

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Stephanie Burton, Executive Director, 608-371-3735

Matt Prestil, Board of Directors Chairperson, 608-289-7231

<http://gifts-shelter.org/>

GIFTS Men's Shelter Receives Home Donation for Transitional Living

Janesville, Wisconsin, February 19, 2018 – As the door closes for Beginnings Group Foster Home, it is opening for GIFTS Men's Shelter's Life Recovery Home.

The Board of Directors of Beginnings Group Foster Home, Inc. announced the closing of its facility at 502 E. Holmes St., Janesville, Wisconsin. The facility has operated as a residential treatment facility for adolescents since the 1970's. Effective February 1, the facility no longer accepts court ordered referrals.

The decision for the closure is based on the belief that the residential treatment model, which has been used for decades, is no longer effective in treating today's troubled youth. The residential model provided counseling and group therapy as part of its approach, but Beginnings believes the mental health issues that need to be treated today cannot be remediated in such a setting. The treatment of these issues needs a total integration of counseling and therapy for the residents. The design and financial structure of the residential group home model did not allow for that.

Beginnings has had the opportunity to serve thousands of youth over its history, some have returned, not as clients, but to thank them for the opportunity they received to reset their lives.

"We are proud of the service we have given and are confident a new model will emerge," said Paul Braun, Board President of Beginnings Group Foster Home, Inc.

GIFTS (God Is Faithful Temporary Shelter) provides immediate support for men in Rock County with shelter, clothing, food and personal care items for an individual, while providing assessments and the creation of a Life Improvement Plan. Over 40 churches provide services through sheltering and resource support.

While the population served by each organization is different, their missions are very similar.

The Life Recovery Home will offer a safe, controlled, Christian environment for guests to advance to the next level in their Life Improvement Plan. The men must qualify to live in the home after a minimum of five months of progress working towards their goals, serve as a Senior Guest Supervisor, and commit to maintaining the integrity of the program.

Being a good neighbor is key to Christian values and to GIFTS. The residents of the home will live there for 6-12 months, and will follow a Good Neighbor Policy. Community members can expect to get to know the residents as they work in the yard, grill on the deck, and help each other with home projects.

Transitional housing reduces the risk of relapse for many by easing the transition from residential treatment back into a positive living situation. Individuals can continue to receive support, guidance and even some structure that allows them to gradually adjust to the freedom of independent living. The GIFTS Board of Directors identified transitional housing as part of their strategic plan, however it was not anticipated to happen so quickly after opening of the new shelter and resource center.

“The opportunity to work with Beginnings Group Foster Home to is a true blessing. GIFTS continues its work to enhance services to homeless men throughout the area and the development of a transitional housing option was definitely our next step,” said Matt Prestil, GIFTS Board Chairman. “Everyone associated with GIFTS cannot thank Beginnings enough. We pledge to remain steadfast stewards of the support and trust the community has given us and our efforts to help restore these men to productive and positive lives.”

Once the “homeless, homeless shelter,” GIFTS moved into its permanent location at 1025 North Washington Street in November, 2017, which accommodates meal preparation, overnight sleeping, daytime programming, and evening enrichment activities. GIFTS utilizes the building as the site for its main offices, a resource center for guests, a commercial kitchen, 42 beds—up from the current 25—and a garden.

When GIFTS opened in 2007, the goal was to provide safe, warm shelter during winter months when it is dangerously cold. A daytime resource center was added in 2013 to give shelter guests opportunities to work with volunteers to improve their situations. To stay focused on the GIFTS faith based mission on providing a “hand up and not a hand out,” capital projects and annual operating budgets are funded through community events, donations and non-governmental grants.

To Make a Donation:

Send a check to the GIFTS Men’s Shelter, P.O. Box 788, Janesville, WI 53547, or donate online at <http://gifts-shelter.org/donate/>

About GIFTS

GIFTS (God is Faithful Temporary Shelter) was born in 2007 when a group of concerned Janesville citizens saw an unmet need in our community. Women and children without shelter had options available to them; however homeless men had nowhere to go. These concerned citizens first met in early fall, and on Christmas Eve 2007, the shelter opened with four cooperating churches. Today, forty churches are involved in the operation of the shelter.

The goal to provide the men a hand up rather than a hand out led to the October, 2013, opening of the GIFTS Resources Center. The Center offers materials, technology, and personal assistance to help the men connect with established community resources. Each guest receives an evaluation by a volunteer social worker who then creates a social history. The guest then partners with a volunteer to help them create an individual life improvement plan based off of the social history which guides their efforts and allows them to respectfully regain their footing in society.

Our Mission

“To show Christ’s love to homeless men in Rock County by advancing renewal and hope through a unified Christian effort.”

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