



## PEACE HOUSE COMMUNITY

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# WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER



## Mission:

Peace House Community (PHC) nourishes its members' bodies and souls by providing a safe space for everyone. PHC enriches the lives of its members, volunteers and students by offering a place to belong for everyone who comes through its doors.

## COMMUNITY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – MEET MIKEY



Mr. Ivanovich goes by several names. Sometimes he's Mikey. Sometimes he's Shorty. Sometimes he's White Shorty, to separate him from the two Black Shortys who come to Peace House Community. But that doesn't help because we have two White Shortys who come to PHC. Whatever you call him, he's always ready to talk.

Mikey's been around for a long time. He visited the original Peace House, first stopping in about 20 years ago, but he didn't always feel at home there. "I went to the old one years ago, but I wasn't really steady. I remember Sister Rose and all them." Mikey says he became a regular presence at PHC when the new building opened in 2013 and the atmosphere changed. "The old one was ... this one's more orderly. The place is more 'upkept', you know. We have younger volunteers who are more hip to drug use and holding up the bathrooms, you know. It's more orderly. The old one was kind of off the chain."

"Off the chain" can refer to anything that is out of control or unpredictable, like a dog that has gotten off its chain and escaped from its owner. Life on the streets is usually off the chain, with its own level of chaos. Mikey says PHC fills a huge need in the community by providing a safe space. "That means a lot to the people who, especially, live outside, which is when people are hurting. That's what this place was originally designed for. Being able to wash your face sometimes. We're respectful, getting in and out of the bathroom at the right time. I can come in and out, get what I need quickly, and leave if I need to. Fresh coffee's available, things of that nature."

After living through homelessness, Covid, the George Floyd riots, and more, Mikey has mixed feelings about what lies ahead. He thinks things are headed in the right direction overall, even if he doesn't benefit from it. "I'm hopeful for the future of the people, but not so much myself, which is satisfactory that there will be a future for the younger generation. For myself, not so much. It is what it is."

Despite his ambivalence, Mikey keeps a positive attitude much of the time, and he has a message for PHC supporters, especially those who don't make it to the building to see what their support accomplishes. "They're the ones I want to say thank-you to, for their time and comfortability. I like to thank the source, 'cause they're rarely seen for who they are. I'd like to go to the source and tell them thank-you sometime. If I never meet you, thank-you. I'm grateful. That's about it."

# VOLUNTEERS ARE LOVE IN MOTION



I am most grateful to be a volunteer at PHC because of the opportunity to listen to people whose lives are very different from my own. I am often amazed by their courage, hope, sense of humor, creativity and generosity of spirit. It is genuinely my favorite day of the week.

**-Mary, Thursday volunteer**

I have learned so much from all the times we've spent time with all the community members. I really enjoy one on ones with folks, be it hand massages, or simply chatting with members. I like to think that I'm a good listener, and I don't mind offering some encouraging words from time to time. Sometimes I just listen to anyone who would like to chat; all in all, I'm so glad to be a community member, and look forward to many more days!

**-Dennie, Monday volunteer**

Art activity and hand massages have been an integral part of my volunteering - coming at them both from two "ends" of my abilities/efforts/intentions. In one way I give, in the other I receive.

I give: As a retired art teacher/artist I continue to search for ways to ignite creativity in those who pass through PHC doors. I receive: Hand massages take me away from teaching to listening. My biggest gain and personal growth from being a PHC volunteer is the privilege of listening. Hand massages allow me to hear whatever my "guest" is willing to share. It reinforces my belief in the Native saying, Mitakuye Oyasin, "We are all related."

**-Kathleen, Wednesday volunteer**

I provide chair massage to Peace House because I believe everyone deserves a caring touch. It is scientifically proven that physical touch is something that is necessary for everyone. And yet, it is something that many of us lack. The reason I volunteer at Peace House is because of the community. Here I feel part of the community. I not only provide a service, but I also receive things like hearing stories from a different perspective, sharing laughter or a tear with another, gratitude, and friendship. Thank you for letting me be a part of the community at Peace House.

**-Ann, Massage Therapist, Thursday volunteer**

I am passionate about people having a safe place to sleep and call home. I have worked with Minnesota housing and homeless programs for 30 years. Peace House Community is the place that I suggest people visit for community.

**- Monica Nilsson, Board of Directors**

I do my best to improve transportation options for the Peace House Community by maintaining and repairing members' bicycles. I cannot fix everything because often a missing part is needed, but we do have the most common maintenance supplies, and I'm happy to work on anything that needs it!

**Daniel, "The Bike Man"**

There's no one-size fits all here. A haircut can be a fresh start or a return to a desired state, down to the scalp or just a trim. It can mark the change of season, a job interview, attendance at a happy event, mourning a death, or simply a chance to doze. Regular, first-timer or long-time-no-seer—all welcome, as is the conversation. Who wouldn't love cutting hair and witnessing people becoming more like they envision? Trim as needed.

**-Charlie, Wednesday volunteer**

I'm a singer and a songwriter. I perform frequently around town, either as a solo artist, or with my band. Once a month, though, I have the opportunity to come and sing and play guitar over the lunch hour at Peace House. I'm a believer in music as a vehicle for connection, both to other people, and to our own hearts, and singing at Peace House has been a meaningful space to offer my songs. My hope is to serve, to be part of the room. Thanks for having me, Peace House!

**-Sarah, Singer, Musician, Tuesday volunteer**

I like contributing to Peace House in fun ways and I find baking is one of them. I like the smell of freshly baked cookies. It relaxes me and brings comfort as well. Seeing others enjoy what I have made brings me joy. The oatmeal recipe I use is big enough so I can bring cookies to friends and neighbors. It takes only two or three cookies to cheer up one who may be having difficulties in his or her life. I like to be spontaneous and surprise others.

**-Joanne, Tuesday volunteer**

I began to wonder what might help lift the spirits of the Peace House Community women. Most women like to feel and look pretty. The nail polish colors, clear to black, and everything in between, attracted both women and men. I found that the 30-45 minute one-on-one contact brought with it mutual respect, friendship, and return "appointments." I was surprised about the interest the Community men had in manicures. In fact, they usually outnumbered the women each week. It was heartwarming to realize the effect of holding another's hand.

**-Jane, Wednesday volunteer**

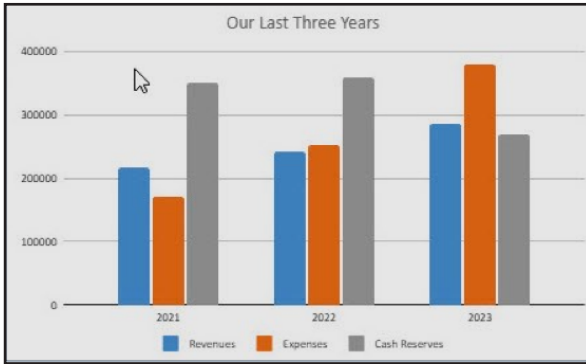
I began at Peace House several years ago and have been coming most Tuesdays. One day years ago another Tuesday volunteer, Rodney Olsen, brought ice cream to celebrate his birthday. It was a big hit!

That inspired me to bring ice cream once a month to celebrate birthdays for each month. I have been doing so for several years now. Many community members call me "ice cream." I have threatened to quit unless they call me Jeff! A running joke is that they can request any flavor they want. But I will always bring vanilla and chocolate. I am planning on continuing this monthly ice cream day.

**-Jeff - The ice Cream Guy, Tuesday volunteer**

# Thank you

## FOR YOUR SUPPORT



We are often asked, “What is Peace House Community’s biggest need?” The two answers are always supporters who will share their time, and supporters who will share their resources. You can hear from those who share their time in the “Volunteers are Love in Motion” section. This section outlines why we need additional resources, especially money. As this graph shows, the increases in our expenses have drastically outpaced our revenue increases, so that we used \$100,000 of PHC’s financial reserves in 2023. We knew at the start of 2023 that this was a possibility, and we know that we may have to use another \$100,000 during 2024. As the chart shows, we can afford this level of spending this year and next, but if we do not increase our revenue, PHC will be in dire financial straits in less than three years.

We are always thankful for everyone who shares their resources with our community. At PHC, everything happens because of your support. While we hope you are able to increase your support, we know this is not always possible. If you know others who would value PHC’s ministry and mission, would you be able to introduce them to our work?

There are many ways you might be able to increase your support that may not have occurred to you. This include:

- Direct disbursements from retirement accounts
- Naming PHC as a beneficiary on insurance policies
- Naming PHC in your will
- Donating stocks or other investments to PHC
- Host a fundraising event on behalf of PHC

If you would like information on any of these options, please feel free to get in touch with us at [contact@peacehousecommunity.org](mailto:contact@peacehousecommunity.org) or at 612-870-7263.

Thank-you again for all the support you have given PHC! You are making a huge difference in our community’s life!

## Peace House Community offers heartfelt thanks to our supporters and partners who have so willingly shared in our ministry last year:

We are sorry if we missed your name. Please know that we are so thankful you are part of our community.

Adam and Victoria Olson  
Adele Della-Torre and Spencer Kubo  
Allison Kerner  
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## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Welcome to 2024! On behalf of Peace House Community and its members, volunteers, and staff, we wish you a peaceful year. We also want to thank you for getting us through 2023. Well, we didn't just get through it; in some ways we thrived.

Way back in the second half of 2022, PHC's Board of Directors and I had to decide how much it would cost to operate PHC well. At the time we were paying our staff minimum wage, which is not a livable wage, meaning many quality people simply couldn't afford to work for us. We also had to decide how many staff we needed to welcome the increasing number of community members who were coming through the doors. We decided to raise the salaries and increase the staff, so that we are in a much better position now to achieve PHC's mission and vision.

At the same time, we refocused on our volunteers, knowing that they are essential to making PHC the warm and inviting space that Sister Rose intended when she founded PHC. I am pleased to say that, not only are many of our long-term volunteers (those who have been coming here for decades) are still here, but we have diversified our services with the skills of our new volunteers. Twice a month our community members enjoy live music during lunch. Several community members are honing their wood carving skills on Tuesday mornings. Once a month a writers group meets in our library to develop their literary skills.

As always, I want to and need to thank you for making all of this possible. Your support provides everything from the packets of salt and pepper right up to our corporate insurance. You ensure that PHC is a safe, warm, and welcoming space year-round. Whether you give financially, pray for us, or repost our social media blurbs, you continue to make PHC a place to belong for everyone.