I had a call from a guest last month. She lives in Maine and called to make her annual reservation. We had a very nice little chat. She was telling me all about her volunteering for Family Connection in her hometown. Following is an excerpt from the United Methodist Women in Wareham, Maine:

“The program was very enlightening and heart-warming as Barbara W. shared her experience as the parent of a man in prison. She spoke of her son and his experience as a prisoner. The trial was held in Pierre, SD but he is incarcerated in Sioux Falls, SD. Her special emphasis was on the Family Connection House operating for the benefit of families who came to visit family members in prison. She showed a video of the house as narrated by a woman who has been especially helpful to Barbara over the years and especially to David during his imprisonment. She has been especially supportive of the Family Connection House. This facility is staffed 24 hours per day. All of the furniture and supplies are contributed by outside support. There is equipment to meet the needs of the entire family, toys for the children and toilet articles are provided for the guests. The charge is $5.00 per night and transportation is provided to and from the prison for the guests of the House.

Barbara had pamphlets available for everyone to take home. All of those in attendance at the meeting were impressed with the lovely Victorian home and the comfortable and attractive furnishings that have been donated by people in the area.

Following Barbara’s presentation the women voted to give Barbara a check toward the program when she goes to South Dakota the next time. (She is able to go only one time each year.)"

Isn’t that a wonderful excerpt? I was absolutely delighted that Barbara would take the time and effort to volunteer for us as far away as Maine. Barbara’s angel wings are working overtime.

How much we can learn from someone like Barbara! I have to ask myself some questions when something like this is brought to my attention. What do my angel wings look like? How hard are they working? I hope sometime in my life my angel wings are as shiny and full as Barbara’s must be right about now.

April 21-27 was National Volunteer Week. We need to remember all our volunteers during this time. And, of course, say a big THANK YOU for all you do.

Dorothy Richards
Executive Director

May the world hug you today with its warmth, and love
Pray it whisper a joyful tune in your heart
And may the wind carry a voice that tells you there is a friend sitting in another corner of the world wishing you well!
“Ask and it shall be given!”

It has been “a long time a-brewin’” but the upstairs bathroom in the guest house is usable again! Pastor Tjarks has to finish some shelving space but otherwise it is complete. We have so many people to thank. Those names will be listed at the end of this article.

The bathroom was quite a project. Pastor Norman Eittrheim, Leonard Johnson, David Tanner, a trusty, and I dug into it. We discovered that there were four floors to take up before we got down to the joists! There had been attempts before to repair the “sinking stool”. We discovered the problem. When it was installed, there were not adequate provisions made for supporting it. Of course, nothing was level, but David figured out a way to put in some extra supports to make the joists level. After that was done, new plywood flooring was put down. Elliott and Anderson came and installed new linoleum. A new tub with wrap-around shower was installed with Greg Trewatha, a volunteer plumber, doing that work. New melamine was installed three quarters of the way up the walls, and the rest of the walls were painted. New cove base was put on and trim added around the tub. A new vanity under the sink was installed. New windows were installed. New green curtains, garbage can and shower curtain were installed. Prison Industries refinished the cabinet that had been in there. We “rounded up” another wall cabinet and it was hung. Then, the kitchen ceiling was repaired. We needed to mud and tape the split seam in the sheetrock and painted the ceiling and walls above the border. We started the project on April 16th, and for almost a month, the house was alive with volunteers working, friends stopping by to see the progress, and much food, fun and fellowship shared. Nan and some volunteers cooked lunch for the crew each day, and fed them morning and afternoon coffee break. And now, with all the hullabaloo settled, (Nan’s missing everybody!) the room looks great! Come see for yourself!

We then tackled Jennifer’s kitchen. The walls were painted. The west window is at the repair shop, and the door is being painted. The ceiling light needs to be replaced. We are fortunate that we have not had a fire because of the poor wiring.

We should have a party to celebrate! Our victories are small and sometimes it takes a while for them to happen so let’s celebrate. Maybe we could sell tickets to see the renovations. A ticket to use the bathroom would cost more, of course.

But we have much for which to be thankful. MidContinent who provided $1,500 for this project. We are grateful that God also provided willing and skilled volunteers: Leonard Johnson, Maintenance Chair; Norman Eittrheim, Eugene Tjarks, Elliott and Anderson Floors, Wally Ahrendt, Trusties- David Tanner and Shannon Weurkis; Greg Trewatha, plumber; and Chet Opland, garbage.

An afterthought about David Tanner. When he worked at the FCHH he was a trusty at Unit C up at the penitentiary. David was to be released May 14, 2002. He had a job lined up, and living quarters, but instead of being released, officers from Minnesota came and got him to face possibly more years in prison on reinstated charges there. Please pray for him.

Leroy Iseminger
Board Member
Greetings from Family Connection! We’ve been having a busy Spring here at the house. Volunteers have been here all week planting flowers and weeding the garden. We’ve installed a completely new bathroom upstairs and are currently preparing the house for a fresh coat of paint. We’ve also had a big increase of guests, especially new faces, here at the Hospitality House.

Spring is in progress and Summer is just around the corner. Summer brings our once a year guests, all mothers of inmates, to the Hospitality House for their one-week visits. These ladies come from Massachusetts, California and New York. All three save up all year in order to make the annual trek to South Dakota to see their sons and all three have been doing this for years. Even though I only see them in person once a year we maintain a friendship year-round through email, letters and the occasional phone call. These three remarkable women and their visits to the House are one of my favorite aspects of the job. I am making friends as well as welcoming guests. It’s like having an extended family from three different corners of the United States.

These women are able to stay a week despite the expense of airline tickets, and time off work because they don’t have the added expense of a weeklong hotel bill, which can be an investment for anyone’s budget. We have discussed how they had to visit before the Hospitality House existed. They told me how tough it was to visit their sons in a different town and then go home to an empty hotel room with no one to talk to. These visits can be hard enough, but doing it alone with no one to talk it out with is really rough. Now every time they visit they can come into a big house with friendly, familiar faces and many times that makes all the difference in the world.

Jennifer Koepsell
Hospitality Director

Would your ladies’ group make a quilt as a fund raising project to be auctioned at an upcoming event? All proceeds will go to Family Connection Hospitality House. Please call Dorothy at 357-0777 or write to us at:
Family Connection
303 N. Minnesota Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Thank you for your friendship!

The more of earth we want, the less of heaven we’ll get.
Hi everyone, I’m Kara, the new Children’s Connection Director. This quarter has been quite a learning experience. I have come to realize and understand that when people are incarcerated, they are still moms and dads, and the family members left behind suffer not just the loss and separation of a loved one but also humiliation and shame for the reasons surrounding the separation. As the new director I have been working on developing new programs to serve families of inmates locally and out of state.

Our newest program is monthly birthday parties. These parties are open to any child who has lost a parent or other family member to incarceration. We have cake and games and lots of fun, plus everyone gets a gift. If we are fortunate enough to have a “Birthday Child” that month he or she gets a special birthday present. Our first few have gone well and as word gets out about how much fun they are I hope they will be even more enjoyable for the families that attend. The kids all have a good time but the parents that come have a great time too. Thanks, to Kristi (a new and very enthusiastic volunteer) we have a lot of new ideas for summer parties.

Besides the birthday parties we are trying to implement support groups for adults and we provide baby-sitting. This is an opportunity for spouses, parents or partners of inmates to discuss their concerns and begin sorting out their own issues or lend help to others who need support in dealing with these complex problems.

We have conducted groups in some of the public schools in Sioux Falls this last year and hope to expand this service next year. Individual or family counseling is available on a limited basis as well.

We have camp scholarships this year. Dakota United Methodist Camps have donated 10 camp scholarships. Three sessions are available depending on ages of children attending. If this is a successful program with DUMC, that organization will help us work with other camp programs for more scholarships next year. This time around camp has been little disorganized, due to changes in staff at Family Connection, I hope that anyone interested in sending kids, volunteering to chaperone or provide transportation will contact us.

If you ask any kid, Christmas is too far away, but in the next couple of months it will be time to think about our Christmas Gift Program. We have worked hard to organize all our information so that it will be easier to track the families that we serve and hopefully make their Christmas a little brighter.

Our schedule changes from month to month so please call if you would like to schedule an appointment or information on times for support groups or camp scholarships. For the birthday parties we need guests to R.S.V.P. so we can be prepared. Knowing how many children and parents we will have attending ensures that we have enough gifts for everyone. As always, volunteers and donations are most welcome and appreciated. Every little bit helps to make life better for a child. Have a great summer!

Kara Williams
Children’s Connection Coordinator

The Angel Program

This is an annual program providing items to the Hospitality House on a monthly basis.

A sample of the schedule would be:

**Month 1:** Cleaning products
- disinfectant cleaner
- window cleaner
- furniture polish
- toilet bowl cleaner
- sink & tub cleanser

**Month 2:** Office supplies
- 7” envelopes
- stamps
- colored copy paper
- address labels

**Month 3:** Household needs
- trash bags
- rubber gloves
- air freshener
- liquid soap

**Month 4:** Snacks
- homemade goodies

**Month 5:** Household needs
- after shower spray
- shampoo
- deodorant
- toothpaste

**Month 6:** Office supplies
- stamps
- 7” envelopes
- notepads

**Month 7:** Paper products
- kleenex
- paper cups
- plates

**Month 8:** Kitchen
- bread
- milk
- juice
- fruit & vegetables

**Month 9:** Family Support
- $30 to house one family for one night

**Month 10:** Household needs
- dish soap
- laundry soap
- fabric softener
- stain remover

**Month 11:** Office supplies
- stamps
- 7” envelopes
- notepads

**Month 12:** Christmas goodies
- Use your imagination!

Use this schedule, or create your own!

This is a 12-month commitment to Family Connection ministry. If interested please call Dorothy at 357-0777.
From the Heart of a Guest...

Excerpts from guests’ correspondence...

“...How is the home doing? Has it been busy there? I keep everyone and everything in my prayers. I really feel that this program is a Blessing from the Lord Above…”
- Nancy, CA

“...I got to visit with some of the ladies. It was fun. I really wish I didn’t have to leave. I feel so good and rested here. Thank you again…”
- April, SD

“Here I am, once again blessed by our ‘Father’ for him bringing me back to Sioux Falls and the Hospitality House...I give thanks to the Lord for him giving us you!!!”
- Kim, WI

“I want to thank all of you for giving me a great place to stay & giving me great hospitality. I like this place- it’s real cozy and homey feeling…”
- Cindy

“My Special Angels:
...Sure wish I could do more than this, giving me a chance to visit my only child is a blessing- giving us both strength to continue on with our lives. I will continue to keep you angels in my prayers.”
- Julie, NE

“If it wasn’t for Hospitality House I wouldn’t be able to visit my fiancee and our relationship wouldn’t be deepening as it is. You really do make ‘family connections’.”
- P.

“Thank you for making my stay in South Dakota so much better...This donation is all I can spare, but I left some food behind for other people.”
- Renee, IL

“I would like to thank anyone & everyone for the family connection house. This is only my second visit at this house, but I feel very welcomed...You are appreciated!!”
- Cheri

“You have helped make 2 people smile a lot more and look forward to a better future together. The house itself and all the people who help make this possible are an absolute blessing!”
- -

“We thank you from our hearts. I don’t know what we would of done. God bless you.”
- Melissa

“The services and generosity you offer are priceless. Words can’t express my gratitude.”
- Renee, IL

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Many THANKS!
TO ALL WHO HELPED MAKE
OUR ANNUAL TAG SALE
A SUCCESS!

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Birthday Parties
Children’s Connection now has a monthly Birthday Party. We need angels to facilitate this on an ongoing basis.

Display Tables
We need angels to sit at the display table at conferences. Flexible shifts available.

Human Race
The Human Race is a walk/run marathon to be held on Saturday morning, July 20. We need walkers/runners to solicit pledges and participate for Family Connection.

Please call 357-0777 for more information or to take advantage of these angelic opportunities!

The only way to help people be what they want to be, is to accept them the way they are.

From the Family KITCHEN

This space is from our guests, from all over the world. We will publish one recipe each newsletter from one guest depicting their home state cuisine. Thank you for your contributions, friends.

Pineapple Corned Beef Cheese Ball
2 large packages cream cheese
2 packages Buddig’s corned beef-chopped-line
1 small can crushed pineapple-
drained very well on paper towels
1 tsp. seasoned salt (or to taste)
instant minced onion- to taste
chopped pecans or walnuts

Mix first five ingredients together- roll in chopped nuts. Serve with favorite crackers.
Best served at room temperature.

Mary B., IL
Connecting Points

Gifts/Grants

Blessed are the givers...and grateful are the receivers

**Individuals**

- NDSU: Joseph L. Isakson
- Mrs. E.C. Dickerson
- Mrs. Verne Stundahl
- Dorothy Jensen
- Richard & Aufrey Heidenson
- Norma Hyldan
- Marsha Johnson
- Richard Braithwaite
- Joanne Tieszen
- Connie Smith
- Audrey Anderson
- Ed & Diane Nesselhuf
- Pam Heller
- Dorothy Larson
- Ruth Harrington
- Harold Warner
- Rev. Rex & Carol Wentzel

**Organizations**

- North Preston Lutheran Church
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- First Baptist Church
- Crestwood United Church of Christ
- Patience Circle-Our Savior’s Lutheran Church
- Grace Lutheran Church
- First Presbyterian Church
- St. Mary’s Church
- Sioux Valley Optimist Club
- Huron Church Women United
- Sermon on the Mount Church
- Woods, Fuller, Schultz & Smith
- Hannah Circle, Peace Lutheran Church
- Our Savior’s Lutheran Church
- Catholic Daughters of America, court #271
- Grace Lutheran Church, Sisseton

**Grants**

- ELCA
- Younkers
- MidContinent
- Woman’s Alliance

**Memorials**

- Les Garry
  - Given by Rich Garry
- Les Garry
  - Given by Kevin Garry

**In-Kind by Individuals**

- Joleen Peterson
- Sharon Zylstra
- Anne Pierce
- Helen McGuire
- Beth O’Toole
- Bob & Gail Carlson
- Floyd Anderson
- Lorraine Steensland
- Dave Johnson
- Patty Matson
- Linda Hallstrom
- LaVerle Stevens
- Betty Cook
- Bevdyn Bosler
- Eleanor Burman
- George & Sue Fisher
- Del Duncan

**In-Kind by Organization**

- Elliott & Anderson Floor Covering
- Ahrendt Home Improvement
- Venture Club of Sioux Falls
- Eastman Appliance
- Hope Circle-Beaver Valley Lutheran Church
- St. Vincent de Paul
- West Prairie Lutheran Church
- Grace Lutheran WELCA
- Laureate Lambda
- Holy Cross WELCA
- First United Methodist Church
- Alpha Delta Kappa Education Sorority
- Augustana College Students
- Augustana Lutheran Church
- Minnehaha Sertoma Club
- Sioux Falls Paint & Glass
- Iowa Paint & Glass

**Wish List**

- **Kitchen Items**
  - Fresh vegetables & fruit
  - Individually wrapped snacks
  - Juice & cold drinks
  - Hamburger
  - Packaged meal mixes
  - Sharp knives

- **Housewares**
  - Washcloths
  - First Aid Kits

- **Special Needs**
  - Storm windows & screens
  - Small fire extinguisher
  - Garden hose

- **Office Needs**
  - Postage Stamps
  - Colored copy paper
  - 7” envelopes
  - Toner for Canon copier
  - 4-drawer filing cabinet
  - Computer address labels

- **Gift Certificates**
  - House one family ($30)
  - Grocery stores
  - Walmart
  - Office Max
  - Phone cards
  - Taxi Cabs

- **Children’s Connection**
  - One piece kitchen play set
  - Play dishes
  - Birthday gifts for children 8-12
  - Polaroid camera

- **Furnishings**
  - Dehumidifier
  - Picnic table

Your gifts help to provide a dignified, comfortable place for our guests. Thank you for your generosity. If you would rather we buy the item, please mail a check to Family Connection, designated for “Wish List” item of your choice.

Consider making a memorial donation

When you wish to make a charitable donation in a loved one’s memory, please remember the Family Connection House.
In Loving Memory...

Our now deceased uncle, Les Garry, was a very special person in all of our lives. He always had a very positive attitude and was always willing to share of himself in any way that he could.

Les was always involved in serving his family and community. The work that he did with inmates at the South Dakota Penitentiary was of tremendous value to those that he assisted and was a source of great pride to him and to all of us who knew him, loved him and watched him help others.

Les spent hours as a volunteer at the state penitentiary before his death. We can only imagine that he brought a great deal of comfort to people in difficult circumstances - - and knowing Les, a bit of humor too!

We’re very happy to make a contribution to the Family Connection Hospitality House in memory of uncle Les. It serves to remind us of the wonderful things that Les did for our family and for the greater Sioux Falls Community. We are grateful for all that he did for all of us and hope that our contribution reflects this gratitude and our love for uncle Les.

Good luck with your mission.

Sincerely,

Steve Garry
Rich Garry
Kevin Garry

Heart Prints

Whatever our hands touch-
We leave fingerprints!
On walls, on furniture,
On doorknobs, dishes, books.
There’s no escape.
As we touch we leave our identity.

Oh God, wherever I go today
Help me leave heartprints!
Heartprints of compassion
Of understanding and love.

Heartprints of kindness
And genuine concern.
May my heart touch a lonely neighbor
Or a runaway daughter
Or an anxious mother
Or perhaps an aged grandfather.

Lord, send me out today
To leave heartprints.
And if someone should say,
"I felt your touch,"
May that one sense YOUR LOVE
Touching through ME.

— Author Unknown

My Tax Deductible Gift:

Name: 
Address: Street City State Zip
Gift Enclosed: $ I will pledge: $

Please return this pledge card or place your donation in the envelope provided.

Thank you!

If there is an error in your mailing label or if you know of someone who would like our newsletter, please let us know!

Don't forget this Family Connection Fundraiser on July 20th!

Guest Speaker

• We have speakers available for church or civic group meetings,
• We have a videotaped walk-through of the Hospitality House,
• We have printed material about Family Connection and our programs available to the public,
• We invite your group to hold your meeting or gathering at the Family Connection Hospitality House. Contact Dorothy at 605-357-0777

Please check the appropriate boxes for more information:

☒ I would like information about the Angel Program
☒ I would like a speaker for our group or service club
☒ I am interested in touring the house
☒ I am interested in sharing my talents with Family Connection
connecting points

Helping families stay together while they are apart.

Check Us Out on the Internet! Our e-mail Address is:
http://inst.augie.edu/church/FamilyConnection/

"Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing, many have entertained angels unawares" Hebrews 13:2

Family Connection
PO Box 100
Sioux Falls, SD 57101

“Helping families stay together while they are apart.”

Saturday, June 20th
Falls Park
Sioux Falls

Registration- 7:15am
Walk- 8:15am
Run- 8:30am

Registration inside-call
357-0777 for more information

Mark date on calendar!