

SAINT HERMAN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

FOCUS North America - Cleveland

Dear Steadfast Friends of St. Herman House,

Glory to you O' Lord, Glory to You!

Ever feel surrounded? Engulfed by the cares of this world? Surrounded by COVID-19? Economic woes? Fears about the future? Consider a lesson from the Old Testament Scripture:

During the time of Elisha the Prophet, in the second book of Kings, we read of a time in the House of Israel when the King of the Arameans, Ben-Hadad, sought to destroy the King of Israel and his army. All Ben-Hadad's military maneuvers were repeatedly thwarted, so much so, that he came to believe he must have a traitor in his own ranks. However, his inner circle advised him that it was the Prophet Elisha, who by means of divine revelation, always knew the position of the Aramean Army. So, Ben-Hadad sought to destroy Elisha and his servants with his army, and subsequently surrounded them. As the message of their imminent destruction was reported to Prophet Elisha by his servants, we hear the following:

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
(2 Kings 6:16-17 NKJV)



Yes, Elisha and those men of God with him were surrounded by an earthly enemy, but surrounding that enemy was a host of angels, in chariots of fire, armed with the power of God.

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Support our online fundraiser! November 15-22

We're typically gearing up for two fundraisers at this time of year: our November speaker's event and our December spaghetti dinner. We're sorry that we can't gather in person for these events this year, but we're excited to be holding an online, 8-day fundraising event instead. It will take place November 15-22, to coincide with National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week. Our online campaign will raise awareness about the work of St. Herman's and raise critical funds! Will you help us reach our goal of \$25,000? Every dollar goes directly to support the work of St. Herman House. You can use the enclosed envelope to make your gift.

Here are some examples of how your support directly helps the people we serve:

\$27.50 5 all-day bus passes. We give bus passes to residents when they're starting a new job and haven't received a paycheck yet, or for residents who need to go to a doctor's appointment or job interview.

\$50 A pair of work boots for a resident starting a new job.

\$75 A week's worth of household products & kitchen supplies for the shelter & transitional house

\$125 1 bee colony for our beehives.

\$145 Electricity, heat & water for 1 day at St. Herman's and the transitional house

2020 has been full of moments when I, and those laboring with me, have felt surrounded. Worries with respect to the pandemic, resources, the vulnerability of those we serve, and our own vulnerability have often tried to find a place “front and center” in our mind’s eye. Repeatedly, however, the Lord has opened our eyes. And what have we seen? Those who are with us are more than everything that is against us!

Yes, the work goes on! The virus has not overtaken us! The resources have been provided! We have continued to grow our outreach! God is good and He has surrounded us with an unseen army and with you. Yes you, you are among the angels who continue to serve, continue to give, and continue to pray. You will be reading more of the particulars in this regard in this issue of the Newsletter.

As we draw near to the passing of 2020, we are on track to meet our budget, and your year-end giving is key to achieving, even exceeding our goal. I ask you to continue to surround us, support us, and cross the finish line with us where the victor’s crown of service, philanthropy, and thanksgiving will be ours to share. Please pray for me as I pray for you.

Your fellow servant in Christ,



H. Paul Finley, Local Director

A Year of Growth

2020 has been a difficult year for most everyone, which is why we feel especially thankful that we’ve continued to grow this year. In addition to hiring our new case manager, we’ve also seen exponential growth in support from foundations in Greater Cleveland. Through September, ten foundations have awarded us grants this year, totaling more than \$160,000. That’s the most grant support we’ve ever received, and a nearly **12-fold increase** over 2019 grant revenue. Last year we hired an assistant director, Santhe Loizos, to help raise new funding, and we’re delighted to see the results of her efforts.

In just 19 months, we’ve expanded from two full-time staff to five. With the addition of a full-time farm manager, we’ve seen great progress on our farm in Trumbull County this year, expanding from one greenhouse to three while continuing our thriving beekeeping operation. (For more on that, see page 6).

Ultimately, growth in staff and budget means we can provide more services to more people, and it assures that we continue to fulfil our mission: *“To shelter and support homeless men on the path to well-being and independence and meet the basic needs of people in our community.”*

Thank you to all of the institutions, parishes, businesses and individuals whose ongoing support makes this all possible!



A New Addition to the Team

Thanks to a grant from the Cleveland Foundation, we were thrilled to hire Mary Ellen Jordan in July as our new full-time case manager. Mary Ellen is a Licensed Independent Social Worker who comes to St. Herman's after many years with the Hospice of the Western Reserve. She started her career as a Jesuit Volunteer working with urban communities in San Francisco and is happy to be doing direct service in the community again.

Previously, residents at St. Herman's worked with case managers at nearby social service agencies. Now, residents have the option of on-site case management with Mary Ellen, which for many of our residents will be more effective. And Mary Ellen's case management services are available to the community, too - she's spending a few hours each week helping community members with their needs.

We are grateful to the Cleveland Foundation for making this position possible, and also to the May Dugan Center, a multi-service nonprofit agency in Ohio City. Through a partnership with May Dugan, we'll be able to bill Medicaid for Mary Ellen's services.

A Day in the Life

We asked Mary Ellen to describe a day in her life at St. Herman House. Here's what she wrote.

As I walk up the steps to St Herman's each morning, I am generally met by one of our early-riser residents who has a concern or thought to share. Sometimes he is waiting for me on the front porch and other times he might pop into my office as I'm flicking on the lights and greeting Scamp (the house dog). After grabbing some coffee and having a brief chat with the house manager, I plan for the appointments I've scheduled for the day.



These appointments tend to focus on food assistance and housing applications, health insurance and help to obtain missing birth certificates, driver's licenses, and social security cards. There are rides to get the men to housing interviews, the bank or the doctor. Once there was a special ride to the APL to pick up the remains of a resident's beloved four-legged friend.

In my mind the role of a case manager is becoming comfortable with the term "other duties as assigned," because there's often the day that's planned and the day that unfolds. The beauty for me lies in those unplanned moments. At the end of the day, all that most of our residents want is to be heard, acknowledged, and validated. Isn't that what we all want? Isn't that what we all deserve?

What We've Been Up To



Although the pandemic has altered our everyday lives, it hasn't changed what we do. **We continue to serve daily meals, give away groceries and fresh food, provide clothing for men, and hygiene items and sandwiches for anyone in need.** As the weather starts to get cold, we've also started giving away winter coats, hats, scarves and gloves.



In addition to our regular services, we're also now offering showers to the community. Since May, we've been partnering with Project Fresh Start, which brings their mobile shower van to St. Herman House every Friday afternoon. Many of the people we serve are unsheltered – meaning they don't have access to showers or bathrooms. The shower van has two showers and is stocked with toiletry items and clean towels, so people don't need to bring anything with them to enjoy a hot shower.

Can You Prove Your Identity?

Most of us have easy access to a birth certificate, social security card, and/or driver's license, all of which verify our identity. But what if you don't have these vital documents? How do you accomplish basic life tasks without an ID? It's a problem that many of the people we serve encounter. Moving around a lot means these documents get lost or stolen, and many people don't have the funds or the right papers to obtain identification documents.

We're excited to be partnering with the ID Crisis Collaborative (IDCC), an organization with more than 30 member agencies working to help people obtain their basic identification documents. In 2019, the Collaborative provided over 8,000 documents to people! In partnership with IDCC, St. Herman House is now providing ID assistance to the community during drop-in hours every Tuesday and by appointment. Our case manager explains the process and helps applicants fill out the necessary paperwork. With funding from IDCC and the Cleveland Foundation, St. Herman House can provide these services without any cost to the applicant.

New Beginnings

October was a great month for transitions at St. Herman House. As we write this, 8 men are scheduled to move out and into permanent or permanent supportive housing. Permanent supportive housing is affordable housing for people who have experienced homelessness, and case management services are available on site. The purpose is to help people who have been homeless live independently in safe, affordable, stable housing with access to the support they need.



In My Own Words

Written by our transitional house resident, Cliff.

A safe place. Wherever you are in your journey, Saint Herman House is a place giving refuge and opportunity to help you and others. It saved my life more than once, by giving me a safe place to sleep when I was in danger from domestic violence, and from the streets.

After the immediate safety, Saint Herman's gave me a reference to a great resource, the May Dugan Center. I was worried that they would be heavy handed, but no - Peaceful. They gave me help with my issues and employment. Saint Herman's has saved my life and helped me move towards a daily sanity and feeling good about life.



A Little More About Cliff

I lived in the suburbs growing up. My father made people think everything was fine. It wasn't. He was angry, domineering and unloving, my mother submissive and unable to help. I escaped my father with an early marriage, then another marriage to a woman who turned out to be violent. During that time – the 1990s – I found refuge after work at Saint Herman, where I could sleep without getting hit or burned by my wife. I withdrew into alcohol. By my middle fifties, I found myself out of work.

I struggled with the last recession and became homeless and almost hopeless. I was mugged twice. Then I approached Saint Herman House again, for a deeper help. I stayed for over a year, taking counseling by their referral, and recently retired into secure housing arranged by Saint Herman which I am paying for with the last of my earnings while still in the work force. Next year, social security will cover living costs.

I have found, through counseling, renewed relationships with my son, sister, and cousin, whom I was able to vacation with above Hoover Dam in Nevada.

What's Happening at Spruce Island Farm?

We know of one place that hasn't been disrupted by the pandemic, and that's our 75-acre farm in Trumbull County. In fact, we've had more developments than originally planned this year. Thanks to an award from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a division of USDA, we were able to install a second greenhouse on our farm this summer. And thanks to an unexpected donation of \$18,000 from the Diocese of the Midwest's Mother Maria of Paris Charitable Ministry (Orthodox Church in America), and \$2,000 in contributions from Orthodox parishes in the Cleveland area, we were able to add a third greenhouse, too!

Our vision for the farm continues to be the development of a robust work ethics program for our residents, and ultimately a long-term residential recovery program for men who are in recovery. Farm manager Leonard Heim is working diligently to build the necessary infrastructure for the work ethics program, and Assistant House Manager Kirk Barratt and volunteer JoAn Romick oversee the apiary program.

The apiary program has 62 beehives at five locations, including 31 hives at the farm. Twelve hives are at Harvest Bell Farm in Newbury Township, 9 at Monastery Marcha in Richfield, 8 at Rid-All Green Partnership in Cleveland's Kinsman neighborhood, and two in our yard at St. Herman House. The hives did very well this season and we've got lots of bottling to do this fall! Residents and staff were at the Tremont Farmers' Market on Tuesdays throughout the summer, selling honey and farm produce.

In addition to planting some vegetables, we've been learning about growing microgreens, which are very popular right now. We sold our first flat of microgreens in October. We're exploring the possibility of selling them to restaurants.

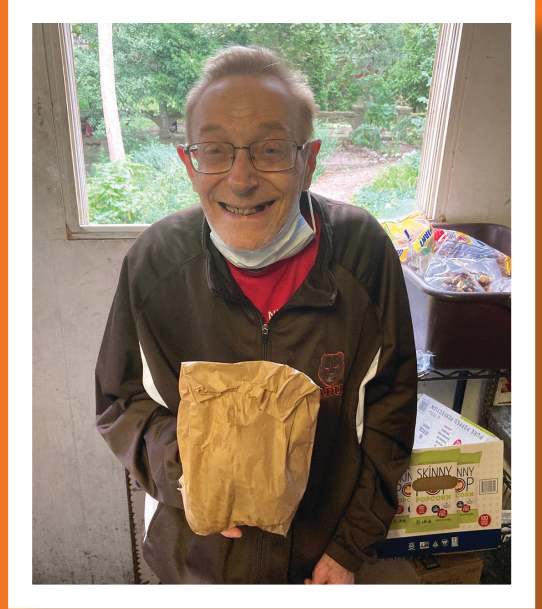
Last winter we planted just over 2 acres of wildflowers to support our beehives. They were in glorious bloom throughout the summer. We're grateful to NRCS, which in addition to providing funding for a greenhouse also provided funding for the wildflower seeds.

We're excited about 2021 and continuing to build our vision at Spruce Island Farm!



Volunteers Prepare More than 20,000 Meals

We may be biased, but we're pretty sure we have the best volunteers in the world. Since March, we've been serving carryout meals outdoors, which means we've served many bagged meals. How many? 23,970 between mid-March and the end of September, to be exact. And who has made and dropped off those meals? Our volunteers! Some are groups that have been supporting St. Herman's for years. Others are completely new to us. Some people found us by googling "homeless shelters." Others were referred to us by a friend or learned of us on social media. We couldn't possibly list all the groups here, but they've included local restaurants, families, churches, youth groups, businesses, and groups of friends and colleagues, all looking for ways that they could do something to help people in a time of need. We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity. For every group whose name we know, there are others who drop off something anonymously. Despite the fears and uncertainties we have all been facing, our volunteers remind us daily of all there is to be thankful for, and what it means to show love for your neighbor.



Want to help with meals? Email Albert at albertkwagner@gmail.com or call him at 216-961-3806 to get your group on the calendar!

New Lift Installed

Earlier this year, we installed a new platform lift to make the first floor of our building wheelchair-accessible. Our previous lift was very old (so old that no one knew how old) and no longer repairable. Thanks to a generous \$14,000 grant from the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, Cleveland Commandery, the new, larger lift will ensure that anyone who needs meals and other services can be served.



Seventh Annual Golf Classic a Success!

Like many organizations, we went virtual with our fundraisers this year, including our 7th Annual Golf Classic. Thanks to many faithful donors, it was nearly as successful as last year's in-person event. We raised over \$55,000! The money raised goes directly to the services we provide. We are so thankful to our outstanding event committee and all of the sponsors & donors who made this year's event a great success. A special thank you to AmTrust Financial, which for the third year in a row was our \$10,000 event sponsor. We look forward to seeing our golfers and supporters on the links in 2021!



+ CLEVELAND

ST. HERMAN HOUSE

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By the Numbers

*Your Giving in Action through
September, 2020*

36,737 Meals Served

*Did you know that we're the only facility in the city of
Cleveland that provides meals every day, 365 days a year,
to the community?*

37 Men Receiving Emergency Shelter

13 Men Receiving Transitional Housing

814 Grocery Bags Distributed

21% Percentage of Men in the Shelter w Full-time
Employment (on average)

28% Percentage of Men in the Shelter w Temp or
Part-time Employment (on average)

108 Number of Volunteer Groups

