

the **BLUEPRINT**

Winter 2025 Newsletter



**Together,
we build
independence.**

Warm winter greetings!

The build sites are a bit quieter now since we will not have any more volunteer groups until next spring. However, our construction team and members of our core crew are working hard to finish up houses #3 and #4. Meanwhile, the rest of the Habitat team are making plans for next year's build schedule and working with homebuyers and Aging in Place families while the ReStore crew is constantly receiving furniture, appliances and other donations to add to the retail floor.

Would you or someone you know be interested in joining Habitat's Core Crew? If you have ever volunteered at a Habitat home, you have worked alongside members of our Core Crew - dedicated volunteers who have a passion for building Habitat homes on a regular basis. Crew members choose how much and how often they work. No construction experience is necessary, just a willingness to learn and a heart for Habitat's mission. Training opportunities will be available during the winter months so that crew members are ready to go when we start to build House #1 next April! Call the Habitat office to learn more and get involved.



**Christine Reilly,
Executive Director**

Speaking of House #1 – we are excited to announce that this home will be the 100th Habitat home built in Douglas County! And, it will be a Faith Build, meaning that we are looking for volunteer groups from our local faith communities. **Would your church or faith group like to be involved with this project?** Construction will begin in mid-April. Reach out to us for more information on how you can be involved with the 2026 Faith Build.

The ReStore continues to be busy and there are new things to see on a weekly (or even daily) basis. **We rely on donors to keep the ReStore thriving!** Please keep the ReStore in mind when you are upgrading your appliances, deciding to retire some pieces of furniture, remodeling and taking out old cabinets, or perhaps you have some excess in building supplies – we'd be grateful for your donation. If you do not have a way to transport large items to the ReStore, just give them a call and they will be happy to pick up your items.

Thank you for supporting Habitat's work right here in Douglas County! **Together, we can make a difference for local families and strengthen our community.**

Wishing you a joyous holiday season!

Christine Reilly



Our mission:
Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

Our vision:
A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Through your support, since 1997, we've served:

221 families	95 new or improved homes	126 Aging in Place projects
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Renewed Independence through Aging in Place

Sometimes, the smallest changes inside a home make the biggest difference in someone's life. That's exactly what happened recently when Habitat completed an Aging in Place project that transformed not only a bathroom—but a couple's daily life.

Before the project, the homeowner could not shower independently. Stepping into the tub/shower was difficult without support from her husband, so each day she waited for him to help her bathe.

After the free home assessment by Habitat's Construction Coordinator/Certified Aging in Place Specialist and an Occupational Therapist, the existing tub was removed and a new walk-in shower was installed. Grab bars for better stability and support, along with a shower chair to prevent falls were also added to the new shower, as well as a safety frame for the toilet. Additionally, a sturdy handrail on the exterior of the home was installed making entry into the home easier.

The results changed everything.

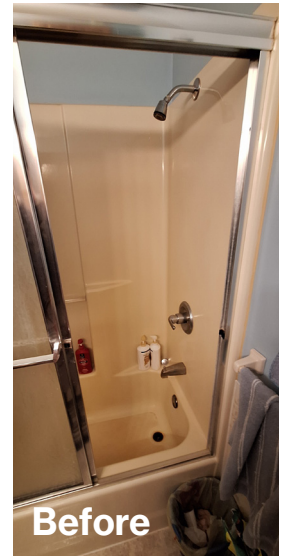
The first evening after the work was complete, her husband came home ready to help her shower as usual—only to discover she had already done everything herself. She was beaming with pride. He was overcome with relief and joy. For the first time in a long while, they could simply sit together, relax, and enjoy each other's company.

In her handwritten thank you note, she shared:

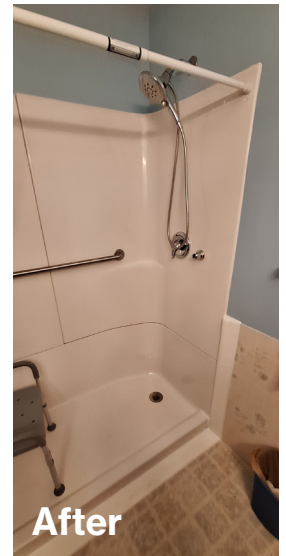
"Thank you for making my house handicap accessible. I can get in and out of the shower myself. I like my independence. Thank you with all my heart!"

Thanks to our Aging in Place program, another local homeowner can now live safely and comfortably at home for years to come.

By partnering with Habitat's Aging in Place program, older adults are able to access the resources they need to age in their homes, while maintaining both their independence and quality of life.



Before



After

Tips on making your home safe and accessible:

- * Replace handles on doors or faucets with a lever style.
- * Place night lights in outlets in each room.
- * Install handrails by any step.
- * Install grab bars near toilets and the tub or shower.
- * Ensure smoke detectors are updated every 10 years.
- * Consider replacing a tub with a walk-in shower or adding a tub cut-out.

Contact Heather at 320-762-4255 to learn more about our Aging in Place program.



After

Home for the Holidays

Home is the foundation on which we build our lives and our communities; it is where we feel safe, raise our families, and create a future. Yet 1 in 4 households in our community spend more than 30% of their income on housing, leaving little for life’s essentials.

This fall, three Alexandria Area High School DECA students have been raising funds to support affordable housing as part of their Community Giving project. David Close, Maya Nesbitt, and Brooke Nelson (pictured right) built and auctioned off three custom-painted playhouses. There is still time to support their project through a donation to Habitat by December 31, 2025. Every dollar you give will be DOUBLED through a State Farm Youth Matching grant.



**Pictured above (left to right):
David, Maya, and Brooke**

“Habitat is honored to receive the State Farm Youth Matching grant and grateful that David, Brooke, and Maya chose to partner with us for this unique project,” commented Christine Reilly, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County. “Their creativity and compassion, combined with the generosity of this matching grant, will make a real impact in building an additional affordable home in Douglas County.”



Earn an 85% Minnesota tax credit 2026!

Have you heard about the Minnesota State Housing Tax Credit Program? Individuals, businesses, and financial institutions can direct their state tax dollars to support one of Habitat's two qualified projects while receiving a tax credit certificate worth 85% of the contribution!



This program is one of the most impactful — and time-sensitive — ways to invest in affordable housing. Last year, program funds were claimed within six weeks of opening; 2026 funds are expected to go even faster. We'll email when the program opens — stay tuned!

To find a list of steps to take to contribute, visit our website at hfhdouglascounty.org/donate/mn-state-housing-tax-credit-program or scan one of the two QR codes to the right to go directly to the page for each of our projects. All the information you need to submit is listed right at your fingertips as well as listed below.



Alexandria - 100th Home



Alexandria Home - 2026 Legends Build

- Name of project: Alexandria–100th Home -or- Alexandria Home–2026 Legends Build
- Type of project: Homeownership
- Developer/Owner/Administrator Name: Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County
- Contact Name: Christine Reilly
- Contact telephone number: 320-762-4255
- Contact email address: christine@hfhdouglascounty.org
- Income limit: 80% of AMI
- Owner type: single-family home

Questions?
Contact Christine Reilly at
320-762-4255 or [christine@](mailto:christine@hfhdouglascounty.org)
hfhdouglascounty.org

Build Updates



House #3

Exterior work is complete on this home. Final finishes are underway on the interior of the home. The homebuyer is looking forward to having a space of her own and creating new memories with her family!



House #4

Work on the exterior of the home has wrapped up, along with interior painting. As we roll into the new year, our construction team along with core crew volunteers will begin adding final interior finishes.



House #5

Carpentry program students from Alexandria Technical & Community College have been busy framing and working on exterior components of this home. When students return from holiday break, they will begin learning about cabinet construction before completing all interior finishes of the home.

An Exciting Milestone!



Next spring, construction will begin on our **100th affordable home in Douglas County!** Each home represents countless volunteer hours, generous community support, and a shared belief that everyone deserves a safe, affordable place to live. It is only fitting that this milestone home will be our Faith Build, a celebration of the partnerships and prayers that have laid our foundation from the very beginning.

Churches and faith groups across Douglas County will come together, putting love into action. We invite you to be part of this extraordinary build. Together, we'll raise walls, raise spirits, continue building homes — and brighter futures — one faithful step at a time. 100 homes strong. 100 homes built on faith. And we're just getting started.



Pictured left: the first Habitat home from 1998!

Meet Jenna!



Future Homeowner!

"I decided to apply for the program because I wanted to own a home and build my life in Alexandria, but prices were too steep for me and my student loans limit my spending ability. I knew what great work Habitat does and discovered that I might qualify for the program. I'm looking forward to having a place that is my own, where I can build relationships with neighbors and host my friends. I love to express myself with art and design, so I'm also excited to decorate. My little dog Hank is my pride and joy—he and I are so excited to have a new home!"

Volunteer Highlights



Thank you for voting us best nonprofit! Together, we build brighter futures.

Habitat for Humanity
of Douglas County, Minnesota



The 2025 build season has been one of many firsts:

- the first wall on the first home in Summer Meadows was tipped up in April,
- the first home in Summer Meadows closed in September,
- a few new special build days were held, including the Community Banks day, an Elected Officials day, and a Protect & Serve Build day held on September 11,
- and two Workplace Builds were held at 3M and Aagard.

Whether volunteering on the build site, an Aging in Place project, or in the ReStore, serving on our Board or a committee, attending a Habitat event, mentoring a homebuyer, or supporting our work in countless unseen ways, we share our heartfelt gratitude to every volunteer! Every volunteer hour matters, and together we create real, lasting change in our community. Because of your dedication, more local families are moving toward a future filled with dignity, safety, and opportunity. Because of you, more neighbors in our community will enter the new year with a safe, affordable place to call home.

As we transition into the new year, we know a new season of building is around the corner, bringing with it fresh projects, new families to partner with, and more opportunities to put your skills and passion to work. Your impact is undeniable, and we are grateful to have you on this journey!

Welcome New Board Directors!



Kris Klemenhausen



Josh Tatge



Angie Urman

This fall, we welcomed three new board members - Kris Klemenhausen, Josh Tatge, and Angie Urman.

Kris Klemenhausen is a Senior Project Manager/Office Manager for Interstate Engineering and has served on Habitat's Construction Committee. Actively engaged in the community, he has seen first-hand the "joy Habitat homeownership brings to families."

Josh Tatge, a Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, brings valuable expertise in financial management to the board. He notes that Habitat's mission demonstrates that "everyone has a place in the community."

Angie Urman, the Vice President of Managed Partnerships for Vivie, adds extensive knowledge of serving older adults and has experience on Habitat's Homeowner Selection Committee. She shared that Habitat's homeownership program "helps keep people in the community as we need workforce to help our local economy."

Habitat is honored to have an innovative and passionate board of twelve members who govern our work. Our board is comprised of professionals who focus on our mission, strategy, and goals.



Pictured above: Christine Reilly, Executive Director with Board Directors. Back row (left to right): Jeff Hohn, Josh Tatge, Rick Sansted, Kris Klemenhausen, Bobbi Jo Sellnow, and Angie Krebs. Front row (left to right): Tim Madson, Jenna Hill, Angie Urman, Whitney Anderson, and Janelle Wunderlich. Not pictured: Jerry Hansen

ReStore Corner



Shop local!

When you shop at our local ReStore, your purchase directly supports the construction of safe, affordable homes for families in our community.

**Store hours: 9 am to 5 pm
Wed - Sat**

Donations? Call 320-759-1989



**Together, we improve safety
and accessibility in homes.**



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Together, we can create a legacy.

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No matter where you are on your life's journey or how much wealth you have, you can write your will to ensure your assets are distributed to the people and organizations you choose.

Make a will today
in just 20 minutes
at no cost through
our partnership.



FREEWILL 

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