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FPSL HAPPENINGS

Official Newsletter of Family Promise Salt Lake



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Rev. Brian Diggs

As a clergy person in the United Methodist Church, I have had the privilege and honor to officiate numerous weddings. If I am honest, my wedding homily/sermon is always the same. Sure, the names and places change, and I try to work in a few personal stories about the couple, but the message is always about... love.

I tell gathered friends and family how beautiful the bride is and how the groom is as handsome as I have ever seen him. I talk about the exquisite decorations and the celebration that will follow the service. But then, I set the hook. I tell them that the romantic love floating in the air, so palpable you can taste it, is not the kind of love we should focus on long-term. In my opinion, love is not simply an emotion we feel, it is a decision we make. The traditional wedding language is not "do you love," it is "will you love" your spouse. And for most, that kind of love, while not always easy, is life-giving and lasting.

Here at Family Promise Salt Lake our decision to serve the most vulnerable of families is an expression of that kind of love. It is the decision we make when the staff show up for work. It is the decision our volunteers make when they prepare a room, cook a meal or function as sleepover hosts in one of our twelve hosting shelters. In short, it is the most powerful kind of love that humanity can display.

As I approach the one-year mark as Executive Director of FPSL, and during this Valentine season of love, I am excited to continue living out the kind of love that changes the lives of families here in the Salt Lake Valley and celebrate our connection to the 200+ Family Promise Affiliates across the country who are also doing the same.

Thank you so much for your continued support and participation!



IN THIS ISSUE:

Director's Desk

Page 1

Volunteer Spotlight

Page 2

Meet The Board

Page 2

Program News

Page 3

Finally Home!

Page 3

Connect With Us

Page 4





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Meet John Stewart

These days it would be impossible to effectively operate an organization like FPSL without information technology, or “IT”. FPSL was lucky to be approached by Mr. John Stewart! John has been working in the IT field for 30 years. During that time, he has engaged many non-profits with his passion to help people in need. John has graciously offered his much-needed services to the staff at FPSL donating computers and his valuable time to help ensure the organization’s success.



Said Mr. Stewart, “My interest in Family Promise is pretty easy to explain. No family, child, or person should be homeless. FPSL’s mission speaks strongly to me as I experienced some hard times in my childhood and now that I am in a position to give back, I do so as much as possible.”

Since FPSL began serving families in 1995, volunteers have been the heart of the organization. Thank you, John, and the countless others who have volunteered their time and talents to make a difference right here in the Salt Lake Valley!



Thank You

Thank You



MEET FPSL BOARD MEMBER: Rocky Cox

Sometimes things just happen for a reason,” said FPSL board member Rocky Cox. A member at Wasatch Presbyterian Church, Rocky would often roll his grill down to the church to cook hamburgers and hotdogs for the guests each time his church hosted FPSL families.

“I always wondered if there was more that I could do? And then it happened, I was asked to join the FPSL board of directors,” said Cox. Since joining the

board, Rocky has been an integral part of revitalizing the organization during the Covid-19 pandemic. He has volunteered to help assist staff when needed, he is a part of the newly formed FPSL Fundraising Committee, and frequently stops by the FPSL offices to offer words of encouragement.



Across the country, the backbone of Family Promise affiliates is the unique shelter model known as “the rotation.” Since 1995 churches across the Salt Lake Valley have served as hosting sites who are in the “rotation.” Currently we have 12 hosting congregations. Each hosting congregation takes a turn welcoming Family Promise guests for 1-2 weeks at a time. Besides offering their buildings as shelter, these faith-based but non-proselytizing communities supply trained volunteers who journey alongside our guests in the program. “Supporting congregations” add additional volunteers and help to the hosting congregations. This unique model creates a holistic and community-based response to family homelessness. Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic placed this model on pause for most Family Promise affiliates across the country including FPSL.

FPSL Board of Directors and Staff are considering re-starting the “rotation” once the pandemic becomes more manageable. Working with FPSL Volunteer Program Coordinators Bill Woods and Becky Buxton, FPSL Executive Director Brian Diggs is in the process of meeting with each hosting congregation to explore how to best move forward serving future guests in the program and to vision what FPSL will look like long after the pandemic.

Stayed tuned!

FINALLY HOME!!



Key to the mission of FPSL is placing families into sustainable housing. Recent increases in the number of homeless families across the nation has continued to concern government entities and social service agencies. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, children experiencing homelessness are at a greater risk of emotional and behavioral problems, experiencing serious health problems, and are more likely to drop out of school. FPSL is excited to help place another family into housing as a response to this growing crisis.



Meet Oscar, Hurtabo, and their children. Tragically, Oscar and Hurtabo lost their oldest son last year and needed a place to stay. Thanks to the generosity of numerous funders, FPSL was able to help offer the financial assistance needed to get them into permanent housing. But FPSL’s impact does not stop there.

Did you know that FPSL case managers continue to work with guests for up to two years after graduation from one of our programs? People like Oscar and Hurtabo will continue to receive support and guidance from FPSL in the After Care Program ensuring a lasting and loving environment for themselves and their children.





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