

FINDING HOPE FOR TOMORROW



VOICES OF HOPE NEWSLETTER

REBUILDING A LIFE

Like many residents who find their way to Paxton Ministries, Brad is no stranger to adversity. At just 10 years old, he lost his mother in a tragic accident. Less than a year later, his father remarried, blending two families under one roof. “For two years it was like walking on eggshells,” Brad recalls. His father was a hard worker, and expected the same from each of his sons, teaching Brad and his brothers to build and maintain their home. “We’d spend our summers installing insulation and doing other chores on the lengthy checklists he’d leave for us every morning,” Brad explains. By 14, Brad got his first job outside the house, and by the time he could drive, he was working multiple after-school jobs seven days a week.

That work ethic carried Brad through college, where he earned a criminal justice degree while working security. He dreamed of becoming a police officer, but when his wife began a third-shift nursing job, Brad settled for a stable day job to support their growing family. He didn’t love the job, but he cherished his wife and the life they were building together. For years, Brad put his ambitions aside for his family. But before their three sons reached their teens, his marriage began to unravel, and Brad started experiencing paranoia and other mental health symptoms.

In spite of these struggles, Brad was determined to move forward. During his divorce in late 2019, he purchased a townhouse and

began working as a security officer. But after reporting an incident involving an intoxicated coworker, Brad was unexpectedly laid off. “That really messed me up, because I had done the right thing,” he explains. Brad’s mental health rapidly deteriorated. “I was hearing voices, struggling with paranoia, and then I couldn’t find another job, because COVID hit.” What followed was the darkest season of Brad’s life: multiple hospitalizations, two stays at Bethesda Mission, and thoughts of ending his life. **“I prayed every day that God would take me to heaven.”**

After a suicide attempt, Brad was admitted to an extended acute unit where doctors finally stabilized him on the right medication. From there, he entered a residential program and got connected with a local church. With support from his family, mental health providers, and his new faith community, Brad began rebuilding his life—until his program announced it was closing. “I knew it wouldn’t be good for me to live alone,” Brad says. Thankfully, Brad’s case manager introduced him to Paxton’s Lodge program, which offered the stability and support he needed.

At Boas Street Lodge, Brad found more than housing—he found the friendship, structure, and accountability he needed to thrive. He also discovered Paxton Solutions, where he started working part-time on a cleaning crew. “I had wanted to get back to work for some time, but everyone in my support team was discouraging me from jumping in too quickly,” Brad explains. Paxton Solutions provided Brad with a gradual path back to employment in a highly supportive environment. It wasn’t long before he was promoted to a leadership role. “I was so thankful to get a job with Paxton Solutions,” says Brad. “I love this company. It’s not easy work, but the management is great. My coworkers are awesome, and it’s been especially good to work under Grace; she’s fantastic at what she does.”

Today, Brad is thriving. With a stable home at Boas Street Lodge and meaningful work at Paxton Solutions, Brad is able to focus on the things that matter most to him in life: his faith, his family, and his health. “The Lodge has been an amazing blessing to me,” Brad says. **“To see where Jesus has taken me—from the depths of despair—and how He’s provided for me through my church, my job, and the friends I’ve gained through Paxton... it gives me hope.”**



Brad (right) relaxing at home with one of his housemates. “The Lodge has helped me make some really good new friends,” he says.



...THEREFORE WE HAVE HOPE

The end of 2025 and the beginning of 2026 have been, in many ways, a heavy season at Paxton. Over the past several months, we have said goodbye to many residents—some moving on from Paxton Ministries and others passing from this earth. Members of our staff have faced significant personal hardships, and we have navigated staffing challenges through the holiday season. We have also felt the impact of delayed government funding and witnessed the divisiveness and hatred in our broader culture seeping into so much of what surrounds us. Even the gray, gloomy days common at the start of the year feel more pronounced. Together, we continue to seek God and mourn these realities that can feel overwhelming.

“But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

The book of Lamentations has long been one of my favorites—not because I enjoy the anguish it expresses, but because of what happens in the midst of it: a clear reminder of the goodness and faithfulness of God. While there has been much to discourage us recently, we also have much to celebrate. Over the past year, Paxton has continued to grow, including the addition of a new Director of Program Services who is helping us expand our work in new and meaningful ways, rooted in our Strategic Plan. Increased engagement has led more people to ask how they can be part of what God is doing at Paxton and how this work might take shape in new places.

Dear friends, “Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven” as we continue to partner together to share Christ-like love with our community.

In 2026, Paxton Ministries marks 45 years of serving adults in need—a powerful reminder of God’s enduring faithfulness. We have hope for tomorrow.

David M. Zilka
Chief Executive Officer

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF HOPE FOR TOMORROW

This year, we mark Paxton’s 45th anniversary! It’s an exciting time to celebrate the legacy of those who have gone before us—including the bold people of faith who prayed Paxton into existence—and to give thanks for the way God continues to use Paxton Ministries to inspire hope and transform lives each and every day.



Whether you’re a current or former volunteer, donor, board member, prayer partner, staff member, resident, or family member, **you’re part of this amazing story**, and we invite you to join us in giving thanks for God’s faithfulness and reflecting on the hope that Paxton has inspired in each of our lives. Stay tuned for opportunities to celebrate with us and share this legacy of hope!



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We would be honored to hear your story of how you’ve experienced hope and transformation through Paxton Ministries. Please email us at development@paxtonmin.org, or call **717.236.5508** and ask to speak with a member of the development team.



MEET GRACE PETERS

Paxton's First Director of Program Services

"Paxton combines a population I love, my faith, and my degree, so how could I not want to work here?!" - Grace Peters

This past summer, Paxton Ministries hired our first Director of Program Services, Grace Peters. In addition to overseeing Community Living, Paxton Place Apartments, and Paxton Solutions, this exciting new position advances two goals from Paxton's strategic plan: supporting residents who want to move toward independent living and growing Paxton Solutions into a thriving supportive employer.

As a registered and licensed Occupational Therapist who previously interned at Paxton Street Home while pursuing her master's degree at Messiah University, Grace was thrilled to return to our community in this new capacity. "Paxton combines a population I love, my faith, and my degree, so how could I not want to work here?!" she recently exclaimed. **"I think once you get a taste of what Paxton Ministries is, you never want to leave it!"**

Grace can already see how God is using her training to benefit residents across Paxton's housing programs. "Occupational Therapy is all about seeing people holistically and empowering them to become more independent in the daily occupations that are important to them," she explains. This perspective informs every aspect of Grace's work, allowing her to meet people where they are and identify small changes that can help them take the next step towards independence.

Grace is particularly enthusiastic about expanding and strengthening Paxton Solutions. "I'm passionate about creating pathways to employment," she explains. "It's so rewarding to see the difference it can make in someone's life when they're able to maintain a dignified occupation that they enjoy." In the same way that Grace seeks out the strengths of each individual she serves, she's been quick to recognize the untapped potential of Paxton Solutions. As a result of her capable leadership, the company is already growing. In addition to securing new contracts for the janitorial side of the business, Grace is energetically pursuing

creative new ventures that will enable Paxton Solutions to provide supported employment to residents with a broader range of interests and abilities.

"I'm just so thankful for Paxton, and for the opportunity God's given me to step into this role," says Grace with a smile. "I feel like this is exactly what I was placed on this earth to do, and I go to sleep every night knowing I've made a difference."



JOIN OUR TEAM!

"Once you get a taste of what Paxton Ministries is, you never want to leave it!"

If you're like Grace and you want to go to sleep every night knowing you've made a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need, we're hiring! Join our friendly, dynamic team and grow with us as we serve others with the love of Christ.

Visit www.paxtonmin.org/careers to view open positions & apply!

WANT TO HONOR YOUR LOVED ONE? Give the Gift of HOPE

By honoring and remembering a loved one through a gift to Paxton Ministries, our donors are making a meaningful difference in the lives of Paxton's residents. **We are deeply moved** by the many people who donated in honor or in memory of someone in 2025, and for the way these gifts are inspiring hope in our community. Please visit our website to see a full list those who were honored and remembered by loved ones this year.



SAVE THE DATE: 2026 Highmark Walk



Saturday, May 16, 2026

Spring is approaching and that means it's time to pull out our walking shoes!

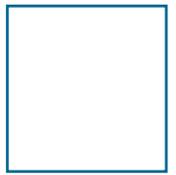
Last year we raised over \$31,000 to care for residents in need, making this the largest single fundraising event of our fiscal year. We need your help to continue building on this success. Will you join us in raising awareness and financial support for our ministry by forming or joining a team and inviting family and friends to do the same?

Check our website or follow Paxton's Facebook & Instagram pages for updates and information about registering for this year's walk.



2001 Paxton Street
Harrisburg, PA 17111

717-236-5508 | www.paxtonmin.org



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS AT PAXTON



Thank you for helping us to give the gift of "Home Sweet Home" to Paxton residents this Christmas! Everyone appreciated their individual gifts, as well as their new "Paxton VIP" swag (their choice of sweatpants or a long-sleeved t-shirt), and our entire community was blessed by the special decorations, events, and goodies provided by our wonderful volunteers and donors. Your time and generosity helped to ensure that Paxton was festive and bright as we celebrated Christ's birth!

We want to give a special thanks to those who responded to our request for donations to Paxton's Resident Celebrations fund, which enables us to provide special holiday meals and activities throughout the year, including our upcoming Valentine's banquet, summer picnics, and a special birthday celebration for each individual resident. Thank you for your generosity!