



**2024 Board of Directors**

President, Megan Hilback  
Vice President, Jim Crecelius  
Secretary, Sandy Sampson  
Treasurer, Tom Fasteland  
Andy Morgan, Mac McKinney,  
Angie Tanner, Luke St. Germain

**Committee Chairs**

Fundraising, Jim Crecelius  
Finance, Tom Fasteland  
Board Development, Sandy Sampson  
Building & Grounds, Open  
Strategic Planning, Lorna Mix

**Staff**

Executive Director, Ron Oleheiser  
Program Director, Dustin Witkofsky  
Outreach Director, Julee Jackson  
Volunteer Coordinator & Housing  
Resource Director - Elizabeth Johnson

**Site Supervisors**

Joan Jewett, Leana Pereira,  
Robert Finke, Blake Bailey

Grace House of Itasca County  
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Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
Phone: 218-326-2790

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**[info@gracehousemn.org](mailto:info@gracehousemn.org)**



**2023 Annual Report**

**A homeless shelter for Itasca County  
Area individuals, families & others  
experiencing homelessness needing  
temporary, safe housing  
and other support.**

*Our Mission:*

*“To provide safe, temporary shelter for  
individuals and families who are  
experiencing homelessness and connect  
them to community resources.”*

**Give Hospitality**

**Rest & Renewal**

**Access to Resources**

**Compassion**

**Empowerment for the future**

• **Shelter Work**

Our shelter was busy in 2023 and there are many statistics in this report. We fulfilled our mission by serving 142 people with 3,030 bed nights.

We welcomed two new employees, Blake Bailey, Site Supervisor, and Elizabeth Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator & Housing Resource Director. All staff are critical in fulfilling our mission and serving our guests.

**All Staff - Thank you so Much!**

Our Housing Resource Director started in September through a Community Living Infrastructure grant in collaboration with Kootasca and Northland Counseling. We receive assistance & support from Itasca County Health & Human Services and our regional partner, NE Continuum of Care.

The **Housing Resource** position was developed to provide Direct Assistance for \*Lease or Rental one-time payments, \*Application and Transportation, \*Utility one-time payments, \*Essential Household Furnishing/Supplies. The funds supported 42 families with over \$76,000 in the last quarter of 2023.

Our **Outreach Program** started in late 2022, below are the 2023 Statistics:  
Total number of community members reached at events: 1,078  
Total households reached needing help with housing: 163  
Total number of referrals provided: 146  
Outreach included all rural communities in Itasca County and Hill City & Remer.

Grace House began as a grassroots effort to assist and provide support to individuals and families in Itasca County experiencing homelessness. We have held steadfast to this effort and our mission for the past seventeen years.

***In 2023 we served:***

- 142 overall guests
- 127 Adults, 15 Children
- 13 Families
- 48 Females, 94 Males
- Ages: up to 17 = 15
- 18 - 24 = 14    25 - 54 = 83
- 55 - 64 = 20    65+ = 9
- 6 Veterans
- 76% Caucasian
- 19% American Indian
- 3% Black/African American
- 2% Multiple Races
- 67% Itasca County residents
- 18% from adjoining counties
- 15% others
- 3,030 bed nights, 83% full,
- 5,941 meals served
- 132 turned away
- 21 days avg. stay
- 62% found permanent or temporary housing
- 16% employment @ intake
- 17% employment @ exit

- **Our Church Partners**

Churches continue to provide funding for our Homeless Prevention Fund (HPF) along with several other organizations. This fund assisted over 200 people, including guests and others needing help with gas cards, identification cards, rental application fees, transportation, and motel & camping vouchers.

Total 2023 HPF assistance was \$24,651.

Churches provide volunteers, general operation funding, food items and they help to keep our closets full of personal care items, quilts, bedding, and pillows.

- **Our Service Provider Partners**

A part of our mission is to connect our guests to resources and services they need and want. The following partners are extremely important in that effort: Kootasca Community Action, The Salvation Army, Northland Counseling, AEOA, Itasca County Health & Human Services, First Call for Help/CRT/211, North Homes, Advocates for Family Peace, Circles of Support, Itasca County Veterans Service Office, Itasca County HRA, MACV-Duluth and others.

**2024 “Home Is Where the Heart Is”  
18<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Fundraiser  
Thurs, Dec 5<sup>th</sup> @ TimberLake Lodge**

- **Our Volunteers**

Volunteers are extremely important to the overall success of Grace House. In 2023 over 80 volunteers provided 4,515 hours of service. **Thank you!** This equals two full-time employees.

**Your service is very much appreciated!**

Volunteers help in preparing and serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals to our guests. They serve as the overnight on-site hosts for our guests and assist with chores inside and outside the building.

Our new Volunteer Coordinator, Elizabeth has worked hard to recruit and retain our volunteers.

*A testimonial, “I would tell anyone who considers volunteering, it is a good choice. When you give of your time or money close to home, you know what it goes for. GRACE House helps people get back on their feet and become responsible, hardworking members of the community. What is required of the volunteers is so little but helps so much. “As a volunteer, I can give back!”*

If you are interested in learning more about our volunteer opportunities, please call our office today at 326-2790 or stop by and visit us at our shelter located at  
**501 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, Grand Rapids**

Grace House is an independent 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. As a nonprofit, Grace House depends on foundation and government grants; donations from individuals, service clubs, local businesses; gifts from faith-based organizations; and special fundraising events.

**2023 Funding Partners**

MN Department of Human Services  
Blandin Foundation  
Itasca County Health & Human Services  
United Way of 1000 Lakes  
Northland Foundation  
Emergency Food & Shelter Program  
Lake Country Power-Operation Roundup  
Enbridge Energy,  
GR Area Community Foundation  
Second Harvest Food Bank,  
Open Your Heart to the Hungry & Homeless

Over 600 Local Individuals = \$120,000  
40 Local Churches = \$17,000  
Over 450 In-Kind donations = \$102,000.

**Local businesses, Civic & Service Clubs**

**\$50,000**  
2care4u LLC, Acheson Tire,  
Anchor Inn Resort, Affinity Plus Credit Union,  
American Legion Post 122-Deer River,  
American Legion Riders-Deer River,  
American Legion Post 340-Hill City,  
American Legion Post 60-GR,  
Arrowhead Promotions/Thousand Lakes Sports  
B.J. Rowell D.D.S., Barney’s Resort &  
Lodging, Bloomers Garden Center,  
Cap Baker Lions Club, City of LaPrairie,  
Crystals Salon Inc, Cut Foot Sioux Resort,  
Davis Chiropractic,  
Deer River Coop Credit Union,  
Deer River Lions Club,  
Deerwood Bank, Diocese of Duluth,  
Edward Jones, First National Agency,  
First National Bank-Coleraine,  
Fraternal Order of Eagles & Auxiliary,

GR Area Freethinkers, GR NAMI Chapter,  
GR Veterinary Clinic,  
Grand Properties Real Estate,  
GLIK’S, Grand Dental Center,  
Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital,  
Grand Rapids GM, Greenway Lions Club,  
Hawkinson Construction,  
Hill City Lions Club,  
Itasca County Board of Realtors,  
Jacobson Community Center,  
L & M Supply, Lakehead Constructors,  
Lawrence Lake Liquor, Leech Lake Gaming,  
Leino’s Riverside Pub,  
Leino’s Riverside Resort,  
Mr. Furnace, Max Mini Store,  
Members Cooperative Credit Union,  
Minnesota Energy Resources Corp.,  
Minnesota Power, Nancy Kurtz Agency,  
North Homes, Inc, North Star Women’s Club,  
Northern Star Cooperative, Park State Bank,  
Paul Bunyan Communication,  
Polar Insulating, Providence Financial Advisors  
Range Bottle Gas Co, Ray’s Sport & Cycle,  
Salon Brad, Sandstrom’s Company,  
Star of the North Lions Club,  
Super One Food Stores,  
Timberlake Lodge, UPM/Blandin Paper Co,  
VFW Post 1720-GR,  
VFW Post 2720-Deer River,  
Walmart Super Center,  
Victory/Wayne’s Automotive,  
Williams Septic & Electric, Woodland Bank.

All businesses, organizations & individuals who donated items for our annual fundraiser!

*The GRACE House Board of Directors, staff and most importantly our guests appreciate the generous support of our donors. The past seventeen years of providing services to people experiencing homelessness would not have been possible without your support.*

**Thank You!**