



# The Good Shepherd Alliance

Providing help and hope for the homeless in Loudoun County since 1983.

## Spring 2011

### I Can't Believe This Happened to Us!

Families don't expect to lose their homes. At least, we certainly hope we never do. We work hard, save money, and think we are on our way. But then - a sudden job loss. Or maybe not so sudden, after many layoffs, it is finally you. You think another job is "just around the corner" and then after a year either unemployed or underemployed you wonder "what am I going to do?" This was not in the plan. Those of us with family might have a little help for a while, but no family can carry other members indefinitely. Selling or losing a home to foreclosure, we might look for a rental to tie us over. But there's a problem. Credit check. Maybe we aren't the top candidate. Now what? Last year we were doing great; good debt to income ratio and things were looking bright. Now - not so much. This may sound familiar to you. It is epidemic. Families everywhere scrambling for jobs and housing, or just trying to stay afloat. Hanging on to those used cars, consolidating our cell phones with family members, getting rid of the landline and reducing our cable channels. Eating out and movie-going is cut way back and everyone is watching their wallet. Thrift shopping has gained a new respect and everyone is looking for a bargain.



The Good Shepherd Alliance is trying to do all we can to offer resources to the community. We are all in this together - there is no doubt. We have dozens of families receiving help with everything from food, diapers and clothing, to employment and housing counseling every month. This is in addition to the 33 or so individuals (14 families) who reside in one of our three homes and are working through our Six Steps to Self-Sufficiency program. Our Women and Children's Emergency Shelter houses approximately 22 women and children and our two resident homes house 6 women and 5 children. Once they have completed their program, they move on. In 2010, 94% of those exiting our program moved on to stable housing.

We are currently working on purchasing another home that will provide a one-year rental to families who have lost their stability to one of these issues and need somewhere to regroup. This home is different from our other residences because it is a single-family home. We hope to be able to buy more homes to provide more affordable rentals to families.

If you have ever had to look, you will find that Loudoun County does not have many affordable rentals. At a time when so many are losing and then needing to find jobs, a "starter" level rent is scarce in Loudoun. We are working to help this situation. We can only do it one family at a time.

If you are asking yourself "what am I going to do" and need some help, call us and ask to speak to one of our case managers. We would be happy to point you to whatever resources we can. If you are doing well and want to help someone else out, please call and ask how you can help or make a donation in support of our community programs today at [www.goodshepherdalliance.org](http://www.goodshepherdalliance.org).

### 2010 Statistics

- 1400 households served
- 118 shelter residents
- 54 households resided at GSA
- 62 resident children
- Over 7,200 bednights
- 94% exited to stable housing
- Over 700 volunteers
- 12,778 volunteer hours
- Distributed \$42,000 food
- Over \$60,000 supplies donated
- \$14,000 of clothing given away
- 12,600 supporters strong
- 85% of funding to programs

### Coming Events:

- May 9 - Golf Tournament
- June 4 - Old Tyme Country Fair
- September 17 - GSA Walkathon
- call for more information



2010 Walkathon

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**The Good Shepherd Alliance is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.**



# The Good Shepherd Alliance

## Regaining Stability Means Overcoming Obstacles

The Good Shepherd Alliance works to prevent homelessness by working with individuals and families in crisis who are facing financial hardships, job loss or other issues that can be addressed early. Families can get the guidance toward potential solutions through resources available to GSA, counseling and case management services or referral to the appropriate agencies. Each month we respond to over 120 calls for assistance from families in need. Many calls require an office meeting with a case manager to assess what help is needed, review finances, help with budgeting, assist with housing or job searches, arrange a bus ticket, or counsel them on how they might move forward, among other things. Other issues can be handled through telephone calls to outside organizations, preparation of thrift store vouchers, email, and verbal counseling.

The number of individuals and families losing jobs and facing eviction or foreclosure has never been higher. Families are cutting corners to “stay afloat” even if it means allowing their car to be repossessed or utilities cut. By making it known that we are here to help, families can get assistance with food, clothing, diapers, baby items, employment contacts, counseling, and other resources. Preventing homelessness is an important part of dealing with the issue of homelessness. Our Outreach and Resource & Referral programs are partner programs to help prevent homelessness in the first place. Financial contributions from our community have allowed us to provide resources and counseling services to many families who need to overcome obstacles such as unemployment or underemployment to stay stable. Goods donated to our thrift stores by GSA supporters, allow us to offer vouchers for those in need to shop for free.

Our network of partner organizations work together with us as we work to do the most good for the most people. Being able to call an organization that has funds for bus tickets, for instance, means that someone who would otherwise be homeless can travel back home to another state. The Good Shepherd Alliance is the only organization who provides wrap-around services in all areas. Because of the over \$200,000 worth of in-kind contributions we receive in one year, we have supplies of food, diapers, gift and gas cards and many other resources that no other group in this County can offer in one place. This allows us much flexibility in addressing the most significant issues facing struggling families. The Department of Family Services is overwhelmed with these needs – especially in a time of budget cuts. We provide services at a much lower cost than the Local Government can and ease the burden on an already stressed agency.

For families who need housing, our emergency homeless shelter and transitional housing programs are an important part of giving families a chance to regain their stability once they have become homeless. Residents in our emergency and transitional homes must participate in our Six Steps to Self-Sufficiency program. Case managers work with them on any issues that may be contributing to their struggle. Residents set goals in each area at their weekly case management meeting, review the goals from the previous week and whether they met them and if not, why not. Your financial support helps us to provide services such as:

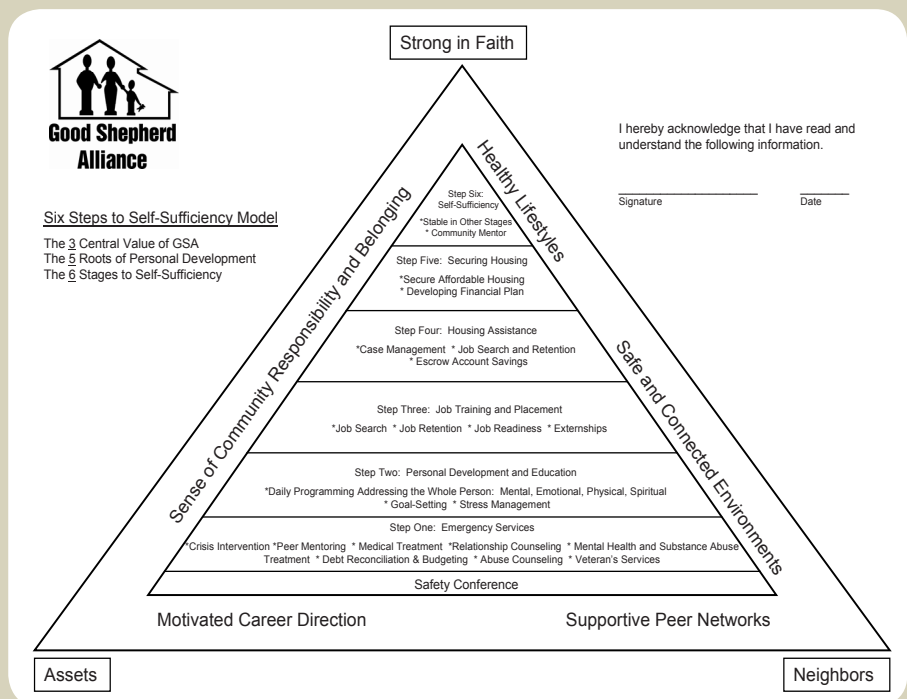
- Stress management
- Counseling
- Budgeting and financial counseling
- Credit counseling
- Parenting and Life skills
- Job placement assistance
- Housing assistance

*“At the present time, your abundance will meet their need, so that one day their abundance may also meet your need, and thus there may be equality.” 2 Corinthians 8:14*

### A Good Word

*“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”*

- Matthew 25:34-40





# The Good Shepherd Alliance



## Hope's Treasures Thrift Store Opens in Leesburg



Thanks to a group of Loudoun contractors renovating a space for us in the Prosperity Shopping Center, our new Leesburg thrift store opened in October 2010 - our fourth store. It is located at 703 East Market Street. April 1, 2011 we will have another "Grand Opening Celebration" as we expand the store, taking over the space adjacent and increasing the store to more than double its current size to 8,600 square feet. We will be adding a large children's section among other surprises. Our store locations feature regular weekly sales and many unusual oddities you won't find every day. But one-of-a-kind items sell quickly, so stop in often so you don't miss out. We have name brand items such as Nike, Banana Republic, Joseph Banks, Levi's, Coach, Timberland, Tommy Hilfiger, Nautica, Talbots, The Loft, and Old Navy, in excellent condition - for thrift store prices. There is no better way to find a bargain

and no better way to recycle your gently used items. Store hours are 10am-7pm, Monday - Saturday. We receive donations around the back of the store from 10am-6pm. Thank you to the following contractors for their donated goods and services to renovate the space: Merritt Properties, Page Mechanical Systems, Inc., GT Electric Service, Inc., Tri State Drywall, and Advantage Media Technologies.



Visit [www.goodshepherdalliance.org](http://www.goodshepherdalliance.org) for Ashburn and Sterling store locations and hours.

## I've Turned my Life Around - testimonies from GSA residents

"When my family and I came to GSA for help, we had no jobs, no money and no place to stay. Most importantly, we had no hope for our future. Since being at GSA I can now say that our future holds plenty of hope and is much brighter. We now have a more optimistic view of our lives and of things to come. We were able to live in a house as a "normal" family again. We were able to find employment and save money to become financially independent again. My eight year old was able to get the help she needed in school. Having our case manager helped me to cope with things better. We would not have been able to find the affordable townhouse we found without the help of GSA and the donation of a much needed vehicle. Being allowed to stay at GSA and get ourselves together has been a true blessing we will never forget GSA and all its staff who made a rough time in our life much, much easier, especially for my children. Thank you and God bless you." - *Mother, father and 3 children*

"I learned how to save money a little better. I've learned that I need to focus on myself more and that its ok to disappoint people from time to time because it has no reflection on the person I am just because I say no every now and again. I've learned how to become a stronger person and that my case manager is the best case manager ever; she helped me more than she will ever know." - *Single woman*



"While at the Good Shepherd Alliance I acquired a car, made new friends and grew closer to God. While I was here I have made a couple lifelong friends, I was baptized and also, although we are far apart, I have gotten closer to my husband. My case manager and the shelter monitor have been such a help to me to point me in the right direction." - *Mother and four children*

"While staying with GSA I was able to get a full-time job and save up money. I found a place for my family and received things to go in my new home. The staff was always helpful to all of our needs and they pointed me in the right direction. I have nothing negative to say about The Good Shepherd Alliance. You showed my family "love." We finally are able to move on with your help." - *Mother, father and four children*



"I was able to find housing and assistance getting my family's documents. GSA staff helped me by advocating especially with Section 8 housing and other needs such as clothing and baby needs. The home was clean and private and I enjoyed the willingness of the staff to help when you need it. I would like to thank GSA and GSA staff for helping my family." - *Mother and three children*

Although they may be in a difficult situation that others may view as being needy or problematic, The Good Shepherd Alliance believes that our guests have many capabilities and resources to offer to their own and the community's benefit. We seek to enable our guests to employ their assets, skills and talents to help themselves in obtaining self-sufficiency rather than offering another "band-aid" program that continues their dependency on others.

Our 2010 Annual Report is now available for download on the homepage of our website at [www.goodshepherdalliance.org](http://www.goodshepherdalliance.org)

## Thanks to our faithful supporters! Here are just a few ways you blessed us in 2010:

**Claire Steindam** organized and decorated the children's playroom at our Women and Children's Emergency Shelter for her Girl Scout Silver Award project.

**Potomac Falls High School** Home Economics classes, led by teacher Deborah Cooper, donated their hand-sewn quilt to our Women and Children's Emergency Shelter.



The **Builder's Foundation** donated \$10,000 toward our Transportation and Six Steps to Self-Sufficiency programs.

**Talk Loudoun** has taken on GSA as one of their charitable beneficiaries for 2011.

**Potomac Hills Presbyterian Church Women's Retreat** donated wrapped complete meals for 6 with 10.00 gift cards for our resident families.



**Ashburn Presbyterian Church** raised over \$16,000 for GSA through their annual fundraiser.

**Loudoun County Youth** from area high schools, headed up by our two student board members, Carleigh Wrobel (Stone Bridge H.S. Student) and Maryjacqueline Fox (Freedom H.S. Student), held a bake sale to raise awareness of and funds for our homeless programs. They have several other fundraisers planned for this year.



**Thanks for all you do!** Costco, Briar Wood High School, BB&T Bank Community Project Team, Guilford Baptist Church, Motorbike Show, Dulles Chamber of Commerce, Ashburn Rotary, Common Ground Church, Winnie the Pooh Preschool, Ashburn/Sterling Masons lodge, Cornerstone Chapel, Jason Project, Mary Kay Consultants, Giving Girls group, Sheldon's Landing School, Country Side Women's Club, St. Teresa's Church, Mission Possible elementary, Heritage High School, Cross Current Ministries, Girl Scout troops, Northern Virginia Community College, Mary Kay Representatives, St. Francis De Sales Church, J10 Church, Christian Fellowship, Ashburn Presbyterian Church Sunday School, King of Kings Worship Center, Crossroads United Methodist Church, JSI Telecom, Heritage Baptist Church, Wegman's, Belmont Women's Club, Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, Goodyear Tire and Auto, AGLOW Women's Conference, St. David's Episcopal Church, Team Effort Christian Youth Group, Unisys, Mclean Bible Church, Greek Orthodox Church, Temple of Healing Waters Church, Community Lutheran Church, ROK Church, Christ the Redeemer Church, Gateway Community Church, Belmont Ridge Lutheran Church, and many, many individuals throughout Loudoun County **that make everything The Good Shepherd Alliance has been able to do possible.**

## The Good Shepherd Alliance

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Investing in the life of a woman, a family, a child...  
there is no better return on an investment. Please  
consider a much-needed donation today!

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To receive an information packet  
or to be added to our email list  
contact GSA at 703-724-1555

### Our Current Needs:

- Gas and grocery gift cards for our guests
- Donations for Housing and Case Management programs (rent, maintenance and counseling)
- Monthly shelter sponsorship (call for details)
- Donating paper products and other "wish list" items

### Volunteer Needs:

- Thrift store volunteers to receive and sort donations
- Various jobs needing to be done in our resident homes

Call GSA at 703-724-1555 for more information

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Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.