

The mission of FISH Hospitality Program is to serve homeless women and families by providing shelter and meals, and such other assistance as we are able, in order to give them a new



opportunity to live independently in their communities as respected families and individuals. FHP does assist and enable our guests to obtain housing, jobs, medical services and other assistance to which they are entitled, as far as resources allow. FHP serves people in need without regard to race, religion, national origin or disability.

SERVICE STATISTICS

(January 1 – October 31)

Persons sheltered – 42 Families – 18
Sheltered Adults – 20 Children – 23
Nights of Shelter provided – 3,647

GUEST'S CORNER

My name is Madeline, and I have two children, Annabella (6) and Anthony (14). I wanted to take some time out to show my gratitude to FISH Hospitality Program.

I was staying in another program in Elizabeth with my children and had some issues there. I went to Social Services, and they could not help me. They told me to call 211 for help. That call that I made that day when I was so overwhelmed with nowhere to go with my kids, was the first of many blessings.

From the moment I spoke with Theresa, the Director, and she told me they had space for me and my children, things started moving quickly. She asked a few questions and told me to come to the office immediately. I told her I had no way to get there. I had no idea where it was, or how was I getting there. That's when she said not to worry, Frank, the Van Driver, will come in a white van to pick me up and take me to the office to fill out the paperwork.

As Theresa promised Frank was there at the time she said he would be. I was very apprehensive at first, feeling like I had travelled so far. I would have no family close to me, and I was wondering whether I made the right choice. I remember Frank making small talk with me. He sensed I was nervous and told me he's been doing this for 16 years and for me not to worry. "It's a great place to be". I started to relax. I finally made the journey to the office, and I met Kathy, the secretary. She immediately asked if I wanted some water and made me feel very comfortable. When Theresa came out of her office, I remember she said to come in and have a seat; take a deep breath and calm down and that she was there to help us. I filled out all forms and everything went smoothly. She asked me what my kids needed, and what I needed so she can have it

ready for me the following day when I came in the church with my children.

When I arrived the next day, she had three brand new pillows for us and toiletries. Theresa gave me a gift card to get clothes for myself - since I had none, and a brand new pair of sneakers for my daughter. From there Frank drove us to Dunellen Presbyterian, our first church. That's when I met Emily. We were welcomed with open arms. Our rooms were clean and our beds had clean sheets. Emily told me to drop off my belongings and come to dinner. I was introduced to the rest of the Guests. I became friends with all of them. All the coordinators at every church have left an imprint on me and my children. We were always received warmly and dinner was always warm and delicious. It's amazing how the churches volunteer their time out of their busy schedules to make sure we feel welcome.

What can I say about this program and how blessed I was to be a part of it? It really has changed my life. I came in broken, desperate, and burnt out, with no means of transportation and no job. Theresa always kept on top of everything - writing letters, making phone calls and helping me get my drivers license in order. Frank drove me to millions of places just to get all my credentials - never once did he complain. Patricia, the day center host, was always very friendly and was great with Annabella. She always made sure my daughter had crayons and construction paper; and when we were sick, Patricia made sure we had tea and anything else we needed.

I learned a lot in this program, especially in my budgeting sessions with Emily. I now can say I have a good job! I received a beautiful dependable car through a program called Recycled Rides which Theresa advocated for me to get. I have a place to call home; and I want to thank all the volunteers who donated furniture since I lost everything. I came into this program with nothing, and I am leaving successfully. Me and my kids are really going to miss everyone, especially Frank. We spent so much time on that van that Frank is Family. My children and I look forward to giving back to FHP. We will be volunteering and cooking dinner for the Guests.

There are so many wonderful people to thank including from other programs that helped me while I was in FHP: the Career Closet and Roni from Jewish Family Services. I also want to thank the Board of Directors, Carole and Margo; and all the volunteers and coordinators: Emily, Nereida, Petey, Sharon, Skip, Kathy, Edie, Jeff, Charlene, Carol, Dave, and Sandy.

DECEMBER 2016

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*Affiliate of Family Promise
Affiliate of FISH, Inc. Dunellen, NJ
A United Way Agency*

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*You can make a donation on-line using Paypal at:
<http://www.fishhospitality.org/donate>*

**PLEASE USE AMAZON SMILE for your
gift www.smile.amazon.com - designate FISH
Hospitality Program as your charity Thank
you!!!!**

WISH LIST

Unscented baby wipes, children's toothbrushes
cocoa butter body lotion, Aveeno body lotion,
feminine hygiene OVERNIGHT maxi-pads; cotton
swabs (in smaller packaging, *but no travel size,
please*), laundry detergent PODS, and Dove bar
soap (sensitive please)

GIFT CARDS: Costco Cash Cards, Walmart, Target,
CVS, Walgreens, Payless Shoes & Famous Footwear;
Shop Rite & Stop N Shop

*We need gift cards to give to Guests for specific
requests, birthdays and when they leave FHP for
household items or food.*

PARTICIPATING CONGREGATIONS

Host Congregations:

Bound Brook Presbyterian Church
Christ United Methodist Church, Piscataway
Community Presbyterian Church, Edison
First Baptist, Sewaren
First Presbyterian, Avenel
First Presbyterian, Cranford
First Presbyterian, Dunellen
New Beginnings Church of the Nazarene, Edison
Rose of Sharon Community Church, Plainfield
(day/night)
Ruth Fellowship Ministries, Plainfield
Second Reformed Church, New Brunswick
St. Francis Episcopal Church, Dunellen (day)
St Paul's United Church of Christ, Milltown
The Presbyterian Church in Westfield
Trinity Episcopal, Woodbridge
Trinity Presbyterian Church, East Brunswick

Support Congregations:

First Congregational Church of Westfield
Friends Quaker Meeting House, Plainfield
Grace Alliance, Piscataway
New Dover United Methodist Church
Our Lady of Fatima R.C. Church, Piscataway
Our Lady of Mount Virgin R.C. Church, Middlesex
Park Community Church, South Plainfield
St Cecelia's R.C. Church, Iselin
St Francis Cabrini R.C., Piscataway
St Luke's R.C. Church, North Plainfield
St James R.C. Church, Woodbridge
St John the Evangelist R. C. Church, Dunellen
St Paul's Episcopal Church, Bound Brook
St. Stephen Lutheran Church JOT, S. Plainfield
Stone Crest Community Church, Warren
The Rescue House of Prayer, S. Plainfield
Trinity Reformed Church, N. Plainfield
Wesley United Methodist, S. Plainfield

Who's in the program now?

(Kid's age in parenthesis – County)

Mom & boy (2) - SC
Husband & Wife & boy (4) - UC
Mom & one girl (12) and boy (4) - MC
Single Woman – MC
Mom & one girl (2) – MC
Mom & girl (6) boy (14) – UC

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