

LYDIA'S HOUSE // ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

Our mission is to provide safe, stable and supportive housing to women and children in transition and crisis

VISION

Our vision is to be a demonstration plot of God's beloved community, a home where people from all walks of life can help one another grow toward wholeness



LYDIA'S HOUSE

August 2016

Dear Friends,

It's been a long journey to the mailing of this document, our first published annual report. Officially, it's a report of our financials from 2015. If you look to the financial chart on pg. 5 you'll get a snapshot of how much money we brought in and how much money we spent to operate in one year. For our donors, this information is important. We want you to know that we operate with a high level of fiscal responsibility and a commitment to simplicity. Staff that are paid receive stipends, we leverage in-kind donations in every way possible, and we make every dollar go far with a great emphasis on spending our funds to make the lives of poor women and children better.

We hope you'll see more than a financial chart in this report, however, but also a picture into what life has been like since we first approached a room full of friends and strangers in early 2013 and shared our dream to offer a unique home for the poorest and most vulnerable women and children in our region. This is an annual report but it's also an organizational report containing information from since this journey began. To get a better picture of this, reference the timeline on the opposite page.

Finally, this report is a picture of life at Lydia's House for the many people who aren't able to share life with us in the day to day. If you've read our seasonal paper newsletter and monthly e-news, you might notice in this report pictures you've seen before or repeated themes. That's no accident. It's fair to say Lydia's House at just over two operational years has achieved a kind of rhythm. There are move ins and move outs, volunteers in the kitchen cooking and cleaning, celebrations and cakes and blowing out candles, holidays (both typical like Christmas and unique like Groundhog's Day), produce harvested from our garden and left on the counter, outings in our minivan, worship services and prayers shared from our prayer box, former guests dropping in, tearful disappointments, joyful victories, and then it seems to all start over again.

It's this rhythm that we celebrate more than anything. Our dream became a reality: women and children and volunteers are living together as we type. Dinner is cooking, an enthusiastic child will ring the bell at 6 pm and we'll sit down together for a meal. Thank you for your part in this and thanks be to God.

In gratitude and hope,

Mary Ellen and Meredith
Mary Ellen and Meredith,
on behalf of the Lydia's House Community



LYDIA'S HOUSE

PO Box 128808, Cincinnati, OH 45212 STLYDIASHOUSE.ORG



LYDIA'S HOUSE TIMELINE:

JANUARY 2012: Mitchell-Eilerman family and Meridith Owensby begin serious conversations about starting a house of hospitality for homeless women

MAY 2012: The ministry is christened "Lydia's House," referencing the New Testament story of Lydia, a woman who welcomes the apostles into her home after hearing the Good News from Paul (Acts 16:13-15)



JUNE 2012: First newsletter is sent to potential funders and supporters

OCTOBER 2012: 501(c)(3) status is granted by the State of Ohio

JANUARY 2013: Enlarged board of Lydia's House holds its first meeting. Financial goals are established with the hopes of opening the doors of Lydia's House to homeless guests in 2014. Feast of St. Lydia event invites in a larger support base and raises \$17,000 toward the purchase of a home



FEBRUARY 2013: Remainder of funds is raised and Lydia's House makes an offer on 2024 Mills Avenue of \$40,000. The offer is accepted, contingent on zoning approval

APRIL 2013: The trustees of Lydia's House close on 2024 Mills Ave. Renovation documents are submitted to the City of Norwood

to add additional bedrooms and bathrooms, making it appropriate as a community living space



MAY 2013: An ecumenical service is held to bless and dedicate the house; renovations begin

APRIL 2014: The first homeless guest and her son move into Lydia's House

JUNE 2014: Meridith and Mary Ellen welcome first associate volunteer to live with Meridith at 2024 Mills Avenue

AUGUST 2014: The Catholic Archdiocese denies Lydia's House funds because of hosting the Women's Ordination movement; other funds and donations pour in from around the country, allowing Lydia's House to buy a second property, later christened "The Jean Donovan House"

FEBRUARY 2015: After a public letter from the Norwood mayor to police incites citywide fury, Lydia's House partners with local clergy and the Cincinnati leadership of Black Lives Matter to confront the Norwood City Government and ask for greater accountability

MAY 2015: The Jean Donovan House renovation is complete and Lydia's House expands into a second property

JULY 2015: The leadership of Lydia's House discerns that a smaller group of committed volunteers is needed and works to expand the in house associates program as well as recruit consistent weekly volunteers from the larger community

AUGUST 2015: Lydia's House introduces smaller worship services in our living room, and adds additional community rhythms including Thursday night prayer



SEPTEMBER 2015: Lydia's House welcomes two new associates to the main property and Dr. Anne Housholder moves in to the Jean Donovan House with Meridith, bringing our core support community to 5. We welcome four young moms over the course of the fall, bringing our total guest population to 8, including 4 babies

OCTOBER 2015: Lydia's House brings on a house counselor to meet monthly with guests



MARCH 2016: The leadership of Lydia's House engages in a lengthy discernment process about how we support and encourage homeless guests. The result is a three step progression called "Ready-Set-Go"

JULY 2016: Meridith represents Lydia's House at a national conference, "The Wild Goose Festival," speaking on "Hospitality as a Feminist Act"

WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE STABILITY

- Each homeless guest receives a private room and shared bath. Guests are offered housing, clothing, the majority of their food, laundry, transportation and situational child care at no cost to them.
- Guests are required to save for future housing and pay back debt. They can also earn incentive tokens that allow them to "buy" needed items from the house bank.
- Each guest is given a clear trajectory of stay through our ready-set-go program. All guests are given an initial stay of 45 days, and may receive an extension of up to 18 months based on their ability to fully utilize the resources of Lydia's House.
- Consistent rhythms at Lydia's House include nightly dinner, evening "together time" activities, and weekly banking and check ins.



CREATE COMMUNITY

- We offer friendship and community to guests, volunteers, former guests and their families. Many of these people come to our monthly worship services.
- Guests support one another, often sharing resources, child care and advice. Many remain friends even after leaving Lydia's House.
- Guests and former guests are invited on monthly outings, including trips to the Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Coney Island, the Zoo, and local parks.
- Lydia's House is connected to many local resources and we turn to community partners in times of need. Some of our closest partners are Safe Families, New Life Furniture, Women Helping Women and the Zion Food Pantry. We've given our partners financial support through the offerings at our monthly worship services.
- Our community is connected to faith based community movements throughout the region including the Catholic Worker, The Episcopal Diocese Praxis Communities, Xavier University's Institute for Spirituality and Social Justice, and several local churches.



OFFER SUPPORT

- Lydia's House offers resources and guidance for housing and job search, connections to health care and legal services, and supports guests in receiving and retaining government benefits and many other basic services.
- Pastoral care is offered daily from live in volunteers and consistent weekly volunteers. Volunteers also offer 24 hour "house duty" coverage, including weekends and holidays, and are available for service coordination and emergencies.
- Many guests choose to stay in relationship with Lydia's House even after they move out and come to dinner, celebrations and holidays. They also turn to our core volunteers for support. Lydia's House offers former guests the opportunity to apply for financial help through our "Jubilee Fund."



ENCOURAGE WHOLENESS

- Lydia's House serves guests and volunteers healthy, whole meals. Through a partnership with the Norwood Grows Garden Program we serve food from our organic garden when available.
- Our core volunteers pray together regularly and have a consistent practice of praying with and for guests.
- We offer guests and core volunteers a YMCA membership (the Y is only 2 blocks away) and we often exercise together. Guests and volunteers are encouraged to set personal health goals and hold one another accountable.
- Lydia's House requires that all core volunteers and guests receive monthly counseling. Guests meet with our house counselor, Quanita Roberson, and are offered the ability to continue meeting with her after they've transitioned into independent housing.
- Guests are celebrated regularly for milestones and achievements. All guests also receive a 30 day "celebration of belovedness" where they are affirmed as a beloved child of God.



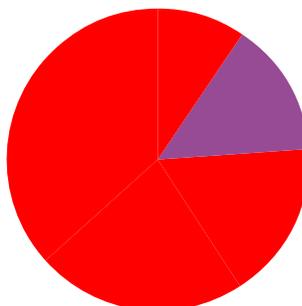


FINANCIALS 2015

INCOME SOURCE 2015

INCOME SOURCE 2015	AMOUNT
Grants and Foundations	9,851
Special Events	15,000
Churches and Religious orders	17,411
Trustees and House leadership	23,185
Other Individuals	37,803
TOTAL*	103,250

INCOME 2015

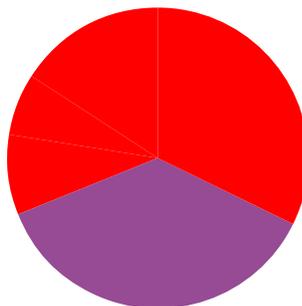


- Grants and Foundations
- Special Events
- Churches and Religious Orders
- Trustees and House Leadership
- Other Individuals

EXPENSE 2015

Stabilization <i>(includes house expenses, insurance, maintenance, utilities, food, bus passes)</i>	26,207.15
Support <i>(includes volunteer stipends and all expenses related to guest support personnel)</i>	29,920.51
Community <i>(includes worship, outings, support for other ministries, newsletter)</i>	6,975.62
Wholeness <i>(includes YMCA, counseling, garden, medication support)</i>	5,295.57
Administration and Fundraising <i>(includes office expenses and supplies, software and hardware, accounting professional expenses, fundraising professional expenses)</i>	12,858.10
TOTAL*	81,256.95

EXPENSE 2015



- Stabilization
- Support
- Community
- Wholeness
- Administration and Fundraising

* These income and expense reports do not include the income or expense from a property that was sold by the ministry in 2015. The proceeds from the sale of this property were put into the renovation of the Jean Donovan House and are listed as an asset.

LIVE AND WORK WITH US!

Would you like to live in intentional community in solidarity with women and children experiencing homelessness? Lydia's House is currently looking for two associate volunteers to work alongside our core community and live in our main property. This is not a professional social work job but rather a commitment to shared life and service. The term is a minimum of one year but could lead to a longer commitment, and applications are currently being accepted for a fall/winter 2016 start. We ask that all applicants for the Associates Program be at least 25 years of age. We are seeking women of faith who desire to embrace life in a Christian community and commit to regular prayer and the works of mercy. Married couples will also be considered. For more information, visit our website at www.stlydiashouse.org or contact Mary Ellen at maryellen@stlydiashouse.org.



SUPPORT OUR WORK

In the enclosed envelope you'll find an opportunity to support us financially. Our goal is to raise \$18,500; the funds necessary for our utilities, insurance, and maintenance for the coming year. We'll be running this campaign through our Women for Women fundraiser on September 17. We need your support!



WOMEN FOR WOMEN REMINDER

Women of faith, join us for our 4th annual "Women for Women" prayer service, concert and fundraiser on September 17 at 6pm. If you haven't already, we hope you'll RSVP to Maryellen@stlydiashouse.org.



LYDIA'S HOUSE BY THE NUMBERS

Since we launched in 2013:

33 

women and children received stable housing

3 

newborns and their moms came home from the hospital to Lydia's House

10 

interns, students and associates received training and mentoring

11 

former guests receive ongoing pastoral care and support

161 

(and counting) women called our intake number or emailed looking for housing. All received calls back.

547 

meals were served at our dinner table

651 

people, worldwide, received our newsletter

\$559,900

and 1 building were donated. As a result, we are debt free.

45 

merit badges were hand stitched to celebrate occasions including a 20 year recovery anniversary, receiving a drivers license, receiving and maintaining employment, moving into independent housing and many, many birthdays



THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 DONORS

We are so grateful for your support! Lydia's House is possible because of you.



Adoption Professionals LLC
 Kathy and Dan Aerni
 Mirza Alikhan
 Sarah and Drew Allan
 Kim Anderson
 Jonathan and Colleen Averdick
 Kim and Matt Bakota
 Ruth Barkow
 Mary Bauer
 Phil and Nora Beckmann
 Wayne and Barbara Beimesch
 Sally Belknap
 Bellarmine Chapel
 Katherine Berger
 Karen Bernish
 Rosemary Bird
 Georgia and Dennis Bishop
 Diane Bissonette
 Monica Blackburn
 Jill Bley
 Chris Bolling
 Pattie Bondurant
 Richard Boydston
 Marion Boydston
 Joanne Budny
 Angela Buechner
 Philip Bunge
 Mary Ann and Henry Burwinkel
 Steve Calme
 Christ the Savior/Holy Spirit
 Orthodox Church
 Congregation of Divine
 Providence
 Congregation of St. Joseph
 Conway Foundation
 Patricia Corona
 Jeanne Corwin
 Courtesy Automotive
 Chris and Brooke Coyle
 Elizabeth Coyle
 Matthew and Maggie Coyle
 William and Kristine Craig

Mary and Timothy Cronin
 Cara and Tyler Cross
 Cynthia Cummins
 Lu Dale
 Barb Dardy
 Caroline Davidson
 Imogen Deaton
 Deeper Roots Coffee
 William and Margery
 Dejonckheere
 Betsy and Matt DeMatteo
 Patricia Dion
 Carrie and Ryan Doan
 Ruth Ann Doerger
 Nick Eilerman
 Tony and Diane Eilerman
 Ben and Mary Ellen
 Mitchell-Eilerman
 Jim Elfers
 Donald and Lynne Embler
 Episcopal Diocese of Southern
 Ohio
 Debbie and Eric Erickson
 Sally Evans
 Martha Feller
 George Fels
 Kara and Gregg Feltrup
 Susanna Fioratta
 Rose Ann Fleming
 Carolyn Frost
 Timothy and Victoria Garry
 Peter Gathje
 Jane Gerdson
 Virginia Gilmore
 Pat Greulich
 Kate and Adam Hallock
 Josh and Maurie Hanauer
 Patricia Harkins
 Chuck Harris
 Patty Hassel
 Ursula Hassel
 Elizabeth and Sam Hatchett
 Judith Heiny
 Marilyn Herring
 Margaret Hilvert
 Tressie and David Hird
 Nancy Hodges
 Holistic Connections Inc.
 Debra Hollingshead
 Nancy and Roger Hopkins-Greene
 Kevin and Deborah Horton
 Gary and Mary Horton

Anne Housholder
 Martha Housholder
 Becca and Michael Hughes
 Don and Karen Hurley
 Peggy Becker Jackson
 Mike and Jannette Jarrold-Grapes
 Ann Kavanaugh
 Elizabeth Killian
 Patricia Kohl
 Maria and Robert Krzeski
 Joanna Lounsbury
 Maggie Machledt
 Karol Mackey
 Carol Marsh
 Liz Maxwell
 Mara McClellan
 Lynda McConn
 Mandy Mclaughlin
 J. Michael McNamara
 Laura Menze
 Harry Meyer
 Katherine Miller
 Brent Mitchell
 Sally Monroe
 Tracy Monroe
 Katherine and Michael Muldowney
 Powers
 Michael and Sandra Murphy
 Matthew Murphy
 Martha Murphy
 Joseph & Angela Murray
 Julie Murray
 Janet Neidhard
 Kym Nelson
 New Jerusalem
 Francis and Peg Niehaus
 Anne Niehaus
 Russell and Leslie Nixon
 Lois Nizny
 Charlotta Norby
 Mary and James Nordlund
 Steve and Becky Novotni
 Nutz & Boltz
 Ohio Child Conservation League
 Raindrops
 Nancy Ollier
 Meredith Owensby
 Helen Pearl
 Bonnie Peterson
 Charles and Cynthia Pfizenmayer
 William and Maryann Picard
 Kate Powers
 Rita Pritchard
 Province of St. John the Baptist of
 the Order of Friars Minor
 Lou and Ang Puopolo
 Rosemary and Michael Quaranta
 Margaret Quinn
 Anne Ramsay
 Anne and Gifford Reed Blaylock
 Yvonne Reissig

Resonate Foundation
 Resurrection Community
 Leah and Sean Reynolds
 Jane Roberts
 Carol and Don Roberts
 Joanna Rymaszewska
 James and Elizabeth Schmid
 Anne Schoelwer
 Lou and Christine Schroder
 Lucy Schultz
 Sally Sedgwick
 Nick and Melissa Shaver
 Sisters of Charity
 Sisters of St. Francis
 Calista and Anthony Smith
 Angie Snelling
 Connie Spanja
 Judy Squire
 Donna Steffen, S.C.
 Anny Stevens-Gleason
 Jill and Josh Stoxen
 Judy Strickland
 Bernie Suer



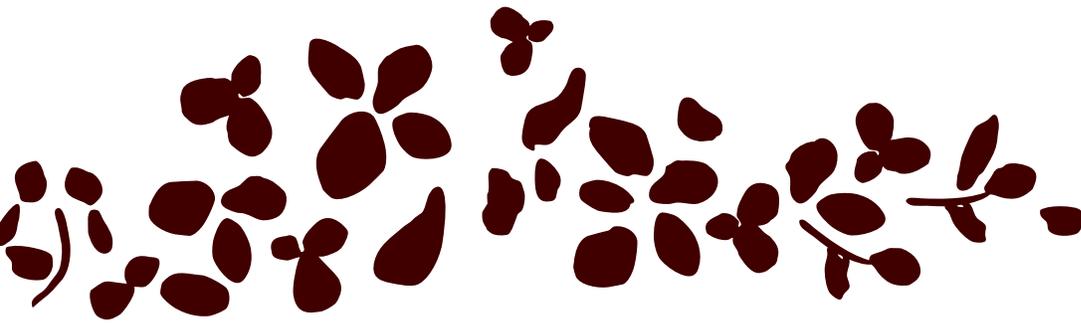
Don Tassone
 Susan and John Tew
 The Church of the Advent
 The Church of the Redeemer
 The Women's Fund of the Greater
 Cincinnati Foundation
 Juli and David Thompson
 Judith Titchener
 Susan Van Amerongen
 Vineyard Central
 George Warrington
 Carol and Gene Weber
 Bonita Weber
 Mary Wendeln
 Amy and Steve Whitlatch
 Mary Ann and Tom Williams
 Patty Willits
 Hilary Wolkan
 Women of the Moose, Norwood
 Chapter No. 742
 Paul and Mary Wood
 Jodi and Rick Wrublewski-Bohl
 Sharon Wyman
 Xavier University
 Carol & Lee Yeazell
 Zion United Church of Christ
 Paul & Marianne Zook
 Mary Zuccarelli



LYDIA'S HOUSE
PO Box 128808
Cincinnati, OH 45212

STLYDIASHOUSE.ORG
513-549-7752

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Cincinnati, Ohio
Permit No. 6207



LYDIA'S HOUSE

WHO WE ARE

Lydia's House is a Christian community that provides transitional housing to women and children in crisis. Drawing from the Catholic Worker tradition, we endeavor to do small things with great love. We are a committed group of volunteers who share regular meals, prayer, and a good portion of our lives together, following the model that Christ set with his disciples. We look for the light shining in the darkness and Christ coming in the guise of the stranger at the door.

We are not an agency with professional titles and set office hours. We believe that we are all children of God, and as such we provide family-style hospitality, with all its messiness and beauty. The core of this community lives together, mostly under one roof but all in one neighborhood. We are committed to seeking wholeness, recovering from addictions and providing accountability to one another.

We attempt to move from a rights-and-obligations economy toward a gifts-and-sacrifices system, where we give what we can and receive what we need. We work jobs outside the house and contribute from our wages



to the running of the house. Some of us have professional degrees, others are seeking GEDs; regardless of each person's background all contributions are honored as equal. We also seek donations from an extended support community and are grateful for their generosity.

We welcome family in many forms, share the burdens and joys of childrearing and seek to be a place where men, women and children from all walks of life can experience a demonstration of God's beloved community.

We value beauty, honesty, justice, simplicity and seek to interact with our guests through a lens of personalism. We hope those values shine through in our daily decisions. We seek to speak truth in love to ourselves, those we serve and volunteers.

