



Christmas at Family Promise

Family Promise
of Cowlitz County
P.O. Box 1152
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Creating Hope, Nurturing Strength, Transforming Lives December 2023 Vol 4, Issue 6

Family Promise Makes a Difference

by Vonda McFadden, Board President

It's the most wonderful time of the year. Unless you are hungry, lonely or homeless. For those of us without those worries, we sometimes find it hard to understand or even relate to those who are dealing with issues of grief, fear, and worry about not having a home or gifts for their kids. Not knowing where your next meal is coming from, being alone on the streets and living in your car is difficult for adults. Now imagine you are a child. According to the US Council on Homelessness, 1 in 19 children will experience being homeless before age 6.

Family Promise seeks to prevent children from becoming homeless and aid families in finding a home. Since November 2022, 220 children have been aided by our Promise of Home program. Wow! That's amazing that these children did not experience being without a home. Our shelter is finally remodeled, and we are actively working to bring more children off the streets or out of the cars into our program.

Because of your generosity Family Promise of Cowlitz County has made a positive difference in those children's lives and those we serve in shelter. Most recently we are thrilled that we have been able to provide shelter for Susan and her family and overjoyed she has welcomed a healthy baby girl into the world. With your help we will be able to assist this family with a bright future. More information about Susan can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.

As we near the end of 2023 and soon celebrate the birth of our Lord, I am reminded once again of Jesus' experience of homelessness and how he relied on others to support his ministry. Jesus spread the message of love and acceptance. That continues to be our goal, too.

2023 has been a difficult year financially for many. As you make your year-end giving decisions, we kindly ask that you consider Family Promise of Cowlitz County in your giving. Each dollar makes a significant impact in the lives of the children we serve. We can't do this work without you. Thank you for your generous support as we look to the future with hope.



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DONATE TODAY

New Executive Director



This past year has seen some struggles for many of us. There have certainly been struggles within our affiliate, but we are excited to announce that Sara Wallace has accepted the position as Executive Director. Sara has served as our Case Manager for several years and has a wealth of knowledge and understanding about those experiencing homelessness. Sara continues her work as Case Manager for the next several months as we realign our program. We are excited for the ideas she brings and her caring spirit for the children and families we serve. Please take a moment to send congratulations to her.

Take Us to Your Leaders

Church Council, Council of Elders, Church Board, Board of Trustees, Parish Council, . . . whatever your denomination calls them, they're your highly valued leaders! And you know that one person you're going to miss a lot now that they're off your Church Parish Council Board Session of Elder Trustees? We want them!

If you know (or are) one of these leaders, we are inviting applicants for the Family Promise of Cowlitz County Board of Directors. Previous Board experience helpful, but *not* required. Board terms are a three-year commitment. People of color, women, young people, and those who have personally experienced housing insecurity or homelessness are especially encouraged to apply. For more details, please email us directly at Director@FPCowlitz.org, PastorVonda@gmail.com, or call 360-703-3131.

Extra Extra!



Want to hear about something specific in this newsletter? Drop us a line—or a whole draft!

Upcoming Financial Campaign

2024 is just around the corner. We are beginning a new campaign, *100 Donors Who Care*. Our goal is \$100 per month from 100 individuals, churches, or organizations. We already have a few churches and individuals signed up! Will you join them?

If you're unable to give \$100 personally, gather a group and share the amount. We'll be listing our givers in every newsletter and on our website. Join us today in sustainable giving by donating monthly to FPCC.



Miracles Happen:
A Family's Story of Triumph

by Sara Wallace, Executive Director

Susan and her children have been in the Family Promise program for 8 weeks. Jake is 15, he loves all things basketball and is a huge help to mom. Coley is 10, a sweet shy mommy's girl. ANDDD we just welcomed baby Grace on November 24, 2023 at a whopping 9lbs 7oz. She is everything good in this world!



We are thrilled to walk alongside this family on their journey home. Having been through so much, and now being sheltered together they have started to heal and thrive!

Susan is originally from Montana and is from the Crow Indian tribe. She and her children were separated a year and a half ago, due to the circumstances that brought them to homelessness. Susan made her way out to WA in search of a better life for them. She was able to stay with a friend and began to see light at the end of this tunnel. When she had saved enough money she immediately flew the kids here to be with her.

When the children arrived, the arrangements weren't accommodating to a family of three. Grateful for that family's support she began to search for shelter. Susan was referred to us from the Kelso School District, Mckinney Vento liaison. Through this partnership we were able to house this family in shelter.

Susan was 32 weeks along when they arrived. She received support from the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and several other organizations in the community. She is working on vocational rehab with a job coach and housing

case manager as well as peer support and seeing a therapist.

The children have been working on their mental health, schooling and getting re-acclimated with mom. It is a beautiful sight to see, capturing the resilience and love in their hearts! Welcoming baby Grace has given them a sense of accomplishment and pride.

Seeing this family heal their bonds and regain their independence has been an honor for FPCC, we are pleased to have them in our program, especially this time of year. We anticipate seeing them housed by spring, once mom is healed up and working!

We also enjoyed a night of togetherness hosted here at FPCC by Columbia Heights Assembly, with special thanks to Jesse and Jamie Mickel.

