

JANUARY 2025



## Transforming Lives Through Support Services

**At Home Sweet Home Ministries**, we strive to support residents on their journey to self-sufficiency and healing. In March 2024, we launched Support Services, a program designed to improve client engagement and foster meaningful relationships, empowering individuals to take charge of their lives and make lasting changes.

Audrey Cail, HSHM's Director of Client Services, emphasizes the importance of trauma-informed, strength-based, and client-centered services. "Grace is one of our core values, and we must ensure every service reflects the love of Jesus," she says. This holistic approach ensures our residents feel seen, heard, and supported as they work toward goals like stable housing, employment, and reconnecting with family.

Case Manager Olivia describes her role as one of partnership, helping residents identify and achieve their goals. "Whether connecting to resources like healthcare or childcare, finding housing, or assisting with resumes, I empower residents to build confidence and resilience," Olivia says. The most rewarding part of her work is watching residents transform as they reach milestones and regain hope.

Darlease, another dedicated Case Manager, explains that HSHM's trauma-informed care addresses the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of each resident. "We meet each person where they are, providing tailored support that encourages growth and stability," she says. This holistic framework focuses on long-term transformation, supporting residents on diverse paths toward healing—whether through sobriety, rebuilding relationships, or spiritual restoration.

Both Olivia and Darlease value the deep relationships they build with residents. Darlease reflects, "It's amazing to see trust grow and safety fostered over time. We become a part of their story, walking with them toward healing and hope." Olivia also cherishes these connections, saying, "Building trust and repairing harm through restorative practices helps create meaningful relationships. It's incredibly rewarding to witness their journey of growth and resilience."

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## MISSION STATEMENT

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



## A Message from Matt

*In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.*

– 1 Peter 5:10

One of the first things people associate with Home Sweet Home Ministries is our emergency shelter program where we provide transformational housing to men, women, and families experiencing homelessness. Within our shelter we provide safe accommodation for upwards of 70 individuals at a time. But what's transformational about our services? I believe it is our commitment to demonstrating the love of Christ within the context of what we do.

And nowhere is that love shared more consistently than within our support services team. The staff who make up that team work with every single person we serve in our shelter program, and they are committed to helping our residents re-establish a firm foundation in their lives. In this newsletter, we are excited to share more details about their work and hope to provide some insight into what goes into our efforts to restore our neighbors as they journey back into housing. As you'll see, we focus on far more than just providing a safe, warm bed for folks to sleep in.

I pray that you are encouraged as you read through the entirety of this newsletter and see that Home Sweet Home Ministries is truly a place of refuge and renewal powered by Jesus Christ.

May God bless you all for your faithful support of our ministry.

*Matt Burgess*

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## Sharing Some Holiday Cheer

Home Sweet Home would like to thank all of you for your generosity this past holiday season. Your donations, time, and prayers blessed several men, women, and children in our community. With the support of our partners at Midwest Food Bank, Thrivent Financial, and Hy-Vee, over 1,800 families received complete meal boxes and frozen turkeys through Give Thanks.



Additionally, volunteers and staff graciously prepared and served over 600 meals on Thanksgiving Day. Second Presbyterian Church creatively turned HSHM into a Christmas wonderland. Many other organizations and businesses also generously hosted food drives. We were also blessed with a new beautiful, serene blue floor in our dining center in December thanks to a special donor.

Because of you, many of our residents experienced the true spirit of the holidays. With all our heart, we thank you. Home Sweet Home appreciates all you do to ensure the wellbeing of your fellow community members. We wish you and your families many blessings in 2025.



*Like Us!*

**Like us on Facebook  
Home Sweet Home Ministries**

# GET INVOLVED

*Make 2025  
your year to give back.  
Home Sweet Home  
has plenty of opportunities  
for you to help serve:*



## ADVOCATE:

Share our story with others. Invite us to speak to your group, club, or friends. Help us spread the message of hope in our community.

## PARTICIPATE:

Volunteer your time and talents. There are endless ways to help with the work we do. Share your experiences of hope with others.

## DONATE:

Invest your financial resources in the restoration of lives. Become a Partner in Hope through monthly donations.

*To learn more, please visit [hshministries.org](http://hshministries.org) for more details. You can also contact us at 309-828-7356 or at [hshinfo@hshministries.org](mailto:hshinfo@hshministries.org). HSHM looks forward to partnering with you to restore lives this year!*

## MATCH YOUR GIFTS



Does your employer offer matching gifts? Many employers do. Your gift can double in value with an employer match. Some employers that provide matching gifts are: Benevity Causes, Caterpillar, Constellation, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, State Farm, and Thrivent Financial. Employer matching gift programs are often available for spouses and some retirees, too. Please check with your employer to see if your donation qualifies. This wonderful opportunity allows you to double your contribution to Home Sweet Home Ministries and make an even larger impact in our community. If you have any questions, please contact our Director of Development, Leslie Bunge, at 309-828-7356.

**Night In A Car, February 7th**  
**Sign up or Donate Now: [www.nightinacar.org](http://www.nightinacar.org)**

*Join Us!*

## Night In A Car-Fuel Change

Home Sweet Home Ministries' 9th annual Night In A Car is right around the corner on Friday, February 7. Participants are eagerly gathering up hats, gloves, and blankets to brave a cold night in their cars. While only lasting one night, Night In A Car provides a real glimpse into the realities of facing homelessness through Bloomington's harsh winters.



Participants can choose to drive-in to Trinity Lutheran Church in Bloomington or Zoom-in from the convenience of their own driveway. It's going to be another powerful night filled with fun games, client testimonies, and other educational activities.

This unique event is something all ages can experience. It serves as a great educational opportunity to learn more about homelessness and the work HSHM does to help those in need. Home Sweet Home encourages you to join the ride whether you can withstand an hour or the whole evening. Together we can achieve our goal of raising \$175,000 to support those in need. Because of you, families experiencing homelessness can discover refuge and renewal at Home Sweet Home. It's such a blessing to have you as part of this caring community. We couldn't do it without you.



**There is still time to help!** Please consider signing-up or donating today by visiting [nightinacar.org](http://nightinacar.org). If you have any questions, please reach out to our Night In A Car Coordinator, Leslie Bunge, at 309-319-2820 or [lbunge@hshministries.org](mailto:lbunge@hshministries.org). Thank You!

## Transforming Lives Through Support Services

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One inspiring story involves a resident who transitioned into shelter after years of homelessness and incarceration. Within weeks, he collaborated with HSHM's team to secure essential documentation, find employment, and navigate public transportation. His proactive approach, including volunteering in our kitchen, highlights his determination to rebuild his life. He remains hopeful and is committed to achieving permanent housing in Bloomington.

Another powerful success story involves a woman who struggled with homelessness for years. After facing significant mental health challenges and being disconnected from her family, she found the strength to rebuild her life. Today, she has stable housing, a job she loves, and a supportive network.

At Home Sweet Home, we believe every person is capable of transformation. We are committed to being a supportive, grace-filled presence in their lives.

Through trauma-informed care, personalized support, and meaningful relationships, we are helping residents not only survive—but thrive.

## Current Needs

Because of your compassion, Home Sweet Home can provide comfort to individuals and families seeking a fresh start. Please kindly consider collecting the following items for us:

- Bottled Water
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Creamy Peanut Butter
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant for Men and Women
- Body Wash for Men and Women
- Lawn/Bag Chairs
- Sleeping Bags

Donations can be made Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm at the Bread For Life Food Co-op at 301 East Oakland Avenue in Bloomington. Be sure to check out [hshministries.org](http://hshministries.org) and click on the "Ways to Give" tab for our updated needs and Amazon Wish Lists. Thank you so much for providing hope to your neighbors in need.

## Pray With Us

As Home Sweet Home starts off the new year, we kindly ask your help in praying for:

- Our Support Services team as they inspire hope in others.
- Individuals, families, businesses, and other organizations participating in Night In A Car.
- Individuals, families, and veterans searching for new beginnings.
- Volunteers and staff who devote their time to helping others.

Your prayers for our ministry are sincerely appreciated. Thank you for lifting HSHM up in spirit.