“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.

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 1st 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
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

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.”

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.