



Where Hope Begins

A Christ-Centered Women and Children's Shelter

A Ministry of Beacon of Hope Ministries — Fort Dodge, Iowa
Member of Citygate Network



Welcome to The Well

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking the time to learn about **The Well**, our upcoming women and children's shelter ministry of Beacon of Hope Ministries. Just as the name suggests, The Well will be a place of **refreshment, renewal, and restoration** through the **love of Christ**—meeting real needs with practical support and spiritual care.

Beacon of Hope has been serving our community through the men's shelter in **Fort Dodge** for 15 years, where we've witnessed **God transform lives, restore dignity, and bring hope** where once there was despair. Now, we feel called to extend this same compassion to **women and children** in need of **safety, stability, and love**.

Together, with your support, **The Well** will become an overflowing well of **love, encouragement, and hope** for families in our community.

Thank you for partnering with us in this vital work.

Sincerely,

Brian Bidleman

Brian Bidleman

Director, Beacon of Hope Ministries



Brian Bidleman is the Director of Beacon of Hope Ministries and a chaplain, providing spiritual leadership, crisis support, and community outreach. His 16 years of street ministry in the motorcycle community, along with his own experiences of sobriety, financial hardship, and supporting family members with mental illness, shape his compassionate and practical approach.

Brian also brings over 30 years of professional leadership experience, including roles in marketing, small-business ownership, and mid- to upper-level management in the trucking industry. His combined ministry and business background equips him to lead programs effectively, steward resources well, and build lasting community impact.

Let the little children come to me. Matthew 19:14

70%

of homeless women
have reported
physical abuse

38%

of domestic violence
victims will
experience
homelessness

25%

of homeless children
have witnessed
violence

*The SAFE Alliance

Board of Directors

Beacon of Hope Ministries is served by a 8-member volunteer board of directors.

Russ Goebel, President

Retired Parole Officer
Department of Corrections

Doug Rushton, V. President

Care Pastor/Maintenance
New Covenant Christian Church

Audra McKinney, Secretary

Owner, Vice President of Finance
Twin Rivers Media, LLC

Kit Hovey, Treasurer

Farmer, Contractor, Coach
Asst. Wrestling Coach, Iowa Central

Barb Schulze, Member

Retired Educator
Manson Northwest Webster School

Mike McBride, Member

Owner, Sales
Central Iowa Distributing, Inc.

Traci Vote, Member

Clinical Director
YWCA

Wendy Stephan, Member

Executive Director
Fort Dodge Housing Agency

Our Vision and Mission

The Well Women's and Children's Shelter is a place of refuge, renewal, and restoration where women and children are met with compassion, encouraged in their journey, and strengthened to rebuild their lives. Rooted in faith, The Well exists to pour out love and hope, refreshing weary souls, renewing purpose, and restoring hearts through holistic care and Christ-centered support.



Mission

To offer women and children in our community a safe refuge with **essential housing, food, and safety**, while nurturing lasting hope through the demonstrated **love of Christ** and guiding them toward a **stable and secure future**.



Vision

- **Refresh:** Souls through spiritual love and care with Christ's living water
- **Renew:** Hope and purpose
- **Restore:** Hearts and lives with holistic healing



Our Goal

To be an **overflowing well** of **love, encouragement, and hope** for women and children, strengthening them and helping them **build new foundations** for their lives.

He gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40:11

2,653

Iowans are experiencing homelessness *every night*

58%

of Iowa's homeless population are women and children

Office of Policy Development and Research (2023). Annual Homelessness Assessment Report. 2007-2023 PIT Counts by State. Iowa 2023.

Homelessness: The Need

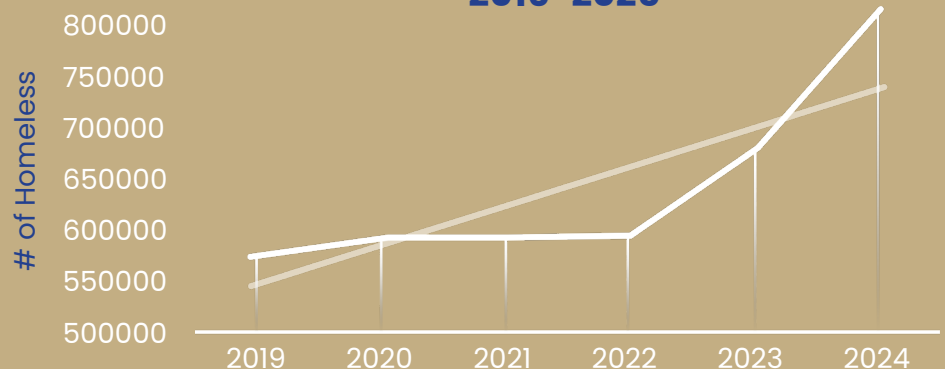
Homelessness in the United States has reached levels – **unprecedented levels** – driven largely by rising housing costs, inflation, and reductions in social supports. **Homelessness among families with children saw a 39% increase**, the largest single year in history.

The graph below illustrates the **growing number of people experiencing homelessness** in the United States from 2019 to 2024. We use national statistics because the Fort Dodge area currently lacks reliable, consistent measurements of the local situation. As the chart shows, homelessness is rising at an accelerating rate. The white line represents the **actual annual homeless counts**, while the gray line shows an **exponential trend line** that highlights the rapid upward trajectory.

HUD's numbers significantly understate homelessness. Most people—especially

families—experience homelessness by staying temporarily with others due to economic hardship, a situation known as couch surfing. It's instability, carries similar risks to shelter or street homelessness, and yet HUD does not count doubled-up households, leaving a large portion of the crisis invisible.

UNITED STATES HOMELESS TRENDS 2016–2025



Singh, K. (2024). US homelessness rose by record 18% in latest annual data. Reuters.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its annual Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, Part I: Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness School House Connection. Hidden Homelessness in the U.S.: Why Congress Must Change HUD's Definition of Homelessness to Align With Other Federal Agencies

Learn to do right; see justice. Defend the oppressed. Isaiah 1:17

The Building Design

The shelter's design **prioritizes safety and security**, ensuring the environment is created to support and protect residents, with the well-being, dignity, and comfort of our guests at the center of every decision. The plan includes **24 individual units** designed as dorm-style rooms, with each unit featuring a lockable door and furnished with a single bed for the mother and a set of bunk beds for up to two children. To better serve larger families or households with older boys, two units will include a private bathroom and will be positioned adjacent to a standard room, allowing the space to function as a family suite.

The facility will also include a playground, a commercial kitchen, shared common areas, and on-site office space for community partners to meet with guests, along with supportive services for women and children designed to promote stability and long-term self-sufficiency. The building, which has already been purchased, is located at 1597 3rd Ave NW in Fort Dodge and provides a strong foundation for bringing this vision to life.

48

Children Beds

24

Living Units



Conceptual drawing provided by Allers Associates Architects, Fort Dodge, Iowa

Support and Opportunity

At The Well, we support women in building stable, independent lives through programs and community partnerships. Our services include financial literacy training with local banks, social skills development, spiritual guidance, job skills preparation, and support from volunteer social workers. We also work with Community Health, UDMO, Webster County Health, and Iowa Workforce Development to provide access to healthcare, basic needs assistance, and employment resources. Together, these programs create a supportive environment where women can grow, gain confidence, and move forward.

Get Involved

Funding Needs and Budget

Building, Facility Renovation and Safety Upgrades	\$4,227,680
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Furnishings, Kitchen and Dining Setup, Child-Friendly Spaces and Essentials	\$185,500
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Operating Reserve (First 24 Months)	\$847,862
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Project Total Amount:	\$5,262,042
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Ways to Give

You can support The Well and Beacon of Hope Ministries through various methods!

Online Giving

Give today right from your mobile device and be the reason someone's story changes.

Visit: www.beaconofhopeshelter.com and click Donate. You may choose:

- One-Time Gift
- Monthly Partner Support
- Tribute or Memorial Gift
- Required Minimum Distribution from IRA
- Grant
- Appreciated Property
- Capital Gains Donation

Church and Organizational Partnerships

Invite us to present at your church or group to share more about The Well.

Our organization is a women's and children's residential substance use treatment facility. Although the YMCA transitioned from a homeless shelter in 2013, many still believe we provide emergency housing, resulting in frequent calls we cannot accommodate.

Each year, we turn away a significant number of women due to eligibility or insurance barriers—108 in 2023, 132 in 2024, 90 in 2025, and 11 already in early 2026. These figures do not include the children who could have entered care with them. The Well would be a vital resource, offering safe, temporary housing for women experiencing homelessness while they await treatment eligibility or insurance approval. It would also support clients discharged early due to insurance limitations, allowing them to continue outpatient care with stability. In a rural community like Fort Dodge, this partnership with The Beacon would help bridge critical gaps, providing women and their children a path toward stability and long-term success.

Traci Vote MA IADC Clinical Director

YWCA Center for Life Empowerment
Fort Dodge, Iowa

SCAN HERE TO DONATE



Please note that funds are to The Well

Mail-In Gifts:

Make checks payable to:

The Well
1021 1st Ave. N.,
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Beacon of Hope is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. All donations will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

Margaret's Story

Hi, my name is Margaret. I am writing this to let people know that being homeless is a very difficult life to live, living in a tent or a makeshift shelter is not the way for anyone to live. I'm grateful for the Salvation Army that will provide coffee and a day old or outdated donuts. Fresh fruit and bread is also there. The Salvation Army also provides lunch. The weekend I would have to kinda make sure I saved enough so I wouldn't go hungry over the weekend. I've also built a shelter from tree branches down by the river. It is also great that there is the SALT Center that gives away clothing and a cooling/heating area. There is also a resting area, but they are only open Monday-Friday from 1-4 pm. Even when you have a shelter, people hassle you and police make you pick up your belongings and move on to a different location. It would be a great idea to open a shelter to help those who are homeless find a safe and healthy place to get off the streets. Please take this letter into consideration if you have a choice to help or hinder the people in this town to a safe home for a temporary time. Help us feel human again. Give the people the opportunity to get off the street, find a job, and change their life around.

Thank you,

Margaret



We have worked with Beacon of Hope professionally for over 12 years and they are a consistent positive force in our community. Other organizations have come and gone, but Beacon of Hope continues to reach out and help homeless men in the community. And now they are expanding to come alongside the growing number of homeless women as well.

They are consistently looking forward and learning how to be more effective in their mission.

David Bowser

David L. Bowser, CPA
Bowser and Richman LLP

Thank you, for joining us in making The Well a reality. Every gift brings **hope, healing, transformation** to families in Fort Dodge and beyond.