

# the House Next Door

Annual Report 2024

**The House Next Door offers a safe space and a place of grace for all who are seeking healing, wholeness, and transformation.**



## COME AND SEE!

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As I sit down to write this report, I have recently learned of the death of Don Harvey, a beloved member of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Kendall Park, where I served as pastor for five years. Don was the loving patriarch of that congregation and the finest churchman I have ever known. To me, and to everyone who knew him, Don embodied the love of Christ in our midst.

Don was the first one to arrive at church on Sunday mornings, and the first to welcome every member and every visitor. One of the things that I respected most about Don was how, even in his eighties, he continued to be open to new experiences, to learning, to growing, and to deepening his relationship with God. Don's mantra was "Come and see!" He was always reminding the Council, the congregation, and his pastor of the central mission of the church – to invite others to come and see what God is doing in our midst. Don's was a life of invitation. He was constantly inviting others to "Come and see!" And he encouraged all of us to do the same.

Throughout the Gospels Jesus extends his invitation to "Come and see!" It is an invitation to a deeper relationship with Christ, where new life is found. As we read in story after story, when people say yes to Christ's invitation, when they encounter him, transformation happens, new life is found, they are never the same, and they are moved to go and tell others.



## GO AND TELL!

Encounters with Jesus always appear to be book-ended with invitations. There is the initial invitation to "Come and see!" And then after the conversation or the teaching or the healing, Jesus extends the invitation to "Go and tell!"

The ministry of the House Next Door continues to grow because everyone, and I mean everyone, who attends an event invites others to "Come and see!" Do you remember the Faberge commercial from the 1980's? (I know, I'm dating myself here). Actress Heather Locklear says, "When I first tried Faberge Organic Shampoo, it was so good, I told two friends about it, and they told two friends, and so on, and so on, and so on..." That is what is happening at the House Next Door. People are invited to "Come and see!". They are invited to a deeper relationship with Jesus where new life is found, and when they experience this encounter, they then "Go and tell!" They tell their story, and they share their experiences with others.

It is my great joy to share with you just a sampling of the stories that participants are sharing about their experiences at the House Next Door:





*There aren't enough opportunities to receive care as a caregiver, so this retreat time was manna in the wilderness.*

*This retreat was deeply healing to my soul.*

*I experienced this retreat as a time of renewal for body, mind and spirit.*

*This time away was pure grace. It is critical for the church to offer these days of respite given the demands and challenges of parish ministry in this day.*

*The House Next Door provided a safe place for a group of pastors to bring our vulnerabilities and pain, then gently move us toward rest and peace.*

*As I prepare for medical leave, this house has been a refuge for me.*

*The House Next Door is my "go to" place for meeting friends, praying, getting away and meeting God. It is my home.*

*The hospitality of the House Next Door is second to none. It beckons me come in and relax. Be with your Maker. Keep up this great and necessary God-work.*

*Blessings to you, Pastor Dale, and your community of caring, who are invested in helping us thrive.*

*Spiritual Direction has been, and continues to be, a precious and transformative gift. My weariness returns to wonder and my exhaustion transformed into a fresh embrace of the Holy Spirit's leading.*

*I am a pastoral care provider. The House Next Door makes it possible for me to experience care. Time spent in Spiritual Direction is a wellspring.*

*Group Spiritual Direction is the most meaningful thing I do each month.*

*This house has become an oasis for me.*

*You can't find this anywhere else!*

*The House Next Door gives me hope for the Church.*

*I'm a seeker...I'll be there!*



# LIVING THE MISSION

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Like Don Harvey, the House Next Door embodies invitation: Come and see! Go and tell!

This is the work of the Church. This is the work of Prince of Peace. This is our mission. To invite. To welcome. To provide a safe space and a place of grace for all to dwell in the heart of God.



# THANK YOU

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I conclude with these words from a colleague who shared his experience of the House Next Door:

*God found a way through the vision, investment, and commitment of Prince of Peace to make possible what Pastor Dale and the House Next Door provide. I suspect others who have encountered such renewal have their own stories that echo humble appreciation for what has been received and anticipate what the Spirit has planned.*

Thank you, Prince of Peace, for your vision, your investment, and your commitment to this ministry. It is making a difference. It is changing lives. Come and see! Then, go and tell!

Faithfully submitted,

*Pastor Dale Selover*

Pastor of Spiritual Formation  
Director of the House Next Door

