

FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER

We want to say THANK YOU to everyone who made the Day of Promise Golf Tournament a success! Whether you played, sponsored, volunteered, donated, or partnered with us, your support means the world. Together, we're making a difference in the lives of families in our community, and for that, we are incredibly grateful. Thank you for believing in our mission - every child deserves a home. More pictures are available on the Events page of our website.

A huge thank you to the great team at Willow House
Advisors for being our loyal presenting sponsor!



DAY OF PROMISE 2025



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Message from Our Executive Director

As the seasons change and the air turns crisp, I find myself reflecting on how much Family Promise has grown—thanks to your generosity, compassion, and belief in our mission. Because of your continued support, we've been able to help more families find safety, stability, and hope this year than ever before. Each success story is a direct reflection of your commitment to walking beside us as we turn uncertainty into opportunity for families across Southern Chester County.

This fall holds special meaning for me. In recent weeks, I've said farewell to several dear friends—and one of the dearest was my Mama. Her wisdom, humor, and unmistakable Southern charm continue to guide me daily. I carry her lessons in my heart: to lead with grace, to serve with kindness, and to always keep a door open for those in need. These lessons have served me well, especially as we've supported several mothers navigating unimaginable challenges.

Autumn reminds us that to everything there is a season—a time to grow, to grieve, to give thanks, and to begin again. As you sip your warm cider or enjoy all things pumpkin spice, I ask that you take a quiet moment to remember those still struggling to find their footing. Change can be difficult, but at Family Promise, we are proud to remain a constant: a place of hope, a bit of Southern hospitality, and belonging. In this issue, we will also highlight some of our major successes, and you will hear from one of our younger staff as he begins his walk into adulthood, and how his experience at Family Promise has changed his outlook.

Our mission—that every child deserves a place to call home—remains at the heart of everything we do. Even as we celebrate new partnerships and financial milestones, we know the work continues. Each day, we are reminded that our calling is not just to provide shelter, but to offer the warmth of community, the promise of possibility, and the comfort of home. Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey. Because of you, hope continues to find a home here—season after season.



Wishing you peace,  love,  and a place to call home.



Community of Caring

It is always a blessing to share our mission with our community, and this recently we've been overwhelmed with kindness and generosity.

- A heartfelt thank you to Bethany Presbyterian for their warm welcome and amazing donations—your support truly uplifts our families.
- To the incredible UPC baking team, thank you for bringing a little sunshine (and sweetness!) to a gloomy day.
- We're also grateful to Kendal-Crosslands Communities for the wonderful donations collected during your annual company picnic—your commitment to giving back inspires us.
- And finally, a very special thank you to the little hands at UPC Vacation Bible School for creating beautiful soup bags for our families. We missed celebrating with you in person this year, but your generosity continues to be such a blessing.

Together, you remind us what community is all about—compassion, generosity, and love in action.



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Celebrating 10 Years

By Reverend Annalie Korengel

“I remember November of 2014; Melanie Weiler, former Executive Director of KACS, called together a group of religious leaders, non-profit EDs, community activists, politicians, and police chiefs. She told us that in the prior school year (2012-2013) in the four surrounding school districts (Kennett Consolidated, Unionville-Chadds Ford, Oxford, Avon Grove), there were hundreds of school age children who had spent at least one night experiencing homelessness with their families. That alarming number did not even include any younger siblings not yet registered in school. She then asked us what we were going to do about it.

More meetings took place and finally a group of about 10 of us took the reins and became an affiliate of Family Promise. FPSCC opened its doors in November of 2015. I had the privilege of serving as the founding Vice President, and served two terms as President of the Board of Directors.

The church I pastor, Unionville Presbyterian Church, became very involved in Family Promise. We were the first church to sign up as a “host church” and we hosted the first group of families in November 2015! The first Executive Director, Susan Minarchi, and the first Administrative Assistant, Robin MacPherson, both came from the congregation.

I am so proud of how this congregation lived out its mission to “Love God, and Our Neighbors as Ourselves.” They prepared 4 rooms for the families, had welcome gifts for every participant, and partnered with other churches (Bethany Presbyterian and Doe Run Presbyterian) to provide meals and overnights.



Unionville Presbyterian Church

Ironically, when the pandemic struck and churches closed and FPSCC had to pivot, the families were again at Unionville Presbyterian. Luckily, the community rallied and we were able to get them into hotel rooms (thanks to Square Roots Collective).

Since the pandemic, as FPSCC has grown and changed, Unionville continues to be involved. We sponsor one of the “Promise Houses” by making sure each new family has a Walmart gift card and other items they need to get them settled. This summer, the children of the church made bags of soup for the families to enjoy.

We wish FPSCC continued success as they provided needed assistance to keep families together when they are facing homelessness and we are so proud to have been part of this great organization since the beginning!”

Creativity as a Second Language



In August, we had our very first Promise of Creativity and wow, what a night! Led by the amazing Nancy Pia, families enjoyed books, art, and a big dose of imagination...plus surprise tickets to either Hershey Park or Dutch Wonderland for extra family fun! As one parent said: "Thank you for helping me create lasting memories with my children this summer." We're beyond grateful, and we loved seeing every happy face along the way!



More Than A Bridge

By Daniel Tafolla, Content Manager at FPSCC



The first time I translated for a family at Family Promise, I was terrified I would make a mistake. My small voice cracked, my palms were sweaty, and I stared at the case manager's notes as if I understood every word that was being written. The mother sat across from me, waiting. Rent, food, school - this conversation was not easy. I was not just translating from English to Spanish, I was translating fear into relief, confusion into clarity, silence into a chance to be heard. I have spent most of my life between two worlds, English and Spanish. Between not knowing one word in another language, between my family and the outside world, between being a kid who wanted to fit in, and being an "interpreter" who had to act older than I was. It felt normal at first, but then the unfairness hit me. I was thirteen. Why did I have to carry so much responsibility? Over time, I learned something important: bridges are where people meet. I realized I was the bridge - and that gave me a purpose I did not know I had. My parents came to the U.S. with hope and hard work, unsure of the future. Their English was limited, their opportunities were small. That meant I had to become a guide to navigate this world together with them. At school conferences, I explained grades and goals. At the store, I translated labels. At home, I was walked my parents through legal paperwork. Each translation was not just words, it carried my family forward.

It hasn't always been easy. Some nights I felt like I was juggling too many things at once: class office meetings and NHS hours and church volunteering and homework and work shifts. On a school night, I was exhausted and questioned if I could keep going. But I showed up anyway, and eventually understood why each role mattered. I was not just helping others. I was becoming someone who could serve, lead, and belong in my community.

In leadership, I found my voice, one that I can use to advocate, not just translate. When classmates trusted me to represent them, I realized leadership is not about a title. It is about listening closely and following through.

In service, I found perspective. Family Promise shows me how fragile stability can be, how quickly a family can lose housing or food. I saw firsthand what parents with young children endured, and how faith and fellowship carried them through. Service taught me that dignity comes from being seen and supported, not from wealth or status.

And, in my own identity, I found a purpose. For a long time, I thought being bilingual was just a skill, something that came from being first-generation American. Now, I know it is part of who I am. It allows me to navigate two cultures, two traditions, two ways of understanding the world. My Mexican roots and my American opportunities do not compete, they complete each other.

These lessons - leadership, service, and identity - are not just ideas to me. They are what I live every day. They are in my late nights, early mornings, and the tired but proud smile when another responsibility is off my shoulders. They are what inspire me to keep pushing for a better future. I have seen what happens when voices go unheard. I want to be the person who makes sure they are not.

I still think about that first translation at Family Promise. I can see the mother's shoulders relaxing when she realized she was finally understood. That moment taught me something that will forever stay with me: I am more than a bridge. I am someone who gives others confidence to take the next step forward, even in the darkest moments of uncertainty.

This is what I hope to keep creating - not just bridges, but pathways for others to follow.

Every Child Deserves a Home – Our *Donors* Make It Possible

By Kimberly Zuleba, Board Member

“For ten years, Family Promise of Southern Chester County (FPSCC) has stood as a beacon of hope for families experiencing homelessness. Founded by community members and fueled by the generosity of local individuals, corporations, and foundations, Family Promise has become a lifeline for parents and children in crisis. Guided by the core belief that every child deserves a home, the organization works tirelessly—365 days a year—to help families regain stability and independence.

From its beginnings, Family Promise was built on the idea that communities are strongest when they come together to care for their neighbors. That belief is evident every day through the compassion of its *donors*. Whether through a one-time contribution, a recurring gift, or a corporate partnership, every donation directly supports families who need shelter, meals, and a pathway to sustainable housing. These contributions make it possible for Family Promise to provide its services completely free of charge to families, ensuring that help is available the moment it’s needed most.

In its first decade, Family Promise of Southern Chester County has grown from a small community initiative into a trusted, comprehensive support network. The organization provides more than just a safe place to sleep—it offers case management, financial literacy coaching, employment resources, and connections to permanent housing. Each of these services represents a steppingstone on a family’s journey toward self-sufficiency, and each one exists because of *donor* support.

The impact of this generosity cannot be overstated. Every dollar given helps to fill a pantry, keep the lights on, or provide a night of warmth and security for a child. More than that, *donor* support fuels transformation—the moment a parent finds a new job, a family moves into their own apartment, or when a child sleeps soundly in a bed that is finally theirs. These moments of renewal and dignity are made possible because of a community that believes in standing beside its neighbors.

At Family Promise, the work is deeply personal. Families receive not only tangible assistance but also the reassurance that they are not alone. Staff and volunteers walk alongside each family, offering empathy, guidance, and a hand to hold during life’s most uncertain times. Together with the *donors* who make this mission possible, they provide not just services—but hope.

As Family Promise of Southern Chester County celebrates its 10th anniversary, it does so with immense gratitude. The progress of the past decade—hundreds of families stabilized, thousands of meals served, countless lives rebuilt—belongs as much to the community as it does to the organization.

Looking ahead, Family Promise remains steadfast in its mission. The goal is clear and unwavering: to walk beside our neighbors in need until every child in Southern Chester County has a home. And with continued *donor* support, that vision moves closer to reality each day. Because when a community comes together, hope becomes a home—and every child deserves nothing less.”

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Network of Congregations

Family Promise was built on a unique model, utilizing the resources of congregational partners in our community to provide meals and overnight accommodations for families until they find permanent housing. Our volunteers are the heart of the organization. Here in Southern Chester County, we are proud to have over 900 dedicated volunteers and 26 caring congregations in our network.

THANK YOU!!!!!!

Apostolic Church of Oxford
Assumption of the BVM
Avon Grove Church of the Nazarene
Avondale United Methodist Church
Bethany Presbyterian Church Mendenhall
Christ Church at the Grove
Christian Life Center
Cornerstone Presbyterian Church
Doe Run Presbyterian Church
Episcopal Church of the Advent
New London United Methodist Church
Kennett Friends Meeting
Oxford Presbyterian Church

Oxford United Methodist Church
Presbyterian Church of Kennett Square
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church of Oxford
St. Cornelius Catholic Church
St. Michael Lutheran Church
St. Patrick Catholic Church
The Barn Vineyard Church
Toughkenamon Presbyterian Church
Unionville Presbyterian Church
United Methodist Church of the Open Door
West Grove United Methodist Church
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Willowdale Chapel

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As always, thank you so much for your unwavering support and dedication to Family Promise and the families that we are called to serve.