

FINDING HOPE FOR TOMORROW



Fall 2026

VOICES OF HOPE NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

45 years ago, something incredible happened. Following the foreclosure of a deplorably run intermediate care facility known as "Swatara Village," dozens of disabled and impoverished adults faced imminent homelessness. Unbeknownst to these individuals, a small group of local Christians were monitoring their plight. Guided by the prophetic call to share food and shelter with the "helpless, poor, and destitute" (Isaiah 58:7), this bold group of believers stepped out in faith to purchase and restore the aging three-story brick building on Paxton Street. They envisioned a Christian "home for the needy," where "love and caring [was] the way of life, where dignity and self-worth [were] recognized in every individual." Although their vision was clear, their path was not, as they lacked the resources necessary to meet the demands before them. All they had was their earnest faith and the conviction that God was calling them to action.

Out of their faithful response, something miraculous emerged. Inspired by the opportunity to live out their values and to help those in need, people came out of the woodwork to join in the effort. Individuals, couples, families, Sunday school classes, small groups, and entire congregations gave what they could. Some came for a day or a weekend; others moved their entire families into the building and committed to full-time voluntary service. Countless others provided financial support, sustaining the bold endeavor against all odds. Everyone brought hearts eager to follow the way of Jesus, and each one helped to carry the ministry forward, day by day, month by month, year by year.

What emerged from these efforts wasn't simply a refurbished home for 85 adults in need. What emerged was a powerful—and ongoing—witness to the transformational impact of everyday people embodying the love of Christ. **In this space, where the holy meets the ordinary, lives are changed and hope is restored, not merely for Paxton's residents, but for everyone.** As proclaimed in a favorite hymn of our founders, Paxton Ministries has become a place where God's great faithfulness is on display, where mercies are new every morning, and where all of us can find "strength for today and **bright hope for tomorrow.**"

As we celebrate our 45th anniversary, we honor this legacy by sharing a glimpse into just a few of the lives touched by Paxton Ministries. As you read these testimonials, may you also be encouraged and filled with hope.



David M. Zilka, *Chief Executive Officer*



"I'm not by myself. I have friends now, and I'm living a healthier lifestyle."

– Diane W, *current resident*



"It saved my life, moving here."

– Bob C, *current resident*



"Coming here... my mind came back to me. I got my life back."

– Larry S, *current resident*

FINDING HOPE FOR MY CLIENT

Witnessing a Transformation

I've known "Pete" for 15 years and have been directly providing case management for the past 7 years. Prior to coming to Paxton, Pete was struggling to live independently. He routinely ended up in the inpatient psychiatric unit due to lack of structure, support, and difficulty taking much-needed medications consistently. He typically was not out of the hospital for more than a couple months at a time and often was re-admitted only days and sometimes hours after being discharged. He also had difficulty maintaining stable housing, routinely being evicted in less than a year due to damaging the property or being too disruptive to his neighbors.

That ALL changed when he came to Paxton Street Home. He hasn't needed a psychiatric admission in over 2.5 years. He's formed friendships with other residents, which I wouldn't have thought possible in the past. He's also developed trusting relationships with all his caregivers there. He's settled into healthier routines, and he's engaging life more fully.

The difference is astonishing, and something I never would have imagined prior to his time at Paxton.

Even when he's had difficult moments while living at Paxton, **I've been blown away by the genuine compassion and care that everyone has provided him.** The staff don't allow his worst moments to define him, and they always respond to his needs with the care and concern of a family member.

Paxton Street Home has changed Pete's life, and witnessing his transformation will always be one of the greatest honors of my career. I have cared about him like a member of my own family and can rest easy knowing that when I drop him off at HOME, he's safe, respected, and cared for by a group of people who feel the same way.

– Joe G, Community Social Worker



Glimpses of HOPE



"Paxton is truly a beautiful and special place. Since volunteering at Paxton I've seen many of our residents' lives changed by the love and care provided to them. I have seen God work by using the smallest act of kindness to make a difference. What a joy to serve at Paxton!"

– Lauree F, Volunteer Receptionist



"Paxton has been a saving grace for me in the years that I've been here... I've seen how God's grace and mercy are so real, and so available when we make ourselves willing to receive these gifts in order to pour them out into the lives of others."

– Ray V, current staff



"I see miracles at Paxton... Beautiful things like love and innocence and caring about other people."

– Robbie C, current resident

"For a long time, Paxton's motto has been 'Housing, Help, and Healing in the name of Christ.' I think that happens in the lives of both residents and staff... We share with one another, encourage one another, and learn from one another."

– Stephanie V, current resident



"I am humbled and honored to serve the residents of Paxton by leading a monthly Prayer & Share Time. It is a delight to see the presence of God in the room as the residents inspire and encourage one another by singing, reading scriptures, and lifting one another up in prayer."

– Tenna H, former staff and current volunteer



To view more testimonials and to share how Paxton has inspired hope in your life, please visit our website!



How Crossing Paths with Paxton CHANGED OUR LIVES

Glenn and I both grew up in tight-knit Christian community, but neither of us ever quite fit in. Our families were both a little rough around the edges, and we each had complicated upbringings.

We were married in December 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, and our first year of marriage was not an easy one. As we continued to struggle to find acceptance within the community we had grown up in, we also wrestled with questions of truth, purpose, and meaning.

During a particularly difficult period, we learned about Paxton Ministries, and, in January 2023, we packed up all of our belongings and relocated to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to begin a term of voluntary service. When we arrived at Paxton Street Home, Dustin Sharbono welcomed us and showed us to our one-room apartment on the first-floor hallway. Though the space didn't offer much in the way of square footage or privacy, it gave us something far more important: a new beginning.

Over the next several months, we came to realize just how broken, confused, and disillusioned we had become. Christianity had left a sour taste in our mouths, and we shied away from anything that felt "religious." **But at Paxton, we encountered a side of Christianity we had never truly experienced before.**

We met genuine people who genuinely cared. People who didn't judge us but loved us. People who served "the least of these" not because it paid well or brought recognition, but because they truly believed every person mattered. Each workday began with prayer and a staff devotion. Staff meetings opened and closed in prayer. When residents struggled with addiction, mental illness, or other heavy burdens, the response wasn't simply to offer easy answers—it was to pray with them and walk alongside them.

Little by little, our own lives began to change.

For the first time in years, life felt hopeful again.

I had struggled with chronic migraines and depression for years. I spent nearly three days every week in bed and found very little joy in life. My last migraine happened the week before we moved to Paxton Ministries, and they have not returned since. My husband had spent years believing he was insignificant and had

developed incredibly low self-esteem. Over the months we spent at Paxton, I watched him become more confident, compassionate, and secure in who God had created him to be. God was quietly at work in both of us, even before we fully recognized it.

Our role at Paxton was to speak life into people who had been beaten down by the world and to remind them that they mattered. In the process, God used those same truths to transform us. **As we encouraged others to believe they had value, we slowly began to believe it ourselves.**

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Last spring, after two life-changing years at Paxton, we sensed God leading us into a new chapter at a farm in Tennessee. Although we are no longer serving at Paxton Ministries, the impact it had on our lives continues today. The ministry changed the trajectory of our marriage, our faith, and our future in ways we could never have imagined.

Its influence meant so much to us that when we learned we were expecting our son—after praying for a child for five years—both Glenn and I independently thought of the name Paxton without ever mentioning it to each other. **We named him Paxton Samuel Mow in honor of the place God used to put our lives on a new path.** His middle name, Samuel, reflects our desire to raise him to be a man who faithfully follows God.

We will always be grateful that our paths crossed with Paxton Ministries. What began as an unexpected detour became one of the greatest blessings of our lives.

– Elsa & Glenn Mow, former staff





JOIN OUR TEAM!

"Paxton has inspired hope in my life by allowing me to find God in a workplace environment.

Before working here I never could see how God truly touched & shined his light on people everyday. Just being at this place volunteering for a couple hours you can feel God's power."

– Nateur Dennis, Maintenance Assistant/
Weekend Team Leader



Ready to find out how God can use you to change people's lives? Join our dedicated team and grow with us as we together become the hands and feet of Christ in a hurting world.

paxtonmin.org/careers

2001 Paxton Street
Harrisburg, PA 17111

717-236-5508 | www.paxtonmin.org

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF CELEBRATING & GIVING

Bringing HOPE into focus

A Night of
Celebration to
Benefit the Mission
of Paxton Ministries

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2026

5:30PM Reception

6:15PM Dinner

The Willows at Ashcombe Mansion
1100 Grantham Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

We warmly invite you to join us for a special evening celebrating 45 years of service and impact. As a friend of our organization, we would be honored to have you join us for this meaningful event.

Together, we will celebrate God's faithfulness, hear inspiring stories of transformed lives, and raise critical funds to expand our mission of providing affordable housing and supportive services to adults living with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and those experiencing poverty.

Your presence and support mean so much to us, and we look forward to celebrating this milestone with you. Please come prepared to give generously as we continue this important work together.

Details and tickets available at
Paxtonmin.org/45years
or scan the QR code.

