

**SPRING 2023**

Faith-based support  
and services for  
individuals with autism  
and intellectual disabilities



# 25<sup>th</sup> *Anniversary*





# Celebrating 25 Years of God's Faithfulness

In 2023 Jessica & Friends Community celebrates twenty-five years of ministry to the disabilities community of central Pennsylvania and beyond. In some ways, it seems just yesterday we welcomed our third child into our home, a beautiful daughter named Jessica. In other ways, it seems an eternity since Jessica was diagnosed with a severe intellectual disability that would require round-the-clock care for the rest of her life.

At the time, we could never have dreamed all that God would eventually do and the future lives God would touch through Jessica's life. We could not have imagined God would raise up through Jessica a ministry that twenty-five years later employs more than 125 staff plus volunteers, to provide respite, care, and guidance to hundreds of families struggling with special needs family members.

As we celebrate twenty-five years of Jessica & Friends Community we think of those whose lives have become an integral part of J&FC over the last quarter century. We are reminded that each

precious individual was created in God's image and that God is creating His masterpiece in each life.

Each new day is another page of the story He has written for them. While many face incredible challenges, we are inspired by their lives as they trust God and develop a close relationship with Him. We are thankful God is working out His good purpose in each of their lives, including our beloved daughter, Jessica.

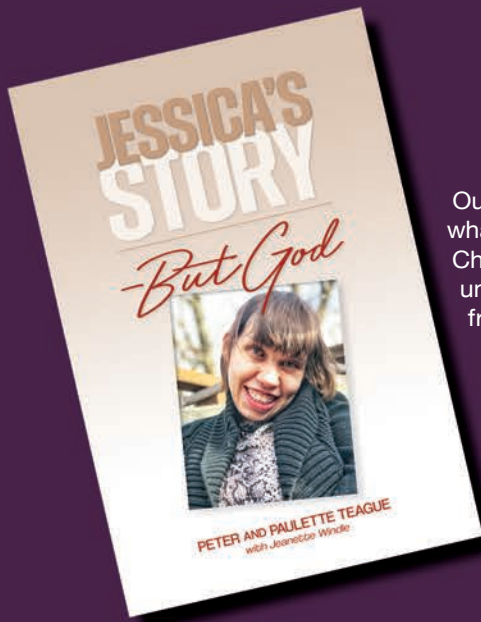
I Chronicles 16:12 reminds us to REMEMBER THE WORKS HE HAS DONE. As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary of Jessica & Friends Community, we begin by looking back to THANK GOD to see all that He has accomplished through Jessica's life, and to thank Him for the privilege of bringing hope and healing to the many families and their loved ones we serve.

With grateful hearts,

**Peter and Paulette Teague**  
**Co-Founders**



# COMING SOON... Jessica's Story



Our soon to be published book, *Jessica's Story*, tells the remarkable journey of what God has done and continues to do through Jessica's life. Joni Eareckson Tada, Christian author and disability advocate, says of Jessica, "Her unflinching bright spirit, unflinching joy-filled attitude, and award-winning smile has won her thousands of friends."

This book takes you deep into the struggles of Jessica's everyday challenges, and the love and support of her family, friends and caregivers to show the power of faith, hope and love, leading to the founding of Jessica & Friends Community twenty-five years ago. This story is not unlike many of yours.

When you send in a gift, requesting a copy of *Jessica's Story*, we will send it to you when it is available in the Spring of 2023.

**Peter & Paulette Teague,**  
Co-Founders, Jessica & Friends Community

## Grateful. Thankful. Blessed.

As we have been privileged to serve our families over these past twenty-five years, these are the words we hear over and over... We are grateful, thankful and blessed that our precious family member is part of Jessica & Friends Community. Following are two stories from a mother and a sister sharing their experiences in these past years.

"When my children, Barry and Betsy, were born in 1973 and 1977 with special needs, it was a journey I could have never imagined. Years later, I met the Teague family at Church of the Open Door, and they invited me, along with other parents who had children with special needs, to their home and shared their dream of starting faith-based residential services for adults with disabilities, which later was named Jessica & Friends Community. Working with the county through a Family Initiative program, three families came together to buy the first home for J&FC.

I am so grateful that I was asked if Betsy wanted to be a part of this first home. The timing was perfect...the rest is history. Years later my son, Barry, was also able to move into a J&FC home. I am so thankful my children are living in beautiful homes with caring staff, and I can have peace of mind knowing they are happy and doing well.



### **RuthAnn Bailets, Mother**

"When my parents were in their 80's they were finding it increasingly difficult to care for their son, Matt, who has special needs. They were referred to Jessica & Friends Community through York/Adams MH-IDD and in 2007 Matt joined two other gentlemen in a beautiful home in Springettsbury township, now called David's House.

The goals J&FC set for Matt have totally improved his quality of life. At age 52, he has become calmer and more relaxed. The staff is loving and supportive. They understand his body language and he loves the attention they give him. Jessica & Friends Community is an excellent model for homes serving the disabled, and I am so thankful Matt has been a part of David's House for the past 16 years."

### **Carol Schintz, Sister**







# Celebrating 25

## YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

These past twenty-five years we look back and remember with thanksgiving God's provisions. He took our dream, and made something beautiful for the families and individuals in our community.

- We are thankful for all our special friends involved in our Residential Services, our Pathway Person-Centered Day Programs, and our Community Program.
- We have been blessed with the gift of Indian Rock Acres, where families come together through our Parent and Caregiver Support (PACS) Group to support and encourage each other.
- We are thankful for the ministry opportunities our Individuals have throughout the community and beyond.
- We are blessed with a dedicated Board of Directors who prayerfully guide us into the future.
- We are so thankful for the caring and dedicated staff who are the hands, feet, lips and heart to God's precious ones we serve.

In God's faithfulness, we have seen the joy of transformed lives these past twenty-five years, and we look forward to see what God will do in the future through the vision and mission of Jessica & Friends Community.



Potential



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*Starts here*

[jandfcommunity.org/employment](http://jandfcommunity.org/employment)





# Faith







# J&FC Appoints New CEO

Jessica & Friends Community would like to welcome Jane Merolla as she begins her duties as our new CEO. We believe Jane is an incredible fit for our organization. First, she has a demonstrated track record in the leadership and growth of organizations that provide care to adults with intellectual disabilities and autism. This includes comprehensive knowledge of governmental regulations and a history of working closely within county and state government to identify and implement creative solutions benefiting individuals and their families.

We were drawn to Jane not only for her knowledge and experience, but also her approach. Soft spoken, and empathetic to the challenges we face, Jane will lead with humility and a servant's heart. She has worked in a family established organization, and has the firsthand experience to manage the sensitivities of working with an active Board and founders. Her previous employment includes both large and medium-sized organizations, experience that will go far as we chart out our future growth. Finally, her faith walk and embrace of our faith-based mission demonstrates alignment with the key elements of who we are and why we exist.

Jane shared, "I'm honored, and certainly humbled, by this opportunity to lead Jessica & Friends Community through this next chapter of its future. I feel very blessed by all the passion and enthusiasm surrounding our mission, and grateful to be on this journey with all of you."

*By Tom Brown, President, Board of Directors*

# Above & Beyond

Our 2022 appeal spoke to so many of you to reach out in support of our friends with autism and intellectual disabilities. Because of your generous giving, our year end gifts amounted to \$133,278. Generous donations were also presented from The Woman's Club of York, Conewago Enterprises, Inc. and Living Word Community Church. Thank you for going above and beyond our goal of \$125,000 and for your gifts of love and notes of kindness and support for those we serve.

Conewago Enterprises, Inc.



The Woman's Club of York



Living Word Community Church



# Introducing New Staff



## Linda Bercik, Director of Residential Services

Linda, originally from the Pittsburgh area, has called York her home for over 20 years. While attending college in 1995, Linda started as a Direct Support Professional in a residential group home working with children and adults diagnosed with intellectual disabilities and autism. Over the years, she continued to serve in human services (IDD & MH) in residential, day programs, community, and home based programs as a Therapeutic Support Staff. Linda loves this work because it is such a meaningful way to serve not only the individuals but the families and dedicated staff. She says "I am privileged to bear witness to the growth of those we serve as we help them live their best life and am blessed to join such an amazing team."



## Treteria Jones, House Manager, Sarah Kathryn's House

Treteria was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. She has been married to her childhood sweetheart, Kyeal, for 16 years. They have two children, daughter, Ta'Shyra and son, Ky'John. Before relocating to Pennsylvania in 2022, they lived in Ohio where Treteria joined the human services field as a counselor to adults suffering from alcohol and opiate addictions. After moving to Pennsylvania, she became a Behavioral Health Therapist for children as well as a house supervisor for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Treteria enjoys reading, cooking, and crafting. She is a die-hard Baltimore Ravens fan. Even her favorite color is purple. Treteria commented "I am grateful for the opportunity to work for an organization that puts Jesus first in everything they do. I am blessed to be building positive relationships with not just the ladies of Sarah Kathryn House, but the staff as well."



## Jade Katz, House Manager, Jackie's House

Jade, a Colorado Rocky Mountain native, relocated to Hellam, Pennsylvania in 2021 to be closer to her son Justin, a retired Army combat medic, his wife, Alyson and grandchildren, Gavin, Sheila and James.

Jade recently became house manager at Jackie's house. She attended Ottawa University where she received her Bachelor's in English with a Minor in Psychology. Her passion has been serving those with intellectual disabilities over twenty years. Jade noted, "Those I have served and cared for have taught me more about life than any formal education could ever have given me."

In her spare time, she enjoys powerlifting, the gym, hiking, kayaking, camping, crafts, reading, and knitting. Above all she enjoys laughter and cheesy good jokes.



## Heather Mundis, Nurse

Heather Mundis, a lifelong York native, has been married to her husband, Marty, for 21 years. They have two children, Tristan and Maia. Heather attended the Christian School of York and graduated from York College with a BA in Nursing. She worked for 17 years in surgical, neuro and trauma nursing. In 2016 Heather suffered a devastating back injury followed by surgery and a very difficult battle with Lyme disease. During those years of illness and recovery, her faith grew incredibly. She began praying for an opportunity to serve God in a ministry utilizing her nursing degree. In the summer of 2022, God indeed opened

that door by providing a nursing opportunity at Jessica & Friends Community. Heather states, "this has been absolutely a blessing and an answer to my prayers."

# Prayer Closet

- 1) We are thankful for our visionary investors who helped us exceed our giving goal of \$125,000 for December. We praise God that we received \$133,278.
- 2) We are thankful for the new staff that has started at J&FC in the past several months. We are not fully staffed, so prayers are needed for more caring and committed staff.
- 3) Pray for the health and safety of our staff and all those they serve in our homes and programs.
- 4) Pray for those families who are grieving the loss of a loved one.
- 5) Pray for Jessica Teague's eyesight to be restored and ask for God's divine intervention for healing.

# In Remembrance

For many years **Jacob Young** was a member

of our Pathway Person-Centered Day Program in York. Jacob was known for his beautiful smile. He was a sweet guy who loved being a



part of the program and having fun with his friends. Jacob went home to be with his Heavenly Father on December 23rd. We will dearly miss him and think of all the wonderful memories we have of this dear young man. We know he is with his Savior and one day we will see Jacob again!

**Ashley Ferguson** was a precious girl who attended our Pathway York Day Program for many years. She was known for her kindness and her huge



smile. Ashley loved unconditionally and was a friend to everyone. Ashley went home to be with her Heavenly Father in January. She will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

# Upcoming Events

**Lancaster Bible College Chapel Service,**  
901 Eden Road, Wednesday, April 12 at 9:00 am

**Give Local York,** J&FC is looking forward to that big 24-hour online give day, Give Local York! For 2023, the event will begin on Thursday, May 4th at 9:00 pm and continue through Friday, May 5th until 8:59 pm.

## J&FC's 25th Anniversary Trip to the Holy Land

We are hosting a trip to the Holy Land from September 9-21, 2023. The trip is currently filled. However, there is a waiting list. If you are interested, please contact Peter Teague at 717.682.1854.

## J&FC 25th Anniversary Gala

Saturday, October 7th More details later.



1625 East Market Street  
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Fax 888.509.2320  
jandfcommunity.org

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Manager, Community Program

Glenn & Millie Martin  
Innkeepers, Indian Rock Acres

Scott Reynold  
Facility Manager

## Jessica & Friends Community News

is published quarterly to provide relevant updates and current issues of importance consistent with our mission to the families we serve, churches, friends and supporters.

Please send all correspondence including address corrections to:

Jessica & Friends Community  
Attention: Anne Fritts

1625 East Market Street, York, PA 17403

## Memorial and Honor Gifts

August 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022

### IN HONOR OF/GIVEN BY:

**Dru and Seth Almone**  
Ms. Kimberly Clabaugh  
Ms. Linda Smith  
Mr. William Staub

**Carolyn Ambrosius**  
Mr. & Mrs. James Neiderer

**Madison Anthony**  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Claybaugh

**Barry Bailets' birthday**  
Mrs. Ruth Ann Bailets

**Martha Brown**  
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Wolford

**Godfrey Family**  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Good

**Bethany Godfrey**  
Mrs. Miriam Leaman

**Kim Grove**  
Mrs. Susan Reich

**Ellen Hartman's birthday**  
Mrs. Ruth Ann Bailets

**Troy Hoenstine's birthday**  
Mrs. Ruth Ann Bailets

**Jayne Janora's birthday**  
Mrs. Sally Janora

**Sally Janora**  
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Snell

**Kadine's House Staff**  
Mrs. Sally Janora

**Sarah Keeney's birthday**  
Ms. Anita Brenneman

**Caring Staff at Scarboro House**  
Dr. & Mrs. Jack Kline

**Ruth Shertzer**  
Dr. & Mrs. Peter W. Teague

**Jonathan Shields**  
Ms. Georgiana Artley

**Kay Slautterback**  
Mrs. Bernadette Livingston

**Scott Smith's birthday**  
Mrs. Ruth Ann Bailets

**Avery Sponseller**  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerome Mathison

**Jeremy Srouer**  
Ms. Sheila Jackson

**Jim & Cushla Srouer Family**  
Srouer Grillo Family Charitable Fund

**Jessica Teague**  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerome Mathison  
Mr. Aaron Spangler

**Peter and Paulette Teague**  
Dr. & Mrs. James Barnes  
RPA, Inc.

**Lucy Wolford**  
Matthew 6:21 Project

### IN MEMORY OF/GIVEN BY:

**Ruth Almone**  
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Wolford

**Cody Blymier**  
Sons of the American Legion  
Post 469  
Wrightsville Social Club

**Jeanette Brady**  
Dr. & Mrs. Peter W. Teague

**Lloyd Briggs**  
Sally and Jayme Janora

**Ernest M. Brown, Jr.**  
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Wolford

**Georgetta Brown**  
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Wolford

**Guy Brown**  
Dr. & Mrs. Peter W. Teague

**Kenn Cosgrove**  
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Mrs. Sally Janora

**Matthew Grove**  
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**June and Kim Handwerker**  
Mr. Robert Handwerker

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**Virginia "Gini" Hartlaub**  
Mrs. Bernadette Livingston

**Gloria Knippenberg**  
Mr. Garnett Knippenberg

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