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First United
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Press Release

Church Purchases House for Hope Home

A new ministry begins

Winterset, IA, June 28, 2013: The First United Presbyterian Church recently purchased a residence located on the west side of Winterset to begin a new ministry. The house will be prepared to be transitional housing for a family in the area who is currently homeless. The church is partnering with various community agencies and organizations along with expertise within the congregation to create a program that will assist the family members to move toward self-sufficiency once again.

In researching the need for such a ministry, the leaders of a task group discovered that over the last two school years there have been 21 students and 22 students respectively in the Winterset school system who have been in a homeless family situation. This clear need and the availability of starter funds made possible through generous bequests by former congregation members, prompted the leadership of the congregation to take action. "It was clear to all the leaders that this was a way to faithfully utilize the monies that had been provided for ministry. The opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of people who are facing some struggles fulfilled our vision of what a fellowship of Christian believers is called to do," said Rev Howland.

In February, the leadership adopted a plan for the new ministry. Throughout the month of March, leaders presented the need and details of the proposed new ministry venture to the members of the congregation through special presentations during each worship service. The leadership also toured potential residential properties which could be utilized for this ministry. In April of this year, the congregation voted to purchase the house and to begin preparations for the creation of Hope Home.

Ministry teams were established which incorporated congregation leaders, members and members of the community. These teams have begun their work of creating the Hope Home ministry. The leaders have been in contact with other residents living around Hope Home to explain the vision and to provide information to them. Volunteers began renovations to the house on June 22. Various forms of support, both financially and in-kind, are being sought for the renovations and on-going needs of this ministry.

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