



# shalom community center

helping people in need



**“Basically it saved my life, you know, having somewhere to go. I wouldn't have made it on the street... I would have gone back to doing heroin. After doing heroin for 20 years I'm learning how to do something different. I'm learning a new way of life. I needed to get back on the right path.”**

**- Michelle Swango**



Dear Friend,

It was that close.

Arguably the most important emergency shelter in Bloomington almost closed forever.

You may know that Martha's House, Inc. went bankrupt in the spring of 2015, putting at risk the only year-round, nonreligious, emergency shelter for homeless adults in a 7 county region. Over 400 people each year rely on this essential resource. To lose it would be devastating.

Thanks to City, County, and Township leadership, the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association, the Community Foundation, the United Way, several nonprofit agencies, and countless concerned citizens, the shelter has stayed open for now. But to keep it open for the long-term, we need your help.

**Please make a gift right now to provide shelter for someone who needs it. Fill out the attached adopt-a-bed card and mail in your support. For a short time, your gift will be doubled thanks to a matching grant.**

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**“You actually have caseworkers that help you. They want to see you succeed in life... Get me on my feet, from the gutter to something. From having nothing to potentially having everything... That's what I get out of it, so far.”**  
**- Rickie Johnson**

Our community is at a crucial point. You and I have to decide whether shelter is an absolute essential for our community... an absolute must. I think it is. And I believe you do, too.

Shalom Center took on the management of the shelter (now called Friend's Place) on January 1<sup>st</sup> and have kept the doors open. But the real need is to keep the shelter open for as long as the tragedy of homelessness strikes our city.

**Multiply Your Gift Through Matching Funds**

The Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association has offered the shelter an unprecedented gift – for every dollar you give in 2016



Nikki Reising is our new Friend's Place Program Manager. Nikki started with Shalom as one of our street outreach workers. Her strong skills made her a natural choice for this position.

towards the shelter, they will give another dollar up to \$200,000. Your support would not only keep the shelter doors open but also make it possible for us to build long-term stability. If we make the entire match, the shelter will be fully funded for another 3 years, giving us the essential time we need to raise the funds to keep the shelter open year after year.

We have already raised more than \$80,000 towards the match and now kick off the public campaign to make it all the way. Help put us over the top with a gift of any size, big or small.

**Adopt-a-Bed**

It costs \$12 per bed per night to shelter someone at Friend's Place. And for a short time, the matching grant from BUEA doubles your impact. Would you consider adopting a bed?

With the help of the matching grant, you can adopt:

- A bed for a week for \$42.
- A bed for a month for \$182.
- All the beds for a night for \$240.
- All the beds for a week for \$1,680.

And if you really want to GO BIG, **you can adopt the entire shelter for a month for \$7,300.**

**What Is Friend's Place?**

Friend's Place is a safe and sober 40-bed emergency shelter for homeless adults in Bloomington, Indiana. The program emphasizes housing as its primary outcome, using Shalom's many services and partnerships to improve the circumstances of the guests of the shelter. We chose the name to help our guests avoid the stigma of homelessness. Whenever a guest is asked where they are staying they don't have to say a shelter name that tags them as homeless. They can simply respond, "I'm staying at a Friend's Place."

**"You have a real bed, a shower, food and a clean environment. You are able to talk to case workers and help get yourself together... It is teaching me to be more positive and to be more aware of other peoples' situations."  
- Tajuana Curry**

**Come to the Open House**

If you'd like to know more about Friend's Place, you are cordially invited to an open house on Sunday, May 22nd, from 3-4:30pm. You can see the shelter, meet program manager Nikki Reising, and learn about how the shelter works and some of the guests who stay there.

**Please fill out the enclosed card and preserve this shelter long into the future. Adopt-a-bed right now.**

With blessings,

Rev. Forrest Gilmore, Executive Director

P.S. For a short time, you can keep the Friend's Place shelter alive and multiply your impact even more through matching funds. Thanks to the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association, **every gift you give in 2016 to the Friend's Place shelter will double**, making your impact that much larger.