



House of Mercy
TRANSFORMING LIVES

MESSAGES OF CARE

Community • Advocacy • Resolve • Empower

Spring 2025

Faith Over Fear A Path to Empowerment



PALM Program Resident ~ Anonymous

Raised by two ministers, he knew God not just as creator, but as the ever-present guide. Faith was not a duty or a performance in his home—it was the very pulse of life. His parents taught him how to pray in moments of fear and how to give thanks when the world felt empty. He learned that peace was something fought for, held tight, and honored—never taken for granted.

Psalm 27:1—“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?”—was a truth he carried with him from his earliest days.

When he came to the United States from the Caribbean Islands, it wasn't out of need—it was out of belief. He believed in the call he carried, in the gifts he was meant to offer, and in the future he had yet to build.

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#EndHIV #EndStigma
#EndDiscrimination
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House of Mercy
TRANSFORMING LIVES

30th ANNUAL WALK FOR AIDS!

SATURDAY, MAY 3RD

Learn more about how to get involved!

Details on pg. 5

A Message from the CEO and our Board Chair

Dear Beloved Community, Thank You for Your Support.

We are deeply grateful for your unwavering commitment, which sustains us through every challenge. The past few months have been a whirlwind of emotions as we faced changes that directly impact the lives of those we care for and love. The federal freeze threatened to end vital services and years of progress. HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for People Living with AIDS) is a federally funding program that provides housing and lifesaving services like comprehensive case management to help people live a healthy life and reach an undetectable status. Without this funding, our clients are likely to lose their housing and have to rely on hospitals and crisis intervention systems that are already overwhelmed. Or they may stop seeking services altogether. However, together we can ensure that our loved ones have access to lifesaving services.



Our Mission and Values

For nearly 34 years, we have been passionately dedicated to supporting people living with HIV or AIDS through housing and comprehensive supportive services. Our mission to empower people living with HIV in their transformation toward a more independent life is unwavering. We are dedicated to creating a world where everyone can thrive.

For us, and many of you, this vision is deeply rooted in mercy, grace, compassion, dignity, and an overflowing love that knows no bounds. We have already witnessed an epidemic, and we don't want to go back. Let's keep making progress so that we can continue to witness the countless stories of resilience and hope that are at House of Mercy.

Current Efforts & Challenges

At this very moment, our home is a sanctuary for those who need help to get back on their feet due to evictions, job losses, and being turned away from family. Our residents have experienced the harsh realities of stigma and discrimination, which have limited their opportunities. However, they also understand the transformative power of community.

With access to medical appointments, prescriptions, nutritious food, a warm bed, and the peace of mind that comes from being safe, they can envision a brighter future. Every day we witness their resilience and hope as they take steps to rebuild their lives.

Our Commitment to CARE



Our CARE values drive us to work tirelessly at the intersections of health, housing, and human rights. We believe that in 2025, no one should die from an AIDS-related illness. This commitment fuels our efforts to ensure that everyone has access to the care and support they need to live healthy, dignified lives.

We are actively engaged in strategic planning and excited to implement a new plan for fiscal year 2026. Our plan aims to increase visibility, enhance and expand our services, diversify our revenue streams, and improve the effectiveness of our board. With these initiatives, we are confident that we will better serve our community and achieve our mission with even greater impact.

Join Us in Making a Difference

We are here, continuing to provide essential services, but we need your help to make an even greater impact. Your support and involvement are crucial in creating a world where everyone can thrive. Act NOW to be part of this transformative journey.

Donate, volunteer, and advocate for our cause today.

Together, we can ensure that no one must face the challenges of HIV and AIDS alone. Your generosity and compassion can change lives.



With gratitude and hope,

Latoya Gardner, JD
President & CEO

Cindy Tilley
Board of Directors Co-Chair

CONGRATS DINAH, 20 YEARS AT HOUSE OF MERCY!

"I've created many happy memories at House of Mercy; the residents and staff over the years have been really great. There have been many changes over the years as our clients have become healthier through better medications, regular doctor visits, and improved nutrition. Many people have been truly helped through our ministry. It is a blessing to work where you feel you are actively helping people who are truly in need."

-Dinah Booth
Resident Program Aide



The long process of permanent residency felt like nothing more than a series of steps he had to walk through, a formality that he knew would pass. When the time came for the routine blood test, he didn't think twice. HIV, in 1992, was seen through a narrow lens. But life, as it often does, had other plans. The news of his HIV status did not come in a storm, but in a quiet, shattering moment that left him breathless. The weight of the diagnosis pressed heavy—more than the physical, it was the unknown that struck him hardest. He didn't know what the next step would look like, but he knew how to keep moving forward. And so, he did. Miami brought warmth—not just in temperature but in spirit.

It felt like an invitation to start over, to find his voice again in the ministry, to rebuild what had fallen apart. Yet, even in the warmth of a new beginning, his marriage ended. But even then, he stood firm. God is faithful, he remembered. And he prayed—not for relief, but for resilience. A daughter, a new city—Atlanta. Another blow: cancer. Life brought more challenges but once again, he found his strength not in fighting the storm, but in trusting that the storm would pass. He had already survived so much. But the challenges continued, including financial hardships, which ultimately led to the end of another marriage. He found himself in Charlotte weary, uncertain, and without a home. No car. No place to stay. Yet, through it all, he never lost his faith. He was never faithless.



That's when he found House of Mercy. What he found there was more than shelter. It was refuge. It was a place where he could take a deep breath, remember who he was, and reclaim his dignity. "During my time at House of Mercy," he said, "I have been acknowledged with inherent worth and valued for my opinions and contributions—regardless of my background or circumstances. I've had privacy when I needed it, and support while being autonomous and independent."

That, too, is mercy. That, too, is ministry.

He found House of Mercy as a space to reflect, meditate, and pray, seeking guidance for his next steps. He expressed, "Through the support of the staff and the programs available, I began saving funds toward purchasing a vehicle, all while working on rebuilding a healthy relationship with my daughter. The ability to attend medical appointments and take care of daily needs, such as shopping, became possible with the stability House of Mercy helped provide."

He began again. And every day, he continues to rise. And still—every morning—he prays. Because even with everything behind him, and all that is still unknown ahead, he speaks with strength, with certainty, and without fear the words that have always been his foundation.

Every day, individuals like him find new hope and purpose at House of Mercy, but this transformation is only possible because of the generosity of people like you. Your donation is more than just a gift—it's a steppingstone in someone's future. It provides the foundation for stability, the resources to rebuild, and the support needed to overcome life's toughest challenges. With your help, we can empower individuals to regain their strength and create lasting change in their lives.

30TH ANNUAL WALK FOR AIDS

Walking in honor of three decades of housing, health and progress!

Commemorating thirty years of dedication and progress

in Belmont, NC on the Sacred Heart Campus.

1 or 2-mile route through Historic Downtown Belmont

FREE HIV, Hepatitis C, and syphilis testing

Music by DJ Buddy Luv, prizes, community vendors and more!

Our goal is to raise \$25,000 that will allow us to continue providing housing, case management, and essential services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Walk, donate, sponsor, or spread the word to help us reach our goal and help make a difference!

[*LIVE Event Page - Click HERE!*](#)





A Legacy of Giving: The Norman Family

“The call came at 1 a.m. PST, making it 10 p.m. in Charlotte. It was my brother, Fred. ‘I just finished grits, eggs, toast, and bacon,’ he said with a laugh. ‘I love it here!’”

Fred Norman, Jr.—family and friends called him Freddy—had been at House of Mercy for several months when he called that night in 1992. He was the second oldest child, the first boy in our family. A mischief-maker with a sly sense of humor, he worshiped the Miami Dolphins. He was a snazzy dresser, father to a young daughter,

an unabashed chowhound. Like our dad, he joined the Army at 18, straight out of high school. A few years after leaving the military, he moved to Charlotte. It was there that we learned he had been diagnosed with AIDS.

“Our family continues to support House of Mercy so they can provide compassionate support to families like ours that want a place free of stigma and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.”

-BEVERLY NORMAN-COOPER



Fred's late mother, Juanita Norman, & his two children



Fred Norman Jr., pictured on far right

Mom wanted a place where Fred could live independently as long as possible while having his growing medical needs met. She also wanted a place where he would be recognized as a human being, someone who was far more than his AIDS diagnosis: a son, brother, father, veteran, and foodie.

She loved HoM at first sight, and Fred quickly grew to love it, as well—its caring, friendly and compassionate staff, his room, the peaceful garden out back, and the food. When we visited, we were not strangers. We were family, treated by everyone with the same dignity and respect they gave Fred.”

Upon Fred’s passing in 1992, at the age of 33, the Norman family has contributed monthly to support the House of Mercy and positively impact the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS.



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