



Winter 2021 • Newsletter

St Joseph native Carissa has found
A SAFE PLACE TO LAND,
not only for herself, but also her daughter,
with the help of Amanda' House.

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Carissa says her family has always been broken. She grew up in a home where drugs were taken behind closed doors. When she was old enough to be curious, she started partaking in drugs too. In a home with few boundaries, Carissa's family became a trigger for her drug use.

After four months in jail and four months in a probation center, Carissa moved into Amanda's House. She remembers being scared and nervous, not knowing if she was prepared for this step. But, she sees now that the Lord was in control. "If it weren't for this house I don't know where I would be."

Amanda's house has provided a safe environment not only for Carissa, but has also helped facilitate a home for her daughter, 6-year-old Myla. Without being able to turn to her family for help, Carissa was faced with the possibility that she might have to move out of Amanda's House in order to provide a safe home for Myla. However, program director Amy suggested to Carissa that Myla could move into a home with a safe family. After much prayer, Amy and her husband decided to take Myla into their home.



AMANDA' HOUSE 2020 in Review

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7 women have found hope, healing and a safe environment at Amanda's house

12 volunteer House Angels who share day shifts

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1 volunteer House Manager
volunteer Operations
volunteer Program Director

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over
10,572
volunteer hours

PARTNER CHURCHES 2020 in Review

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14 partner
churches



Since moving into Amanda's House Carissa has achieved many of her goals, recently obtaining her driver's permit. With the support of the Amanda's House staff and her local church, she was able to complete the requirement of probation.

Carissa's faith has only grown and solidified with her involvement at Amanda's House. In addition to her church, where she volunteers her time and celebrates milestones with her sponsor, she is an active participant in the Bible studies which are all taught by volunteers.

Although she hopes to be able to transition out of Amanda's House eventually, Carissa makes it clear that she wants to stay in the area, "I am building connections here and this is where I want to be".

As for Myla, she enjoys living with Amy and going to school. Ozzy, the family cat is Myla's favorite part of living with Amy's family and she continues to beg Carissa to get her a dog one day. They see each other regularly at Amanda's House and Myla, of course, calls her mom to talk.

Carissa knows that the opportunities afforded to her and Myla would not be possible without the Amanda's House donors. "A huge thank you to all the donors because they are such a big part" She hopes to continue to see Amanda's House reach women so that they can receive the same kind of help she has so thankfully received.



MENTOR PROGRAM
2020 in Review

27
mentors

287
client visits

1,680
hours running the
Mentor Program

450.1
Mentor volunteer hours

BASKETS OF HOPE

Hop to it and support Hope United's ongoing efforts to meet the needs in our community through purchasing your Easter Baskets from our Baskets of Hope fundraiser.



Each basket is filled with playful items, Easter Story books, and of course, chocolate. With various kind of baskets available designed for children ages 3-12 and one option for the chocolate lover in your life, you're sure to find something for everyone this Easter season.

While purchasing baskets for your own children or grandchildren, won't you also consider purchasing a basket for one, or several, of our 150 foster children and teenagers in St. Joseph County? Hope United is partnering with DHHS in providing some Easter love and joy to our foster children and the special families that have opened their homes to them. DHHS will see to it that these families receive your gift of Easter Baskets. Spring into action by purchasing these delightful, fun filled baskets for your loved ones and love on our foster children this Easter season as well.

To purchase a basket visit Hope United's Website at www.hopeunitedsjc.com. **Don't wait as orders must be in by March 15th.** Pick up instructions will be available upon purchase.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

"It's rewarding helping those in need," is the immediate response heard from Ron Wing. Ron has been volunteering at Restored Hope Furniture Ministry in helping to transport furniture from donor to warehouse, and then from warehouse to those in need. Though not involved in the founding, Ron has been the founder of putting feet to this ministry and in helping to meet the practical needs of others. "I wasn't elected, but called." Ron at 80 years leads a busy, full life, and has made room to help others. Would you too? Our goal is to grow a list of volunteers throughout our county who will help their neighbor in this practical way. To volunteer contact Angie West at 918-409-3001.



(left to right) Rich Kwiatkowski (Blue), Ron Wing (Green), Tom Hagerman (Tan), Noah Dewitt (Black)



RESTORE HOPE FURNITURE MINISTRY

Served

19

families

222

furniture items
restored

1

Volunteer Director
with over

195

volunteer hours

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR

On the very last eve of His life, Jesus lifted a prayer to the Father that should stand as a building block for every Christian church and every individual who calls themselves a follower of Christ.

This prayer was not for success or fulfillment, happiness or prosperity. It was for unity. Jesus prayed that His Church would love one another, and that all those that would come to believe in Him would be bound together in that same love that unifies the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In fact, unity is missiological. Jesus states that this unity should exist so that the world would believe that the Father sent Him. Evangelism is, in fact, the very object and purpose of this unity.

Hope United recognizes that Jesus meant for his Church to be united in love and that this unity in love was, and is, meant **to reach a lost and hurting world with the gospel message in both word and deed.** We may never share identical doctrines or worship styles, but we can share in loving and serving our hurting community together.

This Spring Hope United is calling all churches to take part in our **Meet the Need** launch in April. It is time for us to come together in a wholistic manner to serve those less fortunate in our community. We must help in a manner that brings about lasting life change in the individuals we help, instead of band-aid, temporary fixes. Hope United is calling on every church, every church member, every agency and every community member, to step out of their comfort zones and commit to stepping into a sacrificial love of their neighbor through meeting the needs in our community.



Let's come together to change lives in St. Joseph county! Let's be known as the community that loves and takes care of their own. **We can do so much more together!** Get your church involved by contacting Hope United. Sign-up as a church or volunteer to serve in our community through our cloud based **Meet the Need** software program. You can find this located on Hope United's website at www.hopeunitedsjc.com under "Get Involved."

The world will be won for Christ when the church is *one* in Christ! Like never before; our world, our country, our county is crying out for unity! Let's, together, lead the way!

Blessings, Jill Gunn



📍 222 South Main Street, Three Rivers, MI 49093
☎ 269.858.5583 | ✉ jillgunn@hopeunitedsjc.com
🌐 www.hopeunitedsjc.com | 📘 www.facebook.com/StJosephCty