

Seeds of Hope



Each summer Home Sweet Home Ministries' Bread for Life Food Co-op becomes a little more colorful. Green cabbage, red tomatoes, yellow onions, and more fill the shelves. With the support of community garden partners and volunteers, individuals in need are given access to fresh, nutritious food.

Dora Wakefield, a Bread for Life Food Co-op member for over 2 years, loves to help in Home Sweet Home's warehouse garden.

"I'm just so grateful to God that he allows me to be able to do this," shares Dora.

Since May, volunteers and co-op members have been hard at work planting and maintaining a variety of vegetables and herbs.

"We are out here planting cabbage," states Dora. "My job is to dig holes and plant the plants."

Equipped with her hat and trowel, Dora clearly enjoys tending to the garden. She says it's a lot of fun learning how to space plants correctly, but it's even more fun to eat all those delicious greens.

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"I love all vegetables," adds Dora. "Tomatoes. Cucumbers. I eat it all."

According to Dora, it feels good lending a green thumb to help provide fresh vegetables for others in need.

"We are just like a family. When I come out here I don't know anyone, but they are very kind and lovable and easy to work with."

All of the cabbage, broccoli, onions, and herbs planted will help stock the Bread for Life Food Co-op with fresh, healthy options for over 400 active co-op members, including Dora.



"It feels so wonderful," adds Dora, "and it helps to keep my family healthy. I can come into the co-op and get fresh vegetables."

Home Sweet Home Ministries feels blessed to have these gardens because it's about more than just growing fresh vegetables. It's about laying the groundwork for a healthier lifestyle.

"I can do my own garden now, knowing how to space it and what to put in the garden," says Dora proudly. "I'm learning even more. I think everybody should come to the garden to learn more. It's a lot of wisdom in planting gardens and your family can eat healthy, too."

MISSION STATEMENT

Home Sweet Home Ministries demonstrates Christ's love through innovative approaches that instill hope, restore lives, and build community.



A Message from Mary Ann

100 years old and still growing

This newsletter focuses on growing. Gardeners all over our community are growing fresh vegetables that will help our Bread for Life Food Co-op members grow healthy in many ways. Their diets will be enriched with home-grown vegetables and their lives will be enriched through the growth of social connections and capability.

Appreciation of the growth potential for all people is a primary reason that Home Sweet Home Ministries has been growing strong for the past 100 years. We accept people as they are and encourage them to grow into the God-honoring people they were created to be.

Very often the growth experienced by individuals and Home Sweet Home is not visible to the human eye, but is captured in the human spirit. One of our volunteers recently remarked on the last 5 years of leading devotions at Home Sweet Home Ministries. She has experienced spiritual growth herself and has witnessed the spiritual growth of countless individuals who have shared their stories about God working in their lives.

The "growing season" for Home Sweet Home has been every day for the past 100 years, thanks to the seeds that have been planted, nurtured, and harvested by those who have supported us through their prayers, service, and support.

I pray that this season is filled with growth opportunities for each person reading this newsletter.

In His Name,

Mary Ann Pullin

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Bountiful Blessings

Since 1917, food donations have played a huge role in what we as a ministry have been able to accomplish.

Billy Shelper reported in the 1930's that the Mission often served meals to more than 150 people a day. With the aid of the community, the Mission extended its reach to feed even more in need. Pictured here is a huge donation of food in big barrels and burlap sacks that the Williams Oil-O-Matic Company provided for a Christmas dinner in 1930.

Now in 2017, we continue to have several community partners, including local churches and businesses that help us meet the need in Bloomington-Normal. Last year, food donations helped Home Sweet Home to serve over 104,000 meals and impact more than 400 individuals and families through our Bread for Life Food Co-op.



With the continued support from our wonderful community partners, we look forward to extending our reach even more in the years to come. Thank You!



HSHM Women's Auxiliary

Home Sweet Home's Women's Auxiliary welcomes all who wish to support Home Sweet Home Ministries through their fellowship, service, and gifts. Each meeting includes a potluck luncheon and an educational program. For more information, contact Pat Parmenter at 309-661-8842 or Loretta Terven at 309-378-3941.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for August 14, September 11, and October 9 and will be held at Home Sweet Home Ministries. Lunch begins at noon and a program follows.

Save the Date!

**August 4-13:
15th Annual OSF Shoe Drive**

Lending a Green Thumb



It's been two years since Home Sweet Home Ministries first helped Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bloomington create a community garden. With lots of love, donations, and labor, Our Redeemer now has seven raised garden beds.

Jay Brinkmeyer, a member of Our Redeemer, enjoys the opportunity to help grow food for others.

"You know, this area could have still just been grass," says Jay. "But now look at it. We've got vegetables growing that are helping people."

The church's garden beds are full of sprouting broccoli, cabbage, and bush beans.

"When you get something out of the garden, it tastes so much better," proclaims Jay. "Not just because we used our hands and our talents, but that God made it grow."

In this garden, plants aren't the only things growing; relationships are, too. Jay says he enjoys working with his fellow church members as well as others from Home Sweet Home.

"It's just a joy to meet with them and share our faith with them," shares Jay, "and if they have never gardened, just being able to help them out: 'Don't pick that weed, let that one grow, that's a little bean popping up through the ground.'"

By teaching others how to plant, members of Our Redeemer are helping individuals make their lives more meaningful.

"Here they're working and getting some self-worth," says Jay. "And to be able to help people that are having a lot of challenges in their life in this way is just a blessing."

May Community Challenge Met

In May, a generous group of HSHM donors challenged the community to match their donations of \$70,000, resulting in a grand total of \$140,000. Home Sweet Home is pleased to announce that we exceeded our goal! The community once again rose to the challenge to raise funds for the programs and services we provide at HSHM. We can't thank everyone enough for your continued support. Your donations truly make a difference in the lives of the people that we serve. Thank you!



May Community Challenge Update:

100% of \$140,000 Goal



Thank you for your support!

November 4: 100 Years of Hope Fundraising Gala

100 Years of Hope Fundraising Gala

Home Sweet Home Ministries is celebrating 100 years of hope in the community. In celebration, we are hosting a fundraising gala on November 4, 2017 at Second Presbyterian Church in Bloomington. The evening will be full of laughter, food, and entertainment. It's a wonderful opportunity to help those in need. We are currently seeking sponsorships and auction items from individuals and businesses in our community. Please kindly consider becoming a part of our gala and donate today. Your generous support will help Home Sweet Home Ministries continue to instill hope, change lives, and build community for many years to come. Thank you!

For more information please visit wedoauctions.net/hshh or contact HSHM Donor Relations Coordinator, Ashley Souk, at 309-828-7356, ext. 268.



Community Partners

Community support has been amazing over the last few months!

Several HSHM donors helped us reach our goal of \$140,000 during our May Community Challenge.

Vale Church hosted a Big Give weekend, bringing in over 16,000 pounds of donated food and supplies.

Illinois Prairie Community Foundation and other generous donors helped secure new bins for our HSHRenew program.

Our garden partners including Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Calvary United Methodist Church, OSF St. Joseph, along with others, are busy growing fresh vegetables for individuals we serve.

A variety of donations from the community continue to pour in at our receiving center.

First Assembly of God in Normal collected food donations for HSHM during their annual Day of Hope.

We are so grateful for all that you do to support us. Thank you!



HSHRenew Program is Growing!

Home Sweet Home Ministries has received a grant in the amount of \$1,078 from the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation to purchase a new bin for our HSHRenew program. Illinois Prairie Community Foundation reached out to individuals with Donor Advised Funds and we received additional donations to purchase yet another bin. The two bins will be strategically placed in the community for the collection of used clothing and shoes. From all of us at Home Sweet Home Ministries, thank you for your generous support!



Prayer Requests

Please continue to pray for Home Sweet Home Ministries and the services we provide.

We ask that you lift up in prayer:

- all of our community partners working in gardens.
- Bread for Life Food Co-op and its members.
- our food source providers, including local restaurants and grocery stores.
- residents, families, and individuals in need of shelter.
- volunteers that devote their time in our shelter and warehouse.