

William's Place is a ministry begun by members of Christ Community Church – Montreat and was highlighted at a previous presbytery meeting. Below you can read about how this wonderful ministry is meeting an important need as they serve those suffering with addiction issues.

WILLIAM'S PLACE – AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WHAT IS A WILLIAM?

The founders' son William was an addict, someone who struggled with anxiety and depression even when he wasn't actively using. They spent tens of thousands of dollars on treatment programs that addressed part of his illness but not the whole man. Frankly, William needed a strong residential program that offered hope in Jesus Christ and the option of responsibly prescribed medication for his accompanying challenges. Many places offered one or the other, but not both. There was no place for William.

There are many more Williams who need help. A William has been an addict for many years, having lost his family, his children, several jobs, and his very identity. Finding himself broke, homeless and desperate; he lives on the street trading possessions for another hit of meth or heroin. His future is likely death or prison. He doesn't photograph well; his story does not tug at the heartstrings. William knows this, and his self-loathing surpasses any disdain that society can heap on him. We refer to our typical resident as William, not because they all bear that name but because each one bears a name and unique identity. None is, to us, simply "an addict" or "a resident."

WHY THIS PLACE?

William's Place offers nothing less than the hope of full restoration to a small number of men at a time. Such an audacious vision is due to our belief that Jesus Christ wants to save completely those (addict or otherwise) who come to Him. So we provide a comprehensive, residential recovery program designed to give William hope and teach him the skills necessary to start over. Just as the brokenness of one man's addiction affects extended families and communities; we believe one man's restoration begins a healing process in those same circles.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Up to six men live together at William's Place, a nice home located in a quiet neighborhood in Black Mountain, NC. The in-house resident managers and licensed counselor facilitate an environment that supports the residents' desire to be free of addiction, and to teach the men to see themselves in the light of the Gospel.

Drug and alcohol abuse most often begins in the pre-teen and teenage years when most young adults are forming an identity and developing basic life skills. Our program addresses this interruption in development by helping residents connect with a healthy identity and by teaching life skills such as budgeting, banking, cooking, basic housekeeping and organization.

Work for William has been a disaster. He has gained and lost countless positions, mostly in construction, due to his erratic performance and failure to show up. We teach William the blessing of doing something that has nothing to do with him or how he feels at the moment. We help him develop work habits and skills for independent living.

In the home, William performs daily chores, gardening, and food prep. He works for pay two days a week outside the home, and we hold his earned money until the end of his stay. He leaves us with about \$1000 in his pocket so he can transition to a new job, and have practical means to begin a new sober life.

Since drugs and alcohol have been William's main recreation, we introduce him to fun experiences throughout his stay with us. Every weekend the men participate in excellent adventures including mountain biking, hiking, kayaking, horseback riding, bouldering, and camping. Board games and movies have their place, but excursions into our outdoor wonderland get William's adrenaline activated and provide the benefit of exercise and large motor activity.

Imperative for William's recovery is intensive individual and group counseling with a licensed substance abuse counselor. In counseling he has the opportunity to identify and address underlying issues that contribute to and maintain patterns of addiction. Residents also have the opportunity to address co-occurring mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, which is common to this population. He comes to a new understanding of boundaries and how to make better choices moving forward.

We believe our program needs to support appropriate medical treatment of mental health issues (including non-addictive medications) by the resident's prescribing physician. Jesus can and does heal spontaneously, but sometimes He uses beneficial drugs and therapies to get the job done.

The door of William's Place is open to over 70 volunteers who share their time and talent with the residents. They may be mentors, discussion leaders, or guides to excellent adventures. Some come to the house with food and a recipe, prepared to cook together and share a family-style dinner. Others might transport William to an appointment, teach a life skills class, or hike with him. All pray, lend a listening ear, and model healthy relationships.

MINISTRY HISTORY

We opened our doors to the first proof-of-concept cohort in February 2019, which was a success. We continue to hold three 12-week cohorts each year. Our class size is limited to 5 men, according to the rules of North Carolina residential law and we have determined that 12 weeks provides adequate time to accomplish our goals for our residents. When William leaves us, he is clean, sober, and stable having had the opportunity to address underlying issues that have contributed to and maintained his addiction. Follow-up care comes in many forms: counseling, church community, and continued relationship with mentors and volunteers.

WILLIAM'S FRIENDS

“Before coming to William’s Place, I had attended four other treatment centers. Two were state-run facilities “no pay” and two were \$15-20K. None of them compare to the love, care and guidance I received at William’s Place. This program is designed for long-term success.”

Devin, former resident

“My life has always been a crazy one ‘til I came to William’s Place. I was thirteen years old when I fell in love with drugs. At twenty-eight years old William’s Place helped me find a new love that I have NEVER KNOWN. The word “love” was evil to me. I now know that God’s love is so beautiful. It’s a new life I have learned that involves God in my day-to-day walk. I walked in broken, lost, looking for something other than a longneck bottle and a needle. Walked out a new man. Believer, found, and redeemed.”

Josh, former resident

“Six months clean today. . . The few people I was using with are dead today. They left this world too early. I knew I wouldn’t be alive much longer if I kept it up. I’m the type of person who doesn’t like asking for help. But I knew that I needed help and reached out to William’s Place. They had one spot left. By no means is my life perfect but it’s a heck of a lot better than it was. It was by far the best decision I’ve ever made. . . So, I just wanted to say THANK YOU to all the people who have helped me in the great little town of Black Mountain.”

Ed, former resident (Facebook post)

“When I told my daughter that I was volunteering for William’s Place, she laughed and said that I didn’t know anything about working with addiction. However, I do know that it is healthy to be outside, to walk in the woods getting exercise, but mostly to be talking and getting to know good people. These guys are the good people! I hope someone is keeping track of their stories because the trials could fill a book. While hiking, the relationships and conversations flow naturally – just a simple chat – but I’ve learned so much from them and come to deeply appreciate their struggles. It has been amazing to me to see how well they’ve done. Nobody wants to have their life controlled by addiction. I’ve learned that this could so easily be me – this could be any of us.”

Tricia Hoffman, William’s Place Volunteer

“Our congregation loves the guys at William’s Place. As the men discover the joy of relationship with Christ and the church, our people have been touched again by the power of the Gospel.”

Richard White, Senior Pastor, Christ Community Church, Montreat

“I’ve spent a good bit of time around the recovery community and different programs that help those in addiction. This type of residential men’s recovery home was not even on my radar. Many addicts are understandably resistant to religion. I think this program is different and successful for two major reasons. First, by introducing these men to a Christian faith in a way in which they felt accepted, validated, and attracted to the Gospel, which they had never experienced before. The people of the faith community were so encouraging, supportive and welcoming along

the way. Second, by living together among a small group of men with a house manager, going through the daily ups and downs, but doing it together, made a huge difference. All the while, volunteers were flowing in and out, literally showing them how to live life and live faith. There is certainly something to be learned from how this process works, and maybe it will offer a new direction for how we deal with this in society moving forward.”

Jason Burk, William’s Place Board Member

HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

From the outside William’s Place looks like many of this area’s “nice” treatment centers. The big difference is this: We do not charge our residents; we raise all our funds through charitable donations. We do not charge our residents because by the time men are ready for this kind of intensive change they most often have no funds and likely have destroyed relationships with those who might be willing to help. William’s Place runs three 12-week cohorts for 5 men each year, which calculates to a cost of about \$12,000 per resident. As in most organizations, personnel is our largest expense. Over the last two years, we have learned that our annual expenses total \$190,500, broken down as follows:

Counseling	\$60,000
House Manager	\$36,000
House manager #2 (weekend relief)	\$14,000
Rent/ utilities/ maintenance	\$36,000
Food	\$12,000
Clothing, shoes, hiking boots, coats	\$2,500
Van insurance	\$1,100
William’s Place liability insurance	\$2,200
Books, journals, Bibles	\$700
Pharmacy	\$1,500
Drug screening tests	\$3,000
Nicotine patches	\$1,000
Personal care	\$2,000
Car expenses: repairs, maintenance	\$3,000
Car expenses gasoline, oil	\$1,500
Fax/website	\$3,500
Brochures / print materials	\$1,500
Office supplies /postage	\$1,000
Video/fundraising	\$3,000
Excellent Adventures	\$1,500
Legal fees, accounting fees, QuickBooks/PayPal	\$3,500

Support for our effort has come from individuals, foundations and churches (in that order). Our donors either write and mail a check or donate through our website. We also run Facebook fundraisers twice a year.

For further information or to contribute to this ministry contact:

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Donations can be made through the website or by check to the William's Place PO Box.