

SAINT HERMAN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

FOCUS North America - Cleveland

Dear Faithful Servants of St. Herman House,

God Provides!

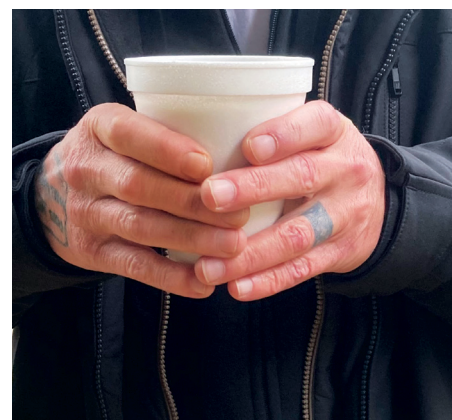
Nine years ago, when offered the position as Local Director of St. Herman House, I asked the National Director of FOCUS, "Why should I take this job?" His response was surprisingly immediate, "Because you will see miracles." Now those of you who know me know I am a believer; however, I confess there is a streak of skepticism that I, like many believers, must war against. During my first week on the job, our House Manager, Roy, came to me in a panic on a cold January day saying, "We're out of coffee, creamer, and sugar - you've got to do something." Just so you know, in winter, we serve up to 400 cups of coffee each day to residents and the community. Taking our last cent out of petty cash I headed out the kitchen door to the grocery store. As I opened the door, a woman was walking up the steps with a big box. I asked, "May I help you with that?" She replied, "Yes, I have several boxes in my car of coffee, creamer, and sugar." All skepticism vanished as I remembered those words, "You will see miracles!"

Yes, God provides, and His provision is miraculous. He provided for the Israelites when He daily bedewed the ground with manna, lifesaving bread which nourished them in the wilderness after fleeing Egypt. He provided them water from a rock in the wilderness as well. Over and over in the scripture we see a loving God providing food, water, shelter, and victory for those who believe, and oftentimes, even having mercy on those who don't. One of the great moments of God's provision is seen in the 22nd Chapter of Genesis when, after calling on Abraham to offer up his own son, Isaac, God provided another sacrifice and spared the life of Isaac. *"Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, 'In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'"* (Gen. 22:13-14)

If ever the name of St. Herman House were changed, no name would be better than **The House Where the Lord Will Provide!** And how has He provided? By quietly moving the hearts of Clevelanders and many more, from all walks of life and every station, to support our effort with time, resources, gifts-in-kind, and money. If you have been an instrument of God's provision this year, thank you! If you have not yet given this year or are sacrificially able to give more, we ask you to prayerfully consider supporting our mission as the year draws to a close.

May God provide for you during this festive season,

H. Paul Finley, Local Director



Thanks to you, St. Herman House is a place where the Lord will provide!

Facing the needs of our neighbors, together.

A New Beginning *for Jonathan*



In our spring issue of this newsletter, we wrote about our resident Jonathan. Jonathan moved into our transitional house in 2017. Typically, residents live in the transitional house for 24 months or less. It is intended for men who have an income and are ready to take steps toward independent living, with the goal that they move into permanent housing within two years. In Jonathan's case that didn't happen, because he was diagnosed in 2019 with a progressive medical condition that began affecting his mobility. Very quickly he went from being employed to unable to work. He had to apply for disability, which was a lengthy process. Our case manager, Mary Ellen, helped connect him to medical care and skilled nursing. As time progressed, it became clear that the best housing option for him would be a facility where he could maintain

his independence but also have access to round-the-clock care. Through close collaboration with a number of organizations (and much paperwork!), Mary Ellen found a wonderful faith-based assisted living facility that had space for him. Jonathan was overjoyed to move into a permanent apartment where he will have the care he needs.

And more new beginnings...

Jonathan isn't the only resident who has successfully transitioned to permanent housing. Niles, Tony, and Danny all moved into their own apartments in the past few months.



Did you know?

46%

of the men who have moved out of St. Herman's this year have moved into stable housing.

In Memoriam...



James

Our resident James passed away in August of this year. He came to stay at St Herman's in January after an extensive hospital stay. Every morning James could be found sitting on the front porch greeting everyone who came to the door with a giant smile. Although he suffered from a chronic health condition, he never complained and instead talked about how grateful he was to be a part of St Herman House. He often helped hand out meals to the community and was always a calming presence if someone became upset by a perceived slight or disappointment. James attended prayers every afternoon and faithfully prayed for his family. He had planned to move out this autumn and begin a new chapter with his friend. Together they were saving up their money so they could "get themselves a nice place with some new furniture." He could always be heard saying "thank you," "I appreciate you" or "I love you" to those of us lucky enough to share space with him at St Herman's. His loving presence has been sorely missed. James is survived by 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren.

Frank

Frank was a resident of our transitional house for a few months this year. Despite having a full-time job, he stopped by St Herman's main house every evening to help with preparations for dinner. He worked at Culver's since its opening, and never missed a day of work. Frank was a hard worker and prided himself on his work ethic. He participated in our Jobs Program and did an outstanding job at the Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Festival. He loved giving away Culver's chips – tokens that entitle the bearer to a free scoop of ice cream. Frank was a big Cleveland sports fan and enjoyed watching the Browns pre-season games with the guys of the House. He is survived by a 20-year-old son.

Scamp *(written by our resident Albert)*

In May 2021, St. Herman House lost a special resident, our dog Scamp. Scamp was a special part of the family and was embraced as part of our daily lives since she was born in 2008. At first she shared a room with other dogs and walking them became part of St. Herman's daily routine. She was full of energy and the guys would throw a Frisbee to her, impressed by how high she could jump to catch it. One thing we couldn't doubt: Scamp liked people. She liked people so much a longtime volunteer, JoAn, enrolled Scamp in a training class to go to nursing homes to try to brighten the day of patients. Unfortunately, that didn't work out. She didn't like other dogs as much as she liked people, but she still brightened our days. One of her special traits was how she would often come and follow us and lie next to us while we worked. We liked her company. Later in her life we sadly found Scamp had developed Congestive Heart Failure. Although her health and energy deteriorated, some of the guys still gave her treats to brighten her day. She even came into the chapel from time to time to lie next to us while we prayed. We are thankful she was part of our lives as long as she was, and she is sorely missed.

Thank You to Foundations!

St. Herman House has been awarded nearly \$70,000 in grants from local foundations in 2021. We are incredibly grateful for the support of the following foundations. Their grants help fund our case management services, our shelter and meals programs, and our general operating costs.



COMMUNITY WEST
FOUNDATION

Ridgecliff
FOUNDATION

The Higley Fund

The Thatcher Family Fund



Welcome **Ty'Isha**

We are delighted to welcome graduate student Ty'Isha Meeks to the St. Herman House team. Ty'Isha is pursuing a Master of Social Work at Case Western Reserve University and is in her final year of the program. She is fulfilling a two-semester internship at St. Herman's and will be with us 10 hours a week until the summer of 2022. Ty'Isha is working closely with our social worker, Mary Ellen. She is assisting in many ways, including helping members of the community obtain identification documents, helping residents find housing and complete housing applications, and connecting people to employment resources. Ty'Isha has previously worked with people experiencing homelessness. She has a B.S. in Early Childhood Education. In addition to being a student and a mother, Ty'Isha is also a toddler teacher. We are thrilled to have her join our team!

November Event

a Huge Success!

More than 140 people gathered at Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral on November 8 for "Make a Joyful Noise!" - an evening of music, food, and fellowship. Current and former residents of St. Herman House, as well as members of the St. Herman House community, entertained the audience with piano performances, guitar, gospel, and Orthodox hymns. Photographs, sketches and paintings created by current and former residents and community members were also on display. Not only was the evening an opportunity to showcase the talents of people who are or have experienced homelessness, but the event raised more than \$30,000 for St. Herman House! One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the annual Diakonia Awards, which are given to recognize outstanding service provided to St. Herman House. Diakonia is a Christian theological term that specifically encompasses the call to serve the poor and oppressed. This year's awardees were the Church of St. Dominic and Kirk Ries. The Church of St. Dominic has been supporting St. Herman House for many years and this year the parish raised over \$60,000 - which was then matched by other donors! - in a Lenten campaign to support renovations at St. Herman House. Kirk Ries served on the advisory board of St. Herman House for many years and is the chairman of our Golf Classic Committee- an event which has raised over \$400,000 in 8 years for St. Herman House. We are very grateful to all of the performers, attendees, supporters, and volunteers who made the evening a success.



Pictured above: Paul Finley and Advisory Board member Mike Herzak II with Diakonia Award winners Kirk Ries (second from left) and Jim Meathe on behalf of the Church of St. Dominic (second from right).

On the Farm...

Spruce Island Farm holds a key place in our long-term vision. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed our progress, it has also increased the need for programs that assist those we serve who struggle with addiction. Despite declines in drug related overdoses prior to the pandemic, in February of this year Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost stated that, "Overdose deaths have been worse than they've ever been, it was though we hadn't done anything at all." Our prayer for the beautiful 75-acre property is that it will be a resource for recovery and a place to develop a work ethic for those who are committed to sobriety.

Despite the delays, our Farm Manager, Leonard Heim, has beautifully maintained the property and is developing the greenhouses for future production, with a current focus on soil enhancement. We continue to work on an overall plan for the phased implementation of the programs we envision. Our immediate goal is the purchase of farm equipment which will allow us to develop quality hay fields for the equine market. Hay production and sales would be a reliable source of revenue for our farm operations. We have already begun this process on two acres and want to expand it to an additional thirty-five. An important next step is also the development of better power and water capacity, as these utilities are vital to our future plans.

Our most successful area of production continues to be our beekeeping program. Parishioners and friends of St. Innocent Orthodox Church purchased an electric extractor for us this year to expedite the bottling process. A much-deserved shout out goes to residents Kirk Barratt, Head-Beekeeper and Assistant House Manager, Albert Wagner, who tracks our sales and assists in bottling, and Will Motill who regularly helps with our honey sales booth at the Tremont Farmers Market and the Cleveland Bazaar held in Ohio City. And of course, we can't forget the Queen Bee, volunteer JoAn Romick, for her constant work, support, and oversight of the program. Our honey is also being utilized in the dessert selections at the Paris Room in Chagrin Falls and is sold by Harvest Bell Farm as well as by Prayers from Maria (bottled in their name). We maintain sixty-two hives spread over five locations. You can purchase honey online to be picked up at St. Herman House at www.sainthermans.org/honey

We look forward to 2022 and, God willing, increasing opportunities for the men of St. Herman's to engage in the life of the farm.



Renovations Underway

Last winter, St. Dominic Parish in Shaker Heights approached us about helping renovate two bathrooms on the second floor of St. Herman House. After visiting the House and seeing our needs, the “wish list” grew beyond the two bathrooms to include other renovations, too. The parish launched an Easter Appeal called “Living Waters,” asking parishioners to donate toward the renovations. The campaign was a massive success – they raised over \$60,000, and those funds were matched by other donors!

The generosity of the parish has enabled us to do more renovations than we could have imagined. Extensive HVAC work has been conducted, which has dramatically improved the heating and cooling throughout the house and especially in the dining room, which was always very cold in the winter and very hot in the summer.

A beautiful new wrought-iron fence was installed in front of the house. A new aluminum fence will be installed along the entire front of the property to replace the current chain link fence, and a gate will be installed across the driveway. These additions will both beautify the property and provide enhanced security at night.

Repairs have been made to the exterior of the house, preparing it for painting, which will happen in the spring of 2022. The house will be painted in a combination of historic beiges and browns, with some accent colors. A new roof installation is planned as this goes to print, and the bathrooms are also expected to be completed by the end of November.

It is difficult to convey the magnitude of our gratitude to the parishioners of St. Dominic, who have been faithfully supporting us for many years. We are grateful for the love they demonstrate through their actions and giving.

Pictured at the top: Parishioners of St. Dominic help clean up the house before renovations begin.





+ CLEVELAND

ST. HERMAN HOUSE

4410 Franklin Blvd
Cleveland, OH 44113

By the Numbers *through October 2021*

Thank you to all of our donors, volunteers, friends and neighbors who contribute each day to the mission of St. Herman House. Here's a snapshot of what you've made possible with your contributions thus far in 2021.

44 Men provided with emergency shelter this year

19 Men provided transitional housing this year

30% of shelter residents have temporary or part-time employment, on average

17% of shelter residents have full-time employment, on average

27,967 Number of meals served

114 Number of volunteer groups



Many hands make light work

More than 100 groups have volunteered at St. Herman House this year! We are so thankful that despite the challenges faced in 2021, volunteer support has remained strong. In June, we announced that we were welcoming volunteers back to the premises, and many groups have eagerly returned. Others aren't ready for in-person volunteering yet, but they continue to support us by cooking hot meals or donating bagged meals. We are grateful for every contribution! Thanks to the generous food donations that we receive, we are able to keep our food costs to about **3 cents per meal!** Volunteers served in other ways, too, particularly with yard clean up. If you would like to volunteer, call us at 216-961-3806.