



A Shalom Moment

SPRING 2019



For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. Plans to prosper, plans for a hope and a future. **-Jeremiah 29:11**

Dear friends of Beth Shalom,

Our Beth Shalom Celebration and Fundraising Banquet is just around the corner on June 19; I hope that you will be able to join us! The event is free to attend and is a great way to introduce your friends to our ministry!

At our banquet, we will hear from special guest speaker Melanie G. Snyder. She served as the Executive Director of the Lancaster County Reentry Management Organization and regularly speaks on the topics of reentry, trauma, and trauma-informed care.

As we better understand the circumstances, struggles, and realities that mothers face as they exit prison, we can better support, uplift, and encourage them as they work toward self-sufficient and God-honoring lives.

I am delighted to introduce to you Rachel Stoltzfus, Beth Shalom's new Church Relations Specialist. I've been impressed by her compassion,

empathy, and desire to serve mothers here at Beth Shalom. Please take a moment to read a message from her inside this newsletter. Also, please consider any opportunities to have her share with your church or social group about the life-changing work that is happening in the lives of mothers and children here at Beth Shalom.

As you continue to learn about and invest in Beth Shalom, I would encourage you to consider making arrangements for a legacy gift to ensure that in the future, mothers like Bianca, who is featured in this newsletter, will have a loving, Christian environment to rebuild their lives for both themselves and their children. For more information on legacy giving, please contact Phyllis at 717.358.9383 or at PStacks@tabornet.org.

Thank you for your continued prayerful support,



Lenara Porter

Lenara Porter
Program Coordinator for Beth Shalom

The beginning of my journey



“

This time was different. I was desperate, spiritually bankrupt, and open to change. I am willing to make the necessary changes to make a new life for my son and me.”

Bianca's addiction to prescription drugs led to her incarceration in West Chester. Upon her release, she participated in a drug and alcohol treatment program in Lancaster which offers inpatient recovery services to women with children.

Even though Bianca knew nothing about Lancaster, and had no friends or family in Lancaster, she decided she needed a new start. While completing this program, she learned about Beth Shalom, a Christian-based transitional housing program of Tabor Community Services for women exiting prison where she and her six-year-old son would be reunited. Her prayers were answered, and Bianca was accepted into Beth Shalom.

She felt God was telling her, 'This is what you need to do, Bianca, to get a foundation and make a new life'. She admits God had given her other opportunities, but "this time was different. I was desperate, spiritually bankrupt, and open to change. I am willing to make the necessary changes to make a new life for my son and me."

Fear was Bianca's biggest obstacle. "I needed to get accustomed to the caring and generosity of others, trusting that people truly care about my wellbeing."

Although Bianca has not been at Beth Shalom very long, she already loves the program. Her favorite part of the program is meeting with Miss Martha and Miss Donna, volunteers who lead a Bible study every Monday. "I can share with them, and I'm never judged. Miss Lenara is a blessing, helping me get back on my feet, pointing me in a new direction in my journey on a spiritual path."

Finding her own church and attending CareerLink to earn her GED are goals that Bianca has already set for herself. One day she would like to work with the elderly and perhaps be an activities coordinator at a nursing home. She hopes that her son will become a strong, God fearing, respectable, and educated man. With the changes she is making in her life, she is confident she will be a good role model for him.

While Bianca realizes she has obstacles to overcome, she says "This is the beginning of my journey. My goal is to become a better Bianca and help others the way I have been helped at Beth Shalom."

Rachel Stoltzfus

Beth Shalom Church Relations Specialist



It's my privilege to support Beth Shalom in achieving its mission of **ending prison recidivism** in our community. As the new Beth Shalom Church Relations Specialist, I plan to spread awareness about our program within the local church and community. I am excited for this new role as I have the chance to meet you and others championing this cause. **As a Christian-based program, Beth Shalom does not receive government funding and relies fully on community support to achieve its mission.**

In case you're wondering what the exact meaning of *recidivism* is, a quick Google search provides the answer. Recidivism is defined as "the tendency to relapse into a previous condition or mode

of behavior such as criminal activity." If we look at the origin of the word, we see that this cumbersome word originated from the Latin word *recidivus*, which is defined as "recurring." With this word stripped to its bare bones, you see the simple idea of reoccurrence, the *repetitive behavior, a habit*.

I wanted to bring this definition to your attention because I see it as a good reminder that I am no different or better than the women Beth Shalom helps. I, too, have bad habits I am trying to break. In fact, almost every New Year, the same two goals show up on my New Year Resolutions list: eat healthier and be more active. You would think one of these years I would finally accomplish these tasks! Life, however, (as you probably know) is a process of refinement. We all work hard to improve ourselves every day of every week of every year. Our residents do the same. They work hard to improve their life circumstances. Beth Shalom participants have

faced many traumatizing and devastating circumstances. I can only begin to imagine the grief and pain many have faced while experiencing homelessness, battling addiction, or surviving abuse.

I grew up on the mission's field as my parents were missionaries with Youth With A Mission and pioneered several mission campuses in the Caribbean. As a result, I was immersed in many diverse cultures and experiences as a child. Throughout my life, I have witnessed the admirable resilience of humanity — despite difficult circumstances like poverty, incarceration, unstable housing. I truly believe human beings have the power and perseverance to rebuild their lives — which is one of the reasons I am so excited about Beth Shalom. In this program, the participants are empowered to grow in their faith and learn valuable life skills, to achieve financial stability and to work toward independent housing — in essence, continue on their life journey of refinement.



If you have an opportunity at your church or social group for Rachel to share about the restorative work that takes place in the lives of women and children at Beth Shalom every day, please reach out to her by email at rstoltzfus@tabornet.org or by phone at **717-358-9386**.

9th Annual
**CELEBRATION &
FUNDRAISING BANQUET**
Wednesday, June 19

11 am - Registration
11:30 am - Program and Lunch



Special Guest Speaker

As an expert on reentry, trauma, and trauma-informed care, **Melanie G. Snyder** will help reinforce how critical Beth Shalom is for our community

Beth Shalom's Mission

To end prison recidivism by providing a comprehensive Christian interim housing program for single mothers leaving prison, where they can reunite with their children and be empowered with the skills and opportunities necessary for long-term self-sufficiency.

Board of Directors Jamie Arroyo, Timbrel Chyatee, Paul I. Currie, Joseph Dhansis, Smokey Glover, Dan Hess, Jason Hess, Sherry Hibshman, Tracy Horst, Brent Kreider, Jill M. Laskowitz (Chair), Bryan Martin, Stephanie Reese, Brian Roche, Mike McKenna (Tabor President), Doug Umble, Lenny Walton, Charity Welch, Katie Zimmerman

PO Box 1676, Lancaster, PA 17608-1676 | **717.358.9376**

LAST CHANCE TO RSVP!



Event is free, but reservations are required
Donations will be accepted at the lunch

NEW LOCATION!

Eden Resort ▶ 222 Eden Rd
Lancaster, PA

TO RSVP

Mail Use the enclosed form

Online www.BethShalomLancaster.org

Email NLammey@tabornet.org

Phone 717.358.9377

RSVP by June 5

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Current & Ongoing Needs List

- Target Gift Cards (\$10-30)
- Walmart Gift Cards (\$10-30)
- Dish detergent
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Tissues
- Hand soap
- Pampers (sizes 4, 5 & 6)
- Dust spray
- Women's sanitary products
- Magic Erasers
- Pine-Sol or Mr. Clean
- All-purpose cleaners
- Glass cleaner
- Towels & wash cloths
- Single & double bed sheets

Please contact Lenara at 717.358.9376 or Lporter@tabornet.org for more information.