

Fourth Quarter  
2020



Newsletter

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*A Christian  
Community*

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**KINSHIP COMPASSION HOPE**

### 2020 --- A year to remember

*For where two or three are gathered together in My name,  
I am there in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20*

God is present and working at Forward House. We are so thankful for His unconditional love, His unfailing grace and mercy, and for watching over the residents and staff of Forward House. With God's blessings and with the full cooperation of the residents and staff, COVID has not entered the house.

The residents responded with positivity, cooperation and enthusiasm as they were asked to follow provincial and local COVID-related restrictions. A community approach for the well-being of everyone resulted in guys stepping up to take responsibility for a variety of tasks around the house ... cleaning, sanitizing, cooking, meal preparations, driving, painting, replacing mildewed drywall, and other repairs. *They make a great team!!*

We have had some great success stories this year also ... one resident graduated with his GED and is now employed; two others continue work on their GED and one of them is employed. Two residents "graduated" from the FH program and are now living independently on their own. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness!!! Please pray for these men - for what they have accomplished and the ways in which they are redirecting their lives. During the time that quarantine was lifted, several residents also went camping at Birds Hill Park and St Malo. They look forward to more of that activity in 2021!

There were significant expenditures this year ...

- Roof replacement on one house (paid for by friend of Forward House)
- Extensive HVAC repairs, at a cost of \$4,200
- Replacement of a refrigerator compressor at a cost of \$1,800
- Replacement of 3 FH vehicles (newer used replacements leased at a reduced rate through a friend of FH)

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## ***Programs & Activities***

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### Wellness and Nutrition

Since joining Forward House this summer as Cook/Food Service Supervisor, Sarah Mullin has raised the bar in the kitchen, turning out well-balanced meals, leading nutrition classes, teaching a balance between intake and activity, and mentoring residents as some take on increased responsibilities in the kitchen. She has brought a new level of organization to the pantry, cooler and freezers. We are blessed to have her positive energy and congenial personality in the house.

### Stress and Anger Management

Each of us has probably experienced heightened anxiety as a result of the COVID-related restrictions placed on our lives this year. Residents are participating in weekly classes to further develop their coping skills for stress and anger management in their lives, incorporating psychological and physical strategies.

### Fine Arts

Residents choose one of several options to participate in a weekly fine art activity ... music (guitar, piano), reading (presenting a review of the book/s read), or art (painting, sketching, creativity). Some describe these sessions and developing habits as positive mental therapy.

### The Gathering

Residents continue to voluntarily meet Sunday mornings for The Gathering. Participants view leading pastors' on-line/YouTube messages, followed by time for conversations about matters of faith in our lives. The current series of messages is on "Learning how to follow Jesus for a lifetime", covering subjects such as surrender, study, prayer, community, accountability, serve and everyday trials. The level of interest and discussion has led to a real kinship among some of the residents. God is truly working in their lives!

### Living With Addictions

This summer we began our weekly *Living With Addictions* discussion group. Using a variety of print and video materials has facilitated some stimulating and thought-provoking conversations on topics such as mental health and addiction, stages of relapse, and identifying triggers. More recently, we have been delving into the Healthy Supports videos from Tim Fletcher's *Finding Freedom* program.

### Mercy Bags

In early 2020, the residents and staff of Forward House prepared 3,000 (300/week) Mercy Bags for distribution through our partner ministries at Centre of Hope (Salvation Army), Siloam Mission and Union Gospel Mission on Sunday afternoons. These bags were given to the homeless who they were unable to serve in the shelters because of COVID restrictions. The FH residents have indicated a desire to repeat this new tradition in early 2021. The bags contain a peanut butter and jelly (or honey) sandwich, a banana, and a slice of banana bread (baked by FH residents). Our goal is to distribute 400 bags/week, for 12 weeks.

What makes this activity so special is that many of our residents have been homeless in their past and have great compassion for those living under these conditions. We're all learning a lot about what it means to give, to be grateful, to have compassion and to live in kinship with one another, as the Lord intended.

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## ***How You Can Help ?***

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### **Volunteer**

Understandably, COVID has had an impact on volunteer activities everywhere, including Forward House. We are grateful for those that give as they can. Volunteers are needed and welcomed in these areas:

- General maintenance, handyman (including mentoring residents interested in these areas)
- Teaching trade skills
- Driver
- Cook (backup)
- Yard maintenance
- Snow clearing
- Bookkeeping/administrative
- IT Support
- Website/social media
- Fundraising
- Communications
- Health/nursing
- Coaching
- Physical fitness
- Materials/goods sourcing
- Advocacy

### **Specific Needs in 2021**

- Replacement of walk-in freezer compressor (estimated at \$10,000)
- Roof replacement (estimated at \$7,000)
- Cash donations for Mercy Bags (cost is approximately \$2.50/bag)

### **Financial Support**

The economic impact of COVID has had a significant impact on Forward House. Food donations from restaurants, grocery stores and Winnipeg Harvest have decreased dramatically, resulting in increased food costs for Forward House. Another fallout of this difficult year is a decline in financial donations and mission pledges.

As we approach the end of the year, all of us are bombarded with messages asking for generosity. However, we passionately believe in the work God has called us to do through Forward House. As a nonprofit ministry, Forward House is entirely dependent on the financial generosity and partnership with others. We would be honored to have you partner with us.

Especially in these uncertain times, we are deeply grateful for your support and investment in the future of this ministry. To join us, please consider a gift, one-time or on-going, that works for you. You can give online through *Canada Helps*, accessible through this link: <https://forwardhouse.ca/how-you-can-help/donate/>. You can also mail your cheque or gift cards to: Forward House, 407 Chalmers Avenue, Winnipeg MB R2L 0G3.

Thank you for your prayers of support and your prayerful consideration in making a donation to Forward House.

