



**Our Mission:**  
"To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve."

# Along the Way

We deliver furniture, food, and Christmas assistance free of charge to local families in need with no prerequisites for service.

FEBRUARY 2025

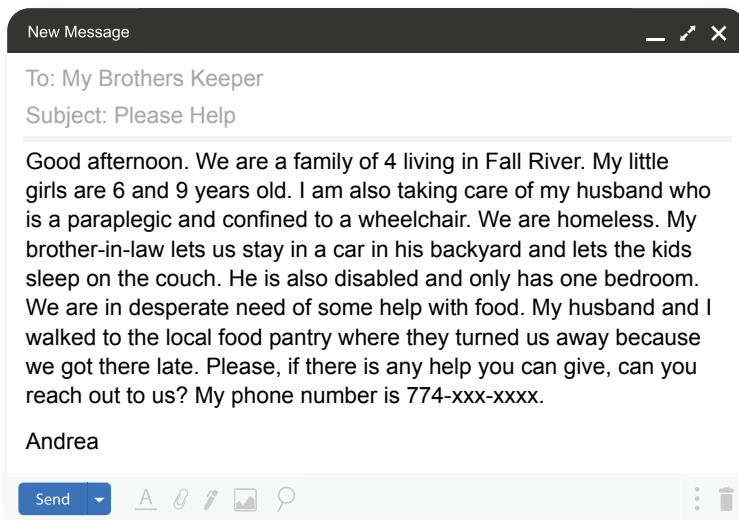


"We're just the delivery people. This is the man who sent you the furniture."

**Above & Beyond.** The mission of My Brother's Keeper "To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve" calls us to serve each and every family with dignity, respect, and excellence. Thanks to our generous supporters and outstanding volunteers, our ministry also has a unique ability to go above and beyond when we feel God's call.

## We Can't Let Another Year Go By By Erich Miller, President

Just before Thanksgiving, we received this email, one of the most difficult situations I've encountered in all my years at My Brother's Keeper.



Three words came to mind right away. Shocking. Heartbreaking. Wrong. How could this possibly happen?

We immediately called Andrea to set up an emergency food delivery and get more information. What we learned was even more distressing: the family had been homeless for a year.

Our records showed they had reached out to My Brother's Keeper last year on December 23<sup>rd</sup> asking for Christmas help and we delivered gifts to them on Christmas Eve. They were staying at a local hotel, a common practice in Massachusetts when shelters are full.

Over the past twelve months, though, things had clearly gone from 'bad' to 'critical' for the family. What would happen if they were homeless for another year? Would they still be together? Would they all even be alive?

My Brother's Keeper doesn't normally provide housing assistance but our position as a Christian ministry was: we have to act. We can't let another year go by.

My Brother's Keeper and Blessed Trinity Church in Fall River worked together to get the family out of the cold and into an affordable hotel while we worked on a longer-term solution. We soon realized the dire complexity of the family's situation. They had been evicted from public housing for non-payment as a result of an administrative error with the husband's disability payments.

The eviction on their record meant they are ineligible not only for public housing but also state-funded family shelters. The only real solution seemed to be a market-rate rental which the family couldn't afford. Bottom line: finding housing for them would take a miracle.

The two greatest assets of My Brother's Keeper are (1) our mission and (2) our community. As an organization, we know who we are, why we exist, and we have an extraordinary group of talented, dedicated, generous volunteers and supporters who allow God to work through them.

One of our community members, Deacon Brian Kean, works for Wingate Management, a property management company headquartered in Newton. He reached out to his colleagues and they located an available two bedroom wheelchair-accessible apartment in a beautiful building in Cambridge.

The best part: the building owner, Homeowner's Rehab Inc., a Cambridge based non-profit affordable housing developer, privately offers a sliding-scale subsidy to low-income residents. The apartment would be incredibly affordable—only 30% of income—less than \$600 per month for the family.

After a year of homelessness, it was a real challenge to gather all the necessary documentation. Thanks to the parents' diligent efforts and great teamwork by Sarah Chambers of Wingate Management and Josh Smith from My Brother's Keeper, the family was able to sign their lease on Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup> and move into their new home on Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>—the start of their new life.

My Brother's Keeper provided all the furniture, of course. See their delivery story on Page 3.

# A Family's Prayers Answered

By Josh Smith, Director - Dartmouth

Our front-page story explains the incredibly difficult circumstances that led Andrea to reach out to My Brother's Keeper during the holidays again this year. As we got to know her, we quickly learned that a year of homelessness had not diminished Andrea's readiness to work hard and fight for her family.

With an eviction from public housing on her record, Andrea and her family faced a seemingly hopeless battle to secure housing. She applied for program after program despite rejection after rejection.

Indeed, the whole family — Andrea, her husband Terrance, and children, Sadie (9) and Nina (6) — were resilient. Terrance had been paralyzed from the waist down since the age of 21 when he was shot working as a bouncer. That didn't stop him from taking every job available and he and I soon joked that there weren't many places he *hadn't* worked.

In Terrance's eyes, thankfully, the girls hardly seemed phased by the constant movement of the past year. Obviously, Andrea and Terrance had a lot to do with this by staying upbeat and providing as much normalcy as possible for the children. Andrea and Terrance began to think about their day outdoors only after the girls were on the school bus, for example.

Once a new apartment in Cambridge emerged as a possibility, the family had to track down numerous identification documents and government benefit letters. Andrea kicked into high gear, responding to requests within minutes and arranging handicap rides to all the various offices. Before we wrapped up these calls about logistics, Andrea always said the same thing: "Keep us in your prayers at My Brother's Keeper. That's the most important thing."

For Andrea, Terrance, and the girls, the apartment was more than just a new home. It was an answer to their prayers. Multiple people from the housing industry told us this Homeowner's Rehab Inc. property was the nicest affordable housing they'd ever seen. The building offers regular life skills seminars — Andrea was looking forward to the upcoming session on budgeting — and there's even a food pantry on site to help the residents. Every window in the apartment looks out upon a beautiful 160-acre public park right across the street. "Miracle" didn't feel like too strong a word.

But even once their application was approved, it didn't feel like Andrea's and Terrance's anxiety and nervousness ever fully left. "Nothing ever works out for us," Andrea said. "This seems too good to be true."

On the day of the move, Sadie and Nina were the first ones to bound out of the hotel where they had been staying. "We're going on an adventure!" they shouted, wide eyed and smiling ear to ear. On our drive, Andrea and Terrance talked about the possibilities

suddenly opening up to them. Andrea wanted to counsel families on navigating the housing process. Terrance would restart his physical therapy at the nearby Spaulding Rehab and with it, his dream of walking again. Before we knew it, the girls — who had never been to Boston — were pointing out their windows as the skyline came into view.

Inside their new home, Andrea and the girls raced excitedly from room to room. Terrance trailed them in his wheelchair, shaking his head, then laughing and clapping. Our seven-person moving team — Brian Kean, Dave Blumberg, Deb Elwell, Riley Bast, Ben Williams, Erich Miller, and myself — filled each room with furniture from the Easton and Dartmouth buildings. The household items packaged by volunteers totaled over 30 boxes and bags alone!

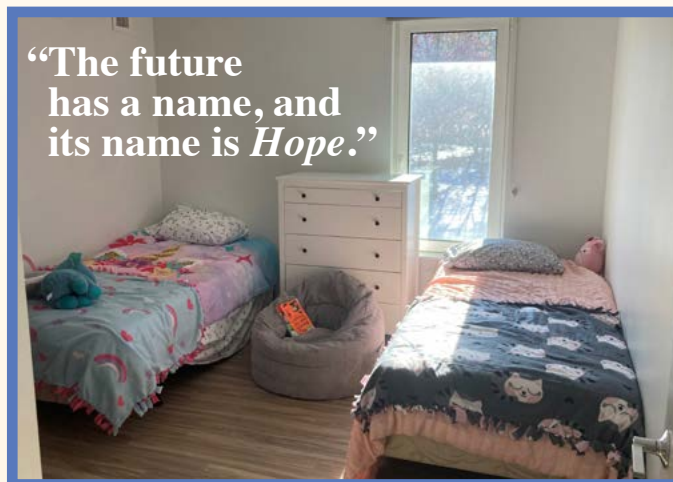
In an instant, Andrea had both girls' beds beautifully made up and Nina was already curled up reading in her new beanbag chair. On the windowsill sat a small frame Deb had picked out with a quote from Pope Francis: "The future has a name, and its name is Hope." With the children's room set, Andrea could now think of herself. "I can't wait to take a shower," she said.

As soon as we set the last piece of furniture down, Sarah Chambers from Wingate Management thoughtfully brought in pizza,

drinks, and dessert to celebrate. Tired but happy, we enjoyed lunch together and chatted about the activities they would do in the city.

Soon it was time for Brian, both a My Brother's Keeper volunteer and Wingate Management staff member, to present the crucifix and bless their home. Promising to pray for each other, we exchanged hugs and left so they could enjoy their new home as a family.

Thank you, God, for allowing My Brother's Keeper to play a role in this life-changing miracle.



Thank you very much. We are truly blessed 🙏😊  
A year ago I couldn't even imagine having a bed to sleep in and today I have really hope for my family and our future!

Andrea



# Record-Breaking Christmas Program

The My Brother's Keeper Christmas Assistance Program rose to new heights in 2024 serving more families than ever before: 3,271 families with 12,425 children and adults living in 108 different communities.

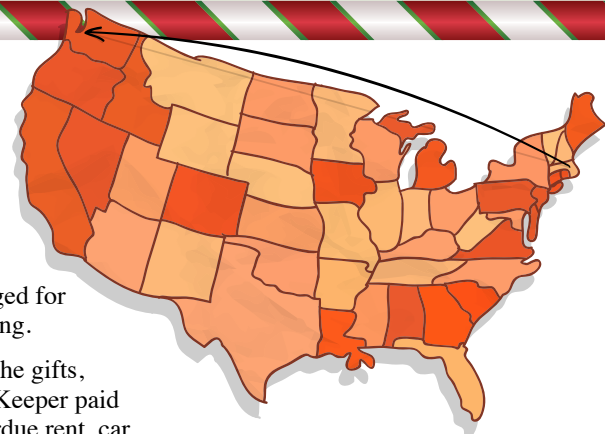
These are astounding numbers for a charity with just 19 employees. The heart and soul of our Christmas Program is the more than 5,500 volunteers who served at our Easton and Dartmouth facilities in December. It's their care, concern, and hard work that allows us to serve each local family with excellence and also go the extra mile.

## Going the Extra Mile

My Brother's Keeper typically processes requests by telephone but we occasionally receive emails like this one that are so compelling that we feel called to respond despite the distance.



a wonderful volunteer with contacts in the transportation industry arranged for donated shipping.



In addition to the gifts, My Brother's Keeper paid Jennifer's overdue rent, car payment, and auto insurance thanks to a handful of anonymous generous supporters so she and her family could start 2025 with a sense of peace. Jennifer sent us the following note in response:

*I just want to start by thanking you from the bottom of my heart and my whole being. I cannot express the gratitude I have for you guys and your willingness to shine some light in this very stressful period of time of financial hardship. There were many sleepless nights of emotional distress. The thought of not being able to provide my kids with another wonderful Christmas and me not being in the Christmas spirit, as I usually am, due to this stress has really taken a toll on me.*

*Christmas is my favorite holiday as an adult. As a child, I was never one of the children who got all the things she wanted or did all the fun holiday things because I came from a lower class unstable home so I have always gone above and beyond to provide my kids with more than what I had. I was terrified they would have to experience a sad holiday like my childhood.*

*So again, THANK YOU!!!! My holiday spirit is in full affect! I have not said many prayers in my life but lately I have been and your help is truly a gift from above.* 🥰❤️❤️❤️❤️

Jennifer's words of gratitude—her recent prayers and her understanding that the help comes from God, not us—is a wonderful affirmation of our mission.

Our Christmas Program is a huge endeavor and a lot of hard work. If just one parent feels closer to God as a result of our efforts, it's all worth it!

Jim and Terry Orcutt founded My Brother's Keeper in 1988 in their modest home in Taunton with no resources to speak of. Thirty-seven years later, it is incredibly humbling to receive heartfelt requests from across the country sent by struggling parents who have no place else to turn.

We felt called to respond in Christ's name and we did. Sending gift cards would be the easiest thing to do but not fully in keeping with our mission which calls us to serve in a way that's personal and relational. Instead, we selected and wrapped gifts for each member of the family—four big boxes in total!—and

**“Let your light shine that others may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”**

**Matthew 5:16**



# A Force of for Boston's Kids

Corey C. Griffin Foundation



Legacy isn't a word you hear very often. It certainly isn't a word that is used lightly. If you are fortunate enough to have your name associated with the word legacy it most likely means you have made, or are making, a lasting impact in the lives of others. That is certainly the case for Corey C. Griffin.

Corey was a bright young man with an unwavering passion for service to others, especially children. His impressive zeal for volunteering and philanthropy are what you might expect from someone with many more years of life experience under their belt.

Sadly, Corey passed away in a tragic accident in Nantucket in 2014. He was 27 years old. Corey's legacy, however, lives on.

The Corey C. Griffin Foundation was launched by Corey's family less than six months after his passing. Led by his parents, Rob and Cathy, the foundation sought to turn their family's grief into a way of continuing Corey's legacy of serving others. Ten years later, the foundation is thriving in its work of funding local nonprofits that serve underprivileged youth.

My Brother's Keeper is a proud recipient and partner of the Corey C. Griffin Foundation. In 2025, the foundation awarded us a grant of \$30,000 to purchase twin beds for local children. This gift accompanied a \$50,000 donation toward our Annual Sponsor program. The impact of this grant on the families we serve is significant. With the help of the Corey C. Griffin Foundation, My Brother's Keeper will move 200 children from sleeping on

the floor, or from sharing a bed with a sibling, into a warm, comfortable bed of their own.

It's hard to overstate the importance of giving a child a bed. According to a recent MIT study, a good night's sleep is an important predictor for a broad range of health and performance outcomes, especially academic success.

With each delivery of a twin bed we make to a child this year, we will gratefully remember Corey. His legacy lives on indeed.



## Volunteer Gail Dailey Recognized As Difference Maker Of The Week

By The New England Patriots

Volunteer Gail Dailey of East Bridgewater was recently honored with the Patriots Difference Maker of the Week award for her service at My Brother's Keeper.

The award is part of the Patriot's **Celebrate Volunteerism** initiative which aims to highlight dedicated volunteers, raise awareness about the need for volunteering, and inspire others to follow the Kraft family's example of service.

Gail has been faithfully volunteering at My Brother's Keeper since 2019. She typically comes in three days a week and is best described as a humble, "whatever-needs-to-be-done" person. She also dedicates extensive time during the Christmas season, volunteering almost every day from Thanksgiving through Christmas to help us distribute gifts to more than 3,000 families.

Gail was a florist in her professional life and uses her creativity and enthusiasm to transform simple items into thoughtful, boutique-worthy gifts. She went above and beyond for Mother's Day 2024, organizing over 500 beautiful gifts for mothers served by My Brother's Keeper in the weeks leading up to the holiday.

Gail's response to the receiving the award was no surprise to those who know her: "I am humbled and honored to be named a Patriots Difference Maker of the Week. My first reaction was, 'No, no, not me! There are so many others who are deserving.' This recognition means so much to me, especially as I represent My Brother's Keeper. I hope to inspire others to think of those in need, just as I've tried to do, and I'm excited to share this honor with my family and community."

The New England Patriots Foundation awarded a \$10,000 grant to My Brother's Keeper in honor of Gail's service. Their donation will cover the cost of delivering a week's worth of groceries to 660 local families in need.



# A Matter of Mission

By Erich Miller, President



I'm in my 28th year at My Brother's Keeper and sometimes I still get surprised! We recently received the following email which presented an opportunity to share the beauty of our unique mission:

*Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I tell you there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*

Luke 15: 6-7

*Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."*

Matthew 9:12



New Message

"My name is XXXX XXXXX and I am a detective lieutenant at the XXXXXX Police Department. We had an anonymous complaint submitted to us indicating that they believed someone was receiving benefits by using a fake cancer diagnosis.

My question is does your organization require proof of a cancer diagnosis or do you just take someone's word that they have cancer?

Respectfully, XXXX XXXXX

Send

It didn't take long for me to come up with a reply. I was taught the answer by Jim and Terry and the daily example of their lives.

New Message

Thanks for your email, Detective. The mission of My Brother's Keeper is "To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve."

Along those lines, one of our most important policies which can be found on our website is "My Brother's Keeper shall have no prerequisites for service. No one seeking assistance shall be required to justify their need or provide any information, i.e., an income statement." In short, it's impossible for a person to fraudulently receive services from My Brother's Keeper because we don't require them to 'qualify' for our help.

As a matter of mission, the question we would ask is, Who needs the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ more than a person who would falsely claim to have cancer to receive services from a charity?

Our founders would say, That's the person we're looking for the most!

Thanks for your service to the community.

Send

My Brother's Keeper has always tried to remain mindful of the difference between our mission and our daily work. We deliver food and furniture—the essentials of life. As critically important as those things are, though, we view them as a means to end. They create an opportunity to enter into the homes and lives of those we serve and remind them of a simple but profound truth: God loves you and He hears and answers your prayers.

The beauty of community is that we can teach each other, learn from one another, and grow closer to Christ along the way. It's no coincidence "Along the Way" has always been the title of the My Brother's Keeper newsletter.

# Our Facilities



**EASTON**



**DARTMOUTH**

## My Brother's Keeper Prayer

Lord—

*When I have food,  
Help me remember the hungry.*

*When I lie in my bed,  
Help me remember those who sleep on the floor.*

*When I have a warm home,  
Help me remember the homeless.*

*When I have work,  
Help me remember those without jobs.*

*When I experience the joy of giving to my children,  
Help me remember the agony of those who must  
watch their children go without.*

*By remembering,  
Help me destroy my indifference,  
And arouse my compassion.*

*Make me concerned enough to act in your name,  
To help those who cry out to you for that which I so  
often take for granted.*



## MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Christian ministry of loving service and education

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