



FIRST LIGHT

A Center for Homeless Women and Children

THE LIGHT

FALL 2016 EDITION

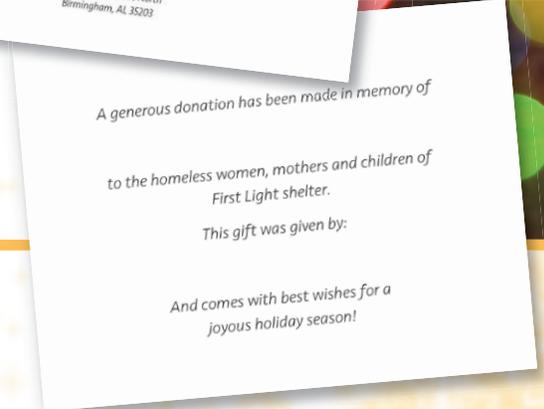
OFFERING HOPE · PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY · CONFIRMING DIGNITY · ENSURING SAFETY · ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY · DEMONSTRATING HOSPITALITY

Holiday Lights 2016

The Holiday Lights greeting card program is an important fund raiser supporting the operation of the shelter. It represents a unique and meaningful gift from you to women and children in desperate situations. We send a holiday greeting to either your loved ones, or to business/community associates, advising them that you have contributed to this important mission in honor of, or in memory of, someone. It is a statement of love and kindness which also honors First Light guests as we light up our building and the downtown skyline with holiday lights around the top of the building.

Watch for the Holiday Lights mailing to your address in early November. It invites you to complete an order form with names and addresses of those to whom you wish to send an “honor of” card or a “memory of” card. (See graphic) All envelopes will be hand addressed and hand stamped, which is included with your contribution. You may choose to complete the form and mail it to us (or drop it off at the front desk) in the return reply envelope... OR...you may go to our website and make the contribution online, and provide your list of names therein.

To do this process totally online, click the Holiday Lights image on our website home page at: www.firstlightshelter.org



Providing Hope Through Holiday Giving Programs

First Light offers supporters several opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways to our shelter guests and those who have moved into apartments, thanks to our housing programs. What follows are brief descriptions of ways you can be a part of showing kindness to the women and children we serve.

1. Christmas morning gift bags

While our guests are enjoying a bountiful breakfast served by volunteer, Cheri Amos and her family and friends, we will place large gift bags on every bed and at the doors of the women living permanently on 4th floor. We fill them with your contributions.





What You Can Do:

SELECT AN ITEM TO GO INTO THE GIFT BAGS.

Call Deb Everson (323-4277) on behalf of yourself, your family, your group, your church or office. There is a list of 20-25 items to choose from. We will need 65 of that item. Why? Because we fill all the bags with exactly the same items. (This way everyone gets the same gifts, which avoids hurt feelings with “you got something I didn’t.”) Deb will add you to her list of donors and let you know the deadline for delivering your 65 items.

2. Shopping Day for Moms and Grandmothers

A day is set aside for shelter guests or those women in First Light’s housing programs to come and select presents for children. Those who do not have income to provide Christmas for their children or grandchildren are invited by our social work staff to come to the program room and what looks like Santa’s workshop. They can select 2-3 items (this depends on how many we receive) for each child. Volunteers will be waiting in the board room to wrap those gifts in pretty papers and ribbons. The women walk away with Christmas gifts for the children in their lives. It has been so touching to hear from the women about the joy they knew in giving those presents to their loved ones.

What You Can Do:

CONTACT DEB EVERSON (323-4277)

Let Deb know what you and/or your group can provide – games, toys, sporting goods, etc., for children of all ages up to 16-17 yrs. Deb will add you to her list of donors and let you know the deadline for delivering the items.

YEAR END GIVING

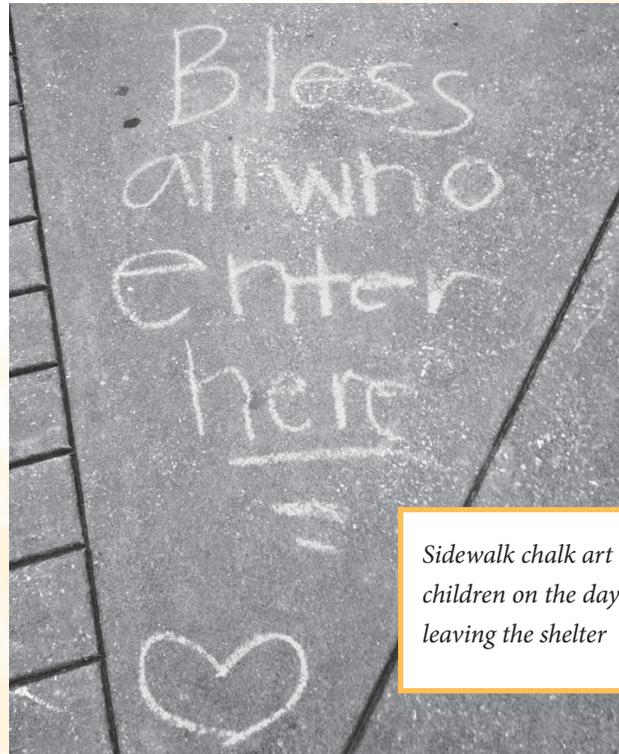
Please Remember First Light at Year End.

The end of the year is a busy time. We celebrate holidays and family—and we make resolutions and memories. First Light shines with volunteers sharing their time and their hearts. Thank you for all the ways you let our guests know that they are part of a caring community.

Because of your generosity, a frightened mother can finally rest easy knowing she and her baby are safe. A lost soul finds patience and warmth. Someone who thought no one cared gets a hearty meal and a helping hand. A little boy goes to school with a new pair of shoes—and when he gets there he can concentrate because he knows where he will be sleeping tonight.

First Light is much more than a safe place to sleep. Every guest can depend on a qualified professional to be her guide as she maneuvers around her personal obstacles to independence and self-sufficiency. Compassionate, devoted volunteers remind her she is not alone.

Guests at First Light are society’s most vulnerable. Your gifts make them safe. Your gifts give them hope. Your gifts give them a chance to protect their children and achieve their full potential. Thank you.



Sidewalk chalk art done by children on the day they were leaving the shelter

2015- 2016 Annual Report



FIRST LIGHT

A Center for Homeless Women and Children

2015-2016 Board of Directors

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Darri Scott
Community Volunteer

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Community Volunteer

Rev. Catherine Goodrich, Ex Officio
First Presbyterian Church

The mission of First Light is to work with homeless women and their children to create hospitality in a safe and nurturing community, to encourage them to maintain dignity, to find hope, to seek opportunity, and to grow spiritually, thereby achieving their full potential.

Letter from the Executive Director

Friends,

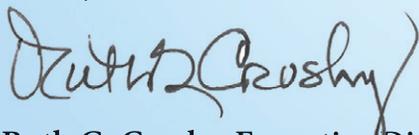
It has been a long hot summer. Aren't the crisp, refreshing autumn days delightful?! Fall will always be back-to-school time to me. And now the days really start to fly by. We begin to plan for the upcoming holidays and our thoughts naturally turn to family and to children we love and have loved.

When I think about the children who depend on us at First Light, I have mixed emotions. I am proud of the good work we are doing to keep them safe and healthy and to make sure they stay in school. I am delighted that a generous community will fill the program room to the brim with toys and games and books so that the children we love will enjoy a happy holiday. I am moved by the sight of a school bus picking kids up at the shelter. Homeless children are twice as likely to repeat a grade or to be expelled or suspended as other children. I'm relieved that the children we serve have a chance to beat those statistics. But I'm sad, too. There are just too many homeless women and children at our doors.

I cannot imagine how frightening it must be to worry about where your children will sleep at night. As a woman, I know how hard it would be to turn to strangers for safety and guidance.

Gratitude is the principal emotion I feel when I think about First Light. Our board of directors is a dynamic, energetic and committed group of volunteers determined that the homeless women and children who depend on First Light get much more than a safe place to sleep. The remarkable staff is professional, compassionate and tireless. And people like you are generous and kind.

Thank you.



Ruth G. Crosby, Executive Director



Ruth G. Crosby

“Our board of directors is a dynamic, energetic and committed group of volunteers determined that the homeless women and children who depend on First Light get much more than a safe place to sleep.”

Leave a legacy that expresses your commitment to your community and reflects your personal values.

Ask your tax and investment advisors how a planned gift to First Light might help you achieve your personal and philanthropic goals while providing security for yourself and your loved ones. And please let us know if you have included First Light in your estate planning.

Emergency Shelter

First Light's emergency shelter is comprised of 38 beds and a small family room on the second floor. It operates beyond capacity by accommodating 15-20 more homeless women and children in the "overflow" shelter, where mats are laid out on the floor in the day room. This year, 978 homeless women and children found refuge at First Light. But First Light provides much more than a safe place to sleep. Each guest gets the support of a professional with a degree in social work to help her reach her full potential.



Project Healthy Minds

Every First Light guest is encouraged to participate in Project Healthy Minds—an extensive program to address the root causes of her homelessness and to learn essential life skills. Guests learn about nutrition, health, and hygiene, and participate in group counseling, art therapy, and movie therapy. Carefully vetted volunteers provide educational presentations and offer bible study and religious services for those who choose to participate. This year, 120 women participated in art therapy, 75 guests participated in movie therapy, 83 attended group therapy, and 125 attended life skills education opportunities.

Supportive Housing

Guests leaving the emergency shelter who need help sustaining housing are directed to First Light's supportive housing programs when space is available. This year:

Six women and **four** children were safe in our community's only transitional supportive housing program to help victims of domestic violence with no income regain stability and rebuild their lives.

Ten women permanently disabled with severe mental health disorders were housed on the fourth floor of the shelter with their little dog, Bruno.

Fourteen families with **nine** children got case management to remain housed in the Shelter+Care program, a voucher program of the Jefferson County Housing Authority.

Twenty-four women with permanent disabilities or who had been chronically homeless got the help they needed to sustain housing in Bessemer and East Birmingham.

Eighteen disabled women who had become homeless because of disabling conditions got the guidance and support they needed to remain and thrive in First Light's Noah's Ark permanent supportive housing program.

Six families with **fifteen** children got financial assistance and social services through Forever Home, First Light's unique privately-funded rapid-rehousing program for homeless women with children.

First Light continues to see a troubling increase in the number of homeless women with children seeking shelter. In 2003, First Light served thirteen children. This year, First Light served 204 children. To meet some of the growing demand, office space has been repurposed to give our families a place for privacy and children a quiet place for homework.

2015-2016 Financial Statement

Support & Revenue

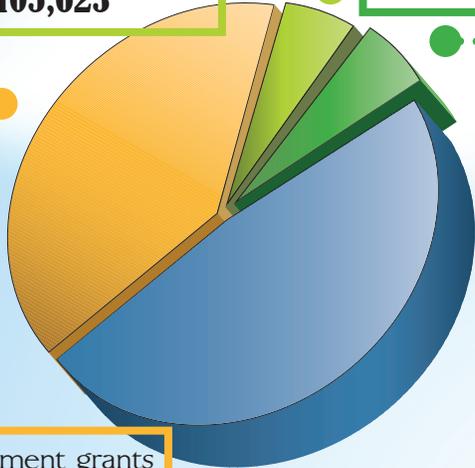
Total support & revenue..... **\$1,685,346**

Fundraising support, net
\$105,623

Program Income
\$99,613

Government grants
and contracts
\$668,099

Corporate, church, foundations,
and individual contributions
\$810,780



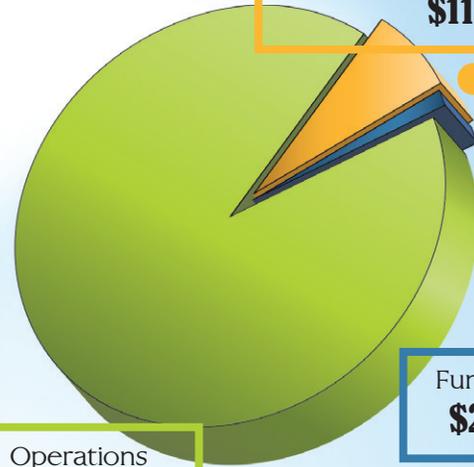
Expenses

Total expenses..... **\$1,573,761**

Management & general
\$118,564

Fundraising
\$20,175

Shelter Operations
\$1,435,022



Change in unrestricted net assets..... \$111,585
Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year..... \$2,037,572
Unrestricted net assets, end of year..... \$2,149,157

2015-2016 First Light Sponsors

Full Potential Society

- Beeson Community Fund of the Junior League of Birmingham
- Carolyn King Legacy Trust
- Cathedral Church of the Advent
- The Daniel Foundation of Alabama
- EBSCO Industries, Inc.
- First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham
- Hill Crest Foundation, Inc.
- Holy Name of Jesus Hospital Trust
- Independent Presbyterian Church
- Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation
- Joseph S. Bruno Charitable Foundation
- Protective Life Corporation
- Protective Life Foundation
- Robert R. Meyer Foundation
- South Highland Presbyterian Church Foundation
- The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham

Circle of Opportunity

- Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz, P.C.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama
- The C. Eugene Ireland Foundation
- Church of the Highlands

- Estelle S. Campbell Charitable Foundation
- Independent Presbyterian Church
- Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church
- Susan Mott Webb Charitable Trust
- The Thompson Foundation

Community of Hope

- Alabama Gas Corporation
- Alabama Power Energizers Birmingham Division
- Birmingham's First Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Bressler, Amery and Ross, P.C.
- Burr & Forman, LLP
- Cathedral of Saint Paul
- Dominion Partners, LLC
- JP Morgan Chase
- Medical Properties Trust, Inc.
- Mike and Gillian Goodrich Foundation
- Riverpeak Partners of Raymond James
- Saint Francis Xavier Church
- Saint Luke's Episcopal Church
- Saint Peter the Apostle Catholic Church
- Scott Dukes & Geisler, PC
- Scott Sullivan Streetman & Fox P.C.
- Starnes Davis Florie

- Surgical Care Affiliates
- Urban Energy Enterprises, LLC
- Verizon Wireless
- Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church

Circle of Dignity

- Bluff Park United Methodist Church
- Cowin Equipment Company
- Edgewood Presbyterian Church
- Ferlisi Jolley Associates, Inc.
- R.J. Mechanical, Inc.
- Southminster Presbyterian Church Foundation for Ministry

Circle of Community

- Alabama Power Foundation, Inc.
- ArchitectureWorks, LLP
- Brunson Stringfellow LLC
- Dunn-French Foundation
- Energen Corporation
- Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, LLC
- Jemison Investment Co. Advised Fund
- Riverchase United Methodist Church
- RSM US LLP
- Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church
- St. Paul Lutheran Church
- Wells Fargo Foundation

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

Dancing with the Stars of the Magic City

PRESENTED BY SURGICAL CARE AFFILIATES



6:30 P.M.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2016

OLD CAR HEAVEN
3501 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

TICKETS ARE ONLY \$25!

Get your tickets today and/or make a donation at www.firstlightshelter.org.

Your favorite team could win the Torch People's Choice Award by inspiring the most support for the homeless women and children of First Light.

STARRING:

Johnathan Austin & Nadine Barton

Morgan Copes & Katie Rose Stephenson

Katie Roach Dudley & Sterling Burroughs

Coach Robert Ehsan & Jaima Miller

Scott Wells Ford & Denise Katz

Honora Gathings & Jenna McCoy

Jan Hunter & Hannah Strauch

Meaghan Thomas & McCall Scofield

Rep. Patricia Todd & Mackensie Garlow

Dancing with the Stars of the Magic City is a project of the First Light Young Partners:

Tiffany Ford, President | Spire

Kathleen Bowers | Bressler, Amery & Ross, P.C.

Anne Frazier | Highlands Bar & Grill, Bottega & Chez Fonfon

Bianca Ingram | Spire

Raleigh Kent | Stryker

Christopher Kyle | National Bank of Commerce

Michelle Layfield | ARI Logistics

Amy R. Peterson | Artist

Dee Repici | Surgical Care Affiliates

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Jocquelyn Scrivner | JPMorgan Chase

Lindsay Shillinglaw | Tenet Health

Brandon Stewart | Starboard Investments, LLC, d/b/a Jimmy Johns

Hope Vinson | UAB Hospital

Ann Watford | Maynard Cooper & Gale, P.C.

Lori Woods | Protective Life



OUTREACH AWARD WINNERS!

Sherry Webb and two UAB nursing graduates who did community outreach hours in Fall 2015. Their project display won an award and will be featured in UAB's magazine.



FIRST LIGHT

A CENTER FOR HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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Birmingham, AL 35205
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www.firstlightshelter.org

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Birmingham, AL

FIRST LIGHT STAFF

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Director of Volunteer Services

Sherry J. Webb, LGSW
Director of Social Services

Altheia Gross, BSW
Social Worker

Roxanna W. Harris, MSW
Social Worker

Lisa Masters, LBSW
Social Worker

Chaquita Pendleton, BSW
Case Manager

Nicole Williams, LBSW
Social Worker

Lani Powell
Development Director

April M. Graham
Administrative Coordinator

Camilla Jones
Receptionist

Becky Mims
Shelter Assistant

Christine Moore
Shelter Assistant

Therese O'Hara
Shelter Assistant

Carmen Taylor
Weekend Manager

Vernnette Wright
Weekend Manager

Marilyn Gross
Art Therapy Coordinator

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