



2026 Board of Directors

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Secretary, Andy Morgan
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Finance, Angie Tanner
Board Development, Megan Hilback
Building & Grounds, Andy Morgan

Staff

Executive Director, Ron Oleheiser
Program Director, Dustin Witkofsky
Outreach Director, Julee Jackson
Admin Asst., Jessica Kujala
Rapid Rehousing, Elizabeth Johnson

Site Supervisors

Joan Jewett, Leana Pereira,
Robert Finke, Dustin Foster, Leighton
Sorteberg, Chad Leen, Eric Tipp

Grace House of Itasca County
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Face Book Page
Grace House of Itasca County
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2025 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**

Expansion & Renovation

Our 2024-2025 building project was completed in March, and we housed a limited number of guests for the first couple months. We had a few items that were still being worked on, most importantly our security system. We held a grand opening on May 8th with many community members and regional & state partners.



Above is a staff picture at the grand opening, with Chamber of Commerce ambassadors. We have hired three new positions to support operations of our newly expanded shelter, bringing our staff to a total of twelve. Our staff is critical in fulfilling our mission and serving our guests.

All Staff - Thank you so Much!

If you are interested in learning more about our expanded shelter or would like a tour, please call our office, 218-326-2790.

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 nineteen years.

In 2025 we served:

- 116 overall guests
- 4,187 bed nights
- 5,165 meals served
- 80% Itasca County residents
5% from adjoining counties
17% others,
- 500 turned away

These statistics are much less for 2025 due to our building project and having a limited number of guests until May. This also increased our turn away number. Our statistics will be much better in 2026 because our state reporting tool (HMIS) is back online with better reporting. In addition, we implemented our own software system in late 2025, which will give us better reporting options.

Our Volunteers

Volunteers are extremely important to the overall success of Grace House. In 2025, 75 volunteers provided 2,408 hours of service. **Thank you!**

Your service is very much appreciated!

Volunteers help in preparing and serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals to our guests. Volunteers also serve as the overnight on-site hosts for our guests. We have immediate openings for volunteers for all shifts.

Call today, 218-326-2790 if interested.

- 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 2025 HPF assistance was \$19,463.

Churches provide volunteers, general 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.

2026 “Home Is Where the Heart Is”
20th Annual Dinner Fundraiser
Thursday, December 3rd
TimberLake Lodge

- Our Strategic Plan**

In the fall of 2025, we embarked on a new strategic plan. Focus groups were held and surveys were sent out to our partner groups to enlist feedback from the community, as well as staff, board and volunteers. The board approved the strategic plan in December.

Strategic Initiatives 2026 - 2028

- A) Manage the process of recruiting and hiring a new executive director
- B) Design a creative volunteer resource plan to recruit and appreciate volunteers
- C) Re-energize relationships with area churches to support the Grace House mission.
- D) Develop a strong messaging plan to communicate Grace House’s story.
- E) Evaluate the potential for growing and delivering services in Itasca County,
- F) Develop a plan for funding and building a warming shelter.
- G) Maintain strong community relationships for Grace House during the leadership transition process.
- H) Review the staff compensation, recognition and retention system.
- I) Participate in developing community housing initiatives.

For a full copy of the Strategic Plan, please see our website or call 218-326-2790.

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

2025 Funding Partners

MN Department of Human Services
Blandin Foundation
Itasca County Health & Human Services
United Way of 1000 Lakes
Northland Foundation
HUD Rapid Rehousing
Lake Country Power-Operation Roundup
North Itasca Electric-Operation Roundup
Enbridge Energy, Diocese of Duluth
GR Area Community Foundation
Starbucks Foodshare, Mardag Foundation
Open Your Heart to the Hungry & Homeless
Over 500 Local Individuals = \$112,000
25 Local Churches = \$10,000
Over 450 In-Kind donations = \$115,000.

Local businesses, Civic & Service Clubs

\$50,000
4U Home Health Care,
Affinity Plus Credit Union, American Disposal
American Legion Post 60-GR,
American Legion Post 122-Deer River,
American Legion Riders-Deer River,
American Legion 301-Taconite,
American Legion Post 340-Hill City,
American Legion 452-Keewatin
Arrowhead Promotions/Thousand Lakes Sports,
Beaudry Oil Co,
Bloomers Garden Center,
Cap Baker Lions Club,
Children’s Mental Health Services,
City of Calumet, City of LaPrairie,
Crystals Salon Inc, Cut Foot Sioux Resort,
Deer River Coop Credit Union,
Deer River Lions Club,
Deerwood Bank, Diocese of Duluth,
Edward Jones, Essentia Health,

First National Agency,
First National Bank-Coleraine, Floor to Ceiling,
Fraternal Order of Eagles & Auxiliary,
GR Area Community Foundation,
Grand Dental Center,
Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital,
Grand Rapids GM, Grand Rapids Vet Clinic,
Greenway Lions Club,
Hawkinson Construction,
Hill City Lions Club, Hill City Thrift Store,
Kootasca-Community Action,
L & M Supply, Lakehead Constructors,
Lawrence Lake Liquor, Leino’s Riverside Pub,
Mr. Furnace, Max Mini Store,
Members Cooperative Credit Union,
Minnesota Diversified Industries,
Minnesota Energy Resources Corp.,
Minnesota Power Foundation,
Nelson Wood Shims, North Homes, Inc,
North Star Women’s Club,
Northern Star Cooperative Services,
Oak Hills Assisted Living, Park State Bank,
Paul Bunyan Communication,
Peterson Funeral Home,
Polar Insulating, Providence Financial Advisors,
Ray’s Sport & Cycle, Sandstrom’s Company,
Star of the North Lions Club,
Super One Food Stores, Timbercraft Homes,
Timberlake Lodge, UPM/Blandin Paper Co,
VFW Post 1720-GR,
VFW Post 2720-Deer River,
Walmart Foundation & Super Center,
White Oak Casino/Leech Lake Gaming,
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 nineteen years of providing services to people experiencing homelessness would not have been possible without your support.

Thank You!