

# ESTHER HOUSE REENTRY QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2018



**Mission:** To provide a Christ-centered 12-month residential program for women transitioning from incarceration and chemical dependency who are seeking to be restored to a place of healing, wholeness and productivity.

**Vision:** Previously incarcerated women who will live free from chemical dependency and the cycle of recidivism will be stopped as they are being restored to wholeness in Christ to live full and meaningful lives.

## Turning a House into a Home

It's been an AMAZING 3 months since our last newsletter. We have been blessed to witness God's hand touching every part of the Esther House through the volunteers He has chosen to send. These volunteers have worked tirelessly – starting mid-November and continuing to this day. You can't look anywhere in the Esther House without seeing their handy work. They are truly turning a house into a home. Walk with us down memory lane . . .



**Electrical Overhaul** – Dudley and First Baptist Church of Wahoo have upgraded all the electric throughout the house.

**County Code Requirements** – Fire Alarm System and Fire Sprinkler System. It took an incredibly long time for our paperwork to “rise to the top of each queue” in the building services department at the county in order to obtain the permits to begin the work. Both of these systems have been installed and the fire alarm is monitoring the building, but we are still waiting for the water to be brought to the fire sprinkler system by the local water company. Until this is done the systems can't be tested and the inspections can't be requested. We were also required to replace 3 bedroom windows (egress) and enlarge one bathroom door. This is complete. The windows are gorgeous and provide a beautiful view to the outside! The bathroom door enlargement caused a complete renovation of the master bath which is now stunning! Praises and shout out to our volunteer, Billy, for his tireless contribution to the renovations.

**Flooring** – we removed all the old carpet/padding (Kolleen, Jon, and Kathy) which left some seriously scarred Terrazzo floors (original to the 1963 house). The “floor doctors” (Danny and Donna) came all the way from Virginia to clean, seal, buff and perform surgery on the “wounds.” Tim Sr. and Pat hosted them and worked tirelessly alongside them. They gave them a beautiful “face lift” but as they say . . . *you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear*. Some of the flooring was still badly scarred which convinced us to install (Billy) beautiful laminate in the main areas (living, dining and kitchen) where the scarring existed.

**Appliances** are all in – we purchased a new microwave, dishwasher, range and previously owned refrigerator, washer and dryer. Soon we will be cooking!!!

**Inside** – Thanks to Billy, Craig, Steve, Stephen, and Ed, every square inch of the house, office and even a part of the garage has been touched – all walls/ceilings/trim work/doors have been painted (3 coats each!), added or replaced; the kitchen was gutted / “gently used” cabinets (thanks to Advanced Finishes) / tiled countertop /

bead board wainscoting has been installed. This doubled the kitchen footprint.

Outside has had a good scrubbing and pressure washing, including the wooden fencing which went from nasty looking to looking almost new thanks to Tim Sr. and Tim Jr.; all exterior trim and doors have been painted AND . . . out with the dark brown and in with the soft gray – every paintable surface outside has been painted thanks to David, Ed and Billy (well – me too I guess since I painted the garage doors – HA!) Our lawns have been mowed thanks to Gussie and Nan and our landscaping has been getting a thorough pruning twice a week thanks to Dean.

Unpacking the goodies – we have been incredibly blessed by so many Women's Groups through showers, collections and donations – these have all been unpacked and put away thanks to Kathy and Maria. Food pantries have begun dropping off supplies to stock the newly painted shelves (thanks to Larry, Linda and Carroll). Linens (sheets, mattress covers, bedspreads, shams, pillows) have been purchased and the bedrooms are waiting patiently to welcome the Esther Women thanks to Johanna through her church.

Furniture – Our Esther Women's bedroom furniture (five twin beds and frames, dressers and night tables) has been donated to us thanks to Our Mother's Attic and Love, INC. Some of the office furniture was donated by Denise and Diane. Audrey donated an outdoor table and chairs and a loveseat. Kay donated the House Mom's bedroom set. We purchased the remaining furniture by taking advantage of several phone apps like "Next Door" and "Marketplace"

On the Business side – the database, developed by Ken, has been getting a thorough workout as we have been storing and tracking all the information needed to run the business side of things. Kathy, Volunteer Coordinator, has spoken to all volunteers. Hundreds of documents (Client, Volunteer, Program, and business related) have been developed and thanks to the editorial eye of Marge, all has been proofread. Elizabeth and Marge have copied many documents and built binders through the use of copy machine time donated by St. Vincent de Paul and New Covenant United Methodist churches.

Training – we have had four training sessions so far to ready our volunteers to fill the roles the Lord has chosen for them using the skills He has provided. Training will continue.

Presentations – I have been welcomed at countless women's groups within churches, local clubs and even neighborhood gatherings to share what the Lord is doing with the Esther House. The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Each group brings forth suggestions on how they can help. I usually leave with my car packed with their donated goodies.

Van – we have been blessed with a gift of a 2016 Dodge Caravan from St. Timothy's Catholic Church. They are storing it for us until we cover several other expenses and obtain the insurance. This will be such a blessing when we have the Esther Women in the house and need to transport them all at one time.

We've all heard that saying "it takes a village" . . . as you can see above – it certainly does and we have been so very blessed by each and every person who has helped along the way. I apologize if I have missed anyone. There have also been countless donations – too many to mention. THANK YOU ONE AND ALL!!!

To stay aware of what is happening with us, please like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/estherhousefp/> or check out our website at <http://estherhousetreentry.weebly.com>



On behalf of the **Esther House**, we wish you and yours a very **Happy Easter. He is Risen Indeed!!!**

We look forward to your continued prayers and support throughout 2018. Blessings and love . . . Judi Courter, Executive Director