

This is a
Special Update
to the
Wonderful
Supporters of
Room at the Inn



INN-Sider

SPECIAL EDITION SPRING | 2020

Making Our Way in Uncharted Waters...How We Are Navigating this Crisis Together



Hello again to our truly amazing supporters, volunteers, staff, and community leaders. Let me first say

that I sincerely hope all of you are doing well and sustaining yourselves as we all continue on this strange and unfamiliar path. And a heartfelt **thank you** for all you are doing for us — those two short words can't possibly capture the depth of gratitude we have for you.

Inside the walls of Room, things change daily as we navigate each rising challenge. Understandably, there's a sense of "climbing the walls" as we shelter at home and do our best to limit contact and practice social distancing. It's not easy, but we are being as creative and resourceful as possible as we carry on our work and mission.

CURRENTLY AT THE DAY SITE...

- We have a full house. If clients decide to leave, they won't be able to re-enter our program for the duration of the crisis — and we will not take new clients until the "all clear" is given.
- We are following all guidelines issued by St. Louis County.
- Our cleaning staff is working 7 nights a week to deep clean, sanitize and keep us safe.
- We are not taking any in-kind donations unless the items are brand new. Donors must call when they arrive and leave items on a cart in the entrance vestibule. We will then bring them in after the donor has left.
- Programming/counseling etc., is being done remotely.
- To eliminate contact, we have asked all congregations to stop sending volunteers, innkeepers, and food to our day site.
- The clients have set a weekly menu and are cooking all meals from the generous financial support of

the congregations.

- We pick up free lunches delivered for the children each day from the Pattonville School District.
- Clients are washing linens and clothes daily.
- We encourage clients to exercise daily by walking outside and keeping safe distances.
- Clients may leave the day site only for necessary appointments which have been pre-approved by staff.
- Our part-time staff members are being paid to assume innkeeper (overnight) duties.
- We have moved to a staggered time schedule, where staff members work limited hours each day and also work remotely when feasible. A staff person must always remain on site.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US...

It would be **extremely helpful** at this time if in place of physically hosting clients, each congregation would send \$150 for each night you were scheduled to host. This offsets the unbudgeted costs we now incur to pay staff to serve as innkeepers, buy food for dinners and breakfasts, and do extra cleaning and sanitizing. We also have a short list of basic items we are greatly in need of (see list at right). I invite you to call me directly if you have any questions — I'm happy to speak with you. And as always, please continue to send your good wishes and prayers our way — as we will to you!

Yes, these are uncertain times. Yet I have great faith that if we work together, we'll come through this whole, ready and eager to return to living without the constraints and fears we are experiencing now. We know you care, and we know you are and will continue to care about us. **Please know that WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL.**

*Kind regards — and please take care,
- David S. Weber, Executive Director*

Current Needs List

We are in need of donations for these items:

- **Bottled Water**
- **Juice Boxes**
- **Milk**
- **Hand Sanitizer**
- **Lysol Spray**
- **Disinfecting Wipes**
- **Toilet Paper**
- **Paper Towels**

Please let us know when you're coming. Call when you arrive and we'll meet you curbside. **Thank you!**

Room at the Inn Board Chair's Note

Room's clients face insecurity and often scary situations each day. With the Covid-19 pandemic, we are all currently experiencing uncertainty and fear. Life as we know it has been disrupted. For most of us, we can retreat to our home, a place we worked hard to make our own – a safe and peaceful refuge.

I would like to express the Board's gratitude for our amazing staff putting clients first during this challenging time. We realize that they have valid concerns for themselves and family, yet they care deeply about community and providing clients sanctuary during this stressful time.

gratitude

Unfortunately, our program has been impacted by loss of support from night site partners due to protective health measures that need to be followed. Luckily, we have been blessed with numerous volunteers and congregations that continue to find ways to give. Given that the duration of this crisis is unknown, the Board is committed to ongoing fundraising to sustain operations. We will continue to seek additional grant funding as well as other donations. As a community safety net, Room is dedicated to providing a safe, secure environment for women and families.

Best Regards,
Julie Wolfe, Board Chairperson

An Update for Our Coordinators and Volunteers

The Latest Word on Recent Changes to our Program

Dear Coordinators and Volunteers,

First of all, we at Room at the Inn want to give you an enormous thank you for continuing to help us so generously in this difficult time. Changes happen here almost daily, and we want to keep you as informed as possible.

As our Executive Director indicated in his update, we are limiting access to our Bridgeton day site during the Covid-19 breakout. We feel this is in the best interests of all involved — our clients, staff, and volunteers. As a result, we have implemented the following:

Evening Meals

Instead of asking our night sites to bring evening meals, we do the meal planning at our Bridgeton site and our clients are now cooking most meals. Periodically we will do carry out or delivery.

Innkeeping

Instead of volunteers assuming this task, we now pay staff to do innkeeping duties.

Extra Cleaning

In keeping with current guidelines, we now pay for extra cleaning and disinfecting of the facility daily.

With your continuous support, we are making things work and fulfilling our mission, even as the situation changes daily. With your assistance, we are navigating this current crisis together!

As we are all faced with sheltering in place for the upcoming weeks, we will continue to plan and cook meals in-house, provide innkeeping and do extra cleaning. With this in mind, we are asking our partner congregations to consider giving a gift of \$150 which will help offset additional costs for one overnight. We certainly understand this may not be possible for everyone, and appreciate any gift that you can offer to help us at this time.

“Grateful” can't adequately express how moved and inspired we are by your outpouring of support and prayers. We value this so greatly! We know these are challenging days for all of you as well. Let's remember that **together we have, we are, and we will make a difference**. This song by Jack Johnson comes to mind – “Better Together”.

*Love is the answer, at least for most of the
questions in my heart
Like why are we here? And where do we go?
And how come it's so hard?
It's not always easy and
Sometimes life can be deceiving
I'll tell you one thing, it's always better when
we're together.*

THANK YOU for your “Better Together” partnership with Room at the Inn. 

*Cindy Warren-Volunteer Coordinator, Room
Staff & Board of Directors*

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