finally the pieces began to fall into place.

Ruth’s House was able to place Tabitha into our off-campus housing and provide support through case management. She writes:

We moved into off campus housing last June. Since moving in I meet with my awesome case manager once a week. I understand now that my mental health has played a significant role in feeling like I was spiraling out of control. I now go to therapy every week. My case manager has made me realize that it is more than just my mental health that is affecting me. She has encouraged me to get an assessment for my mental health. I know I can call her if I need help.

The new diagnosis combined with the support received has been life transforming for Tabitha and her family.
Save the Date!

Hearts Gala benefiting Ruth's House
FEBRUARY 10, 2018

American Legion in Fandian, MN

Many fabulous items up for bid including:
- MN Wild Hockey game in Wells Fargo Suite seats up to 20
- Autographed MN Wild Hockey stick
- Sunset Salon - 6 Basilis & 6 pedicures
- Fanatical Fans - Complete Gophers Football Experience for 4
- 1 week stay at Disney World Resort
- Chef LaBute Dinner for 10 at winning bidder’s home
- Resort stay at Crown Point, All-week stay in the north taking Clarks mountains
- Bloom Floral - monthly bouquet for one year

R.S.V.P. by January 30, 2018 at ruthshousemn@gmail.com

Your Dollars at Work

Last year’s Hearts Gala was a huge success because of our generous donors and community support. It costs over $500 per day to operate Ruth’s House. We put out a call to our supporters for the Race the Roof fundraiser. The house was in desperate need of a new roof, 2nd floor bathroom, gutters, landscaping, fire sprinklers, and electrical work.

The response from our donors, and the community was beyond our wildest dreams. We have been able to complete all the above maintenance issues. CRG replaced our leaking roof, Custone Hardscapes tore out our old landscaping in the front and replaced with beautiful plantings, regaled the dirt, and laid a fantastic stone walkway. Schmidt siding and windows replaced the old worn out gutters with new gutters and installed gutter helmets, and John Striff Construction dismantled our 2nd floor bathroom, and has installed a tub shower combo, a new shower, lights, ventilation fans, and beautiful tile work throughout the bathroom.

I can not express how grateful our staff and residents are for your tireless efforts to keep Ruth’s House of Hope running every day. Because we had the ability to accomplish these large projects, our residents are able to live in a safe, clean, and functional home.

Blessings, Wendy Swanson, House Supervisor

Thank You

Thank you to our Board of Directors and thank you to Grantors and Fundraising Partners

Allina Foundation
Allina Neighborhood Health Connection
Carl Anderson Family
Catholic Community Foundation
Consolidated Communications Community Fund
Edina Realty Foundation
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Our Savior’s Lutheran Church
SageGlass
Shenandoah’s Smoke Stacks
Thrivent Financial
United Way of Fandian
WINNGS
Walmart Foundation
Wells Fargo
Xcel Energy

Thank you to Ashley Olsen for designing this newsletter

McKinley Partnership at Ruth’s House
by Julie Schiffer, Parent Educator, McKinley Early Childhood Center

Anyone who has had any part in raising children knows that the parenthood comes with a great deal of excitement, joy, and love. Along with these benefits, however, come challenges and uncertainty. Many parents have questions about child development, health and safety, nutrition, sleep, positive discipline, and many other concerns that parents of young children know well.

I am a licensed parent educator at McKinley Early Childhood Center and I am pleased to be able to visit each week with families at Ruth’s House on an individual basis. During these meetings I sit down and engage in a relaxed, casual conversation with the mothers about any specific concerns with the children or families. I bring resources and information specific to the needs of each individual family, and just as important, I am happy simply to listen and offer my support. I also inform families of community programs, early learning opportunities for children, and family events in the community. During this time children enjoy educational activities and are cared for by a paraprofessional who tunes in to their specific interests and needs. Each of these meetings last about 20-30 minutes, and they take place each Tuesday between 10:30 and 11:30.

From birth to age 3, the brain undergoes the fastest rate of development of the entire life span. Ninety percent of the brain’s capacity develops by the age of 5 years. That means that the time children start kindergarten, the foundation is already laid for future learning. When you consider how much depends upon those early years, the importance of parents becomes clear. I believe that parents are the most influential educators that children have.

However, raising children is not easy. All parents can benefit from having support and research-based information.

My hope is that mothers at Ruth’s House will feel empowered to face the challenges of raising a family according to their own goals.

Milestones in Child Development
by Melissa Wend, Family Advocate

Ruth’s house has opened my eyes to the development of a child who may have suffered through trauma such as abuse and poverty. In my previous experience as a preschool teacher, it was “normal” to me for a 4-year-old to be able to recognize some letters and to be able to write some letters and even recognize their names. I noticed a difference in the development of some of the children at the house versus the children I taught at the preschool.

During my shift at Ruth’s House, I would watch the children play and interact with other children or adults. The first thing I noticed was that some children had language/spoken delays and that many other developmental milestones were not being reached.

I realized that mothers in the house would benefit if I could teach them about the development of their children and explain how crucial it is that their children meet developmental milestones. I wanted the mothers to learn how to do things at the house that didn’t cost money, that would help their children meet these milestones, and help the mothers spend quality time with their children.

I started doing simple projects with the children and interacting with them to figure out where those children were developmentally. I learned that most of the children in the house were not meeting milestones as simple as using scissors to cut paper or being able to color at a 3-year-old child should. I started educating the moms in the house in conversations around the table and using art projects and interaction to develop these skills for their children. Even the older children worked on a tin can lantern project, hamming a design in the can and painting it. Some of the skills the children have been working on are cognitive, fine motor, social/emotional, cause and effect, and large motor skills. I use the bulletin board to display their projects, and they absolutely love seeing their work displayed.

Connecting faith & finances for good.
Because of your support and contributions, last year we were able to provide over **7,000 NIGHTS** of safe shelter to homeless women and children.

This is Ruth's House - 'OUR HOUSE'.

OUR HOUSE is a safe haven for those who find themselves trapped in life changing and even life threatening situations. OUR HOUSE has become the rock for those who need support navigating through these life changes and healing from the trauma of domestic violence, addictions, poverty, and homelessness. Thanks to the support of the community, OUR HOUSE has been able to provide transformations, new beginnings, and safe housing to over 1400 residents!

This time of year many of us are celebrating Christmas. It is a time we reflect on the birth of Jesus and the fact he was homeless upon birth. But because of an act of generosity, a safe place was made available for the birth of a child who would provide transformation for us all. That simple act of generosity would be the House of the Rock that would change the world.

Thanks to the community and your generosity: Our House is Your House, is my house, is their house, and is the ROCK that is the life giving home that can change lives forever.

It costs over $500 a day to operate OUR HOUSE, Ruth's House Transitional home. This holiday season I ask you that you prayerfully consider a contribution to keep the doors open to those in need.

Merry Christmas blessings to you!
With faith and gratitude,

Ruth Hickey
Executive Director