



The Dwelling Place

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH CHRIST'S LOVE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



*My people will live in peaceful dwelling places,
in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.*

— ISAIAH 32:18

www.thedwellingplacemn.org

Annual Report Message from Executive Director



It may be the understatement of the century (and yet overused): *"2020 was an unprecedented year for everyone!"* Life at The Dwelling Place has certainly been no exception. In the midst of a global pandemic, however, the Lord's faithfulness actually taught us to thrive in the midst of difficult circumstances! Only God can do that! By the Grace of God, we remained open and continued to serve the women and children in our program amidst constantly changing requirements and recommendations. We had to shift to a more limiting program schedule, substantially reduce the number of volunteers, and (for a short time) suspend the admission of new women/families. However, in spite of this, we graduated more women in 2020 than we have in any year since our founding, had greater success in finding affordable housing for families, and, even with challenges around in-person events, were able to finish the year strong financially thanks to you, our amazing donors and partners!

In addition, 2020 was a year of transition in leadership as Linda Wiza, The Dwelling Place Executive Director (since 2015) and long-time volunteer decided to retire. Following an 8-month search process, The Dwelling Place Board offered me the opportunity to serve as their next Executive Director. As I rely on God's guidance daily, I am grateful for their trust and support as I "learn and lead" in this role. We were able to add to our staff for The Dwelling Place with the addition of very talented new team members by the end of 2020. The Lord provided "the perfect fit" to each of our open positions.

Our capacity continues to serve up to 57 women and children at one time and we have fully reopened our programs to provide "in person" classes (following months of Zoom meetings). Our primary purpose is to give the opportunity for each of the women and children we serve to know how much Jesus loves them. As most of you know, this is no ordinary love! Because abused women and children have deep wounds compounded by doubt and fear, it often takes time for them to accept this love. They have to build trust with our staff. It is important that they feel heard, believed, and understood. Every day we get to see the miraculous power of God changing women's lives as He provides hope, affirms value and worth, restores strength and dignity, and establishes a strong foundation for rebuilding their lives.

The first tangible step towards providing strength and dignity to women and their children is to provide the safety and stability of a safe place to sleep; a safe place to live; and a safe place to belong. As they begin to rest, heal, and gain skills they are equipped to move forward and discover choices they can make to break the cycle of abuse for their families.

Last year was relatively quiet as far as any significant renovation projects. However, through the support of very generous donors and partners we were able to make a few outside and mechanical improvements to our properties. We replaced roofs, soffits and fascia, added some new appliances (purchased as well as donated), new furnaces and water heaters, replaced some windows, added a handicapped accessible ramp to one of our homes and, much more! We are incredibly grateful for each of these improvements!

We give thanks for the Lord's mighty provision through generous supporters and amazing volunteers. We continue to be debt free. Hallelujah! We are deeply grateful for every blessing we received in 2020. We rely upon the support of a wide variety of churches, individuals, foundations, and businesses who enable us to utilize best practices around trauma informed care while sharing the message of Christ's love and healing power. We endeavor to fulfill our core-value of biblical stewardship and to seek His guidance and direction as we continue to serve many more women and children in the future.

Vision for the Future

If I learned anything during the year of 2020, it was this: Life is so very precious and can change at any moment! Hold things loosely, but treasure the moments spent with those most dear. Stay close to the Lord. Being dependent upon Him is the safest place to be. Continue to plan, but be flexible with those plans. Now, more than ever before, we understand that our future is in the Sovereign hands of our God, our Creator and Sustainer.

With board and staff participation, we successfully completed The Dwelling Place 2021 strategic planning process for the next three years. As Proverbs 16:9 says, "We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps." The work continues and we trust God to guide us with His wisdom and love.



LeNae Williamson, Executive Director

OUR PROGRAM

The Dwelling Place provides safe transitional housing and trauma-informed Christ-centered programs for women and their children escaping abuse.

Intensive Case Management & Supportive Services

Our trauma-informed care consists of two primary healing principles: safety and empowerment. Women and children recovering from the trauma of domestic violence need to be and feel safe and become empowered to change their own future. We have 23 years of experience in providing safe dwelling space and services to victims of domestic abuse. We combine best practices with a strong Christian environment. We were founded on the understanding that in order to help victims of domestic abuse heal from their emotional wounds our programs must be Christ-centered and comprehensively designed to address the whole person. We work to help residents become empowered through intensive case management with individualized care plans that recognize and build upon their strengths, as well as provide detailed solution-focused strategies to address their areas for growth and future goals.

Core Program Overview:

- Case Management/ Advocacy
- Support Groups
- Domestic Violence Education Courses
- Individualized Therapy
- Life Skills Education
- Financial Education & Counseling
- Education, Jobs & Housing
- Bible Study & Prayer Ministry
- Children's Programming
- Other In-house Services: Transportation, Child Care, and Savings Match Program
- Other Out-sourced Services: Licensed Therapy, Chemical Dependency Treatment, Legal Advocacy, Medical/ Dental Services, and Partnerships with Churches for worship, support and mentorship

2020 SERVICE STATISTICS



67

women and children were served (20 of the women were mothers).



100%

below the poverty line and considered homeless by the state of Minnesota.



80

volunteers contributing 3,538 hours of service

2020 SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

In 2020, we successfully housed and served **30 women** and **37 children** (20 of the women are **mothers**).

- We received calls for help from 211 women with children—all victims of domestic abuse. (Note: Due to Covid-19, calls increased in spring 2020 and decreased as Covid-19 Relief funds were released)
- All women left domestic violence successfully and detached from their abusers. The women and children found safety and remained safe within our program.
- 67 women and children received 174 nights of safety; with the average stay of 10.5 months. (Average length of stay of those graduating in 2020 was 11.5 months).
- All women attended at least 9 hours of classes each week and learned about the dynamics and effects of domestic abuse.
- Before and after Covid 19 restrictions suspended certain activities, all women attended at least 1 hour of life skills training in budgeting, cooking, nutrition, health and wellness, and other related topics.
- All women and children participated in daily Christian spiritual discipleship and Bible studies with the intent to grow in their faith.
- 90% of mothers improved their parenting skills to break the generational cycle of abuse through parenting consultation, classes and daily parenting guidance from staff.
- 87% of women received advocacy and support for overcoming barriers through transportation, job skills, legal, educational and housing assistance.
- 87% of women established new life goals and skills to better manage emotional health.
- All mothers of school-age children learned to advocate for their children within the schools for improved behavior plans as needed.
- All school-age children were provided with 1.5 hours per week of support group programming to help them process their trauma. During Covid-19 lockdown, program elements were adjusted to comply with state protocols.
- All school-age children were provided with 1.5 hours of tutoring per week to bridge their learning gap. During Covid-19 lockdown, program elements were adjusted to comply with state protocols.
- All children birth to Pre-K participated in 6-7 hours of children's programming that focuses on social, emotional and spiritual development (critical for healing from trauma). 1:1 coaching time 1-2 times per week with pre-K children working on large motor skills and social emotional skills work based on their individual needs addressing any developmental delay. School-aged children participated during the summer. During Covid-19 lockdown, certain adjustments were made to comply with state guidelines.

FINANCIALS

Our ministry is fully funded by the generous gifts of individuals, churches, foundations and corporations. We rely on these donations to pay for operating and program expenses. Your monetary gift makes a difference in the lives of the many women and children we serve. **Thank you** to our many donors and supporters who make this ministry possible.

Foundations & Grants

Benjamin F Edwards & Company for The March Family Foundation
 3M Foundation
 AmazonSmile
 Barnabas Foundation
 Benevity Community Impact Fund, The Best Buy Employee Giving Program
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Bethlehem Lutheran Church
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 Eagle Brook Church
 Elim Lutheran Church
 Faith Christian Reformed Church
 Five Oaks Community Church
 Grace Lutheran Church
 Lakes Free Church
 Living Christ Lutheran Church
 LWML-MN South District
 North Heights Lutheran Church
 Redeeming Love Church
 Rockpoint Church
 Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
 The Church of St Patrick of Cedar Creek
 Women United - Fridley United Methodist

THE DWELLING PLACE STAFF



Celeste Hofstede, Children's Program Coordinator; Gabrielle Heille, Children's Program Associate; Stephanie Nelson, Program Assistant; Grace Eller, Volunteer and Alumni Program Coordinator



Case Managers: Lynnae Thompson, Olabimpe Osode, Cindy Hall, Carol Shuler



Anne Reineck, Office Manager; Kalena Guimond, Bookkeeper; Carolyn Lowder, Accountant



Linda Wiza, Management Advisor; LeNae Williamson, Executive Director; Bekah Backman, Director of Programs; Monica Groves, Mission Advancement Director

THE DWELLING PLACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Medtronic

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Director of Risk Management & Marketing
 Northeast Bank

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Disaster Preparedness Coordinator
 Hennepin County Medical Center

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 SCOR Global Life Insurance

Scott Koester, Secretary

Retired, Operations Planning
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LeNae Williamson, Non-Voting Member

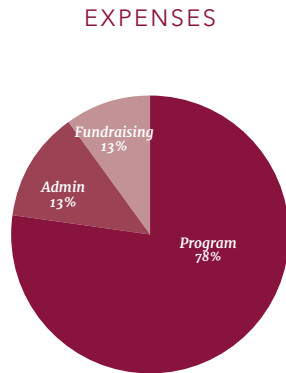
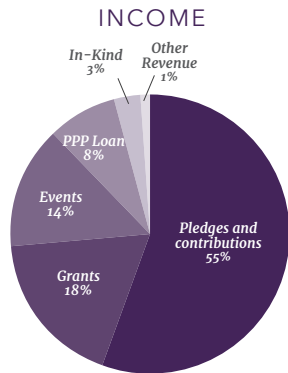
Executive Director
 The Dwelling Place

Heidi Hoium, Member

Consultant and Owner
 Ironworks Consulting

Gretchen Stevenson, Member

Author and Speaker
 Gretchen Stevenson Ministries



Financial Position

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| Assets | \$1,624,415 |
| Liabilities | \$ 41,601 |
| Net Assets | \$1,582,814 |



We extend appreciation to all donors who supported the ministry of The Dwelling Place with financial support.