

STORIES FOR PEOPLE
WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

bloom

FALL 2022



Christy's story

I felt like there wasn't a way out.



Nine years ago, I was being physically, sexually, and psychologically abused. I felt like there wasn't a way out.

I never thought I would experience domestic violence. I remember saying, "I dare someone to put their hands on me," and I often judged women who stayed in abusive relationships by saying, "Why don't they just leave!" But here I was feeling trapped in the very same situation I had judged others.

"I never thought I would experience domestic violence"

I felt as if I didn't have a way to get help after physical assaults. I was too afraid to call the police because, sadly, both partners in a same-sex relationship are often arrested during domestic violence situations.

Unfortunately, LGBTQ+ survivors experience additional barriers to getting the help needed to leave an abusive relationship. They're often met with victimizing legal services, so there is a hesitancy to use them.

I have a teaching license and was pursuing ordination within a Christian denomination to become a minister, so an arrest on my record would put my career hopes in jeopardy.

Thankfully I had friends who helped me leave the relationship and begin the process of healing. One of my friends connected me with an agency that would help me deal with my sexual assault.

I was afraid at first to disclose to the crisis counselor that my partner was another woman. I was so afraid that I would encounter homophobia and that this organization only helped heterosexual persons. Fortunately, the counselor was amazing, and my fears never materialized.

Today I am an outreach advocate at GreenHouse17 helping others find healing and hope. I facilitate our weekly LGBTQ+ domestic violence support group. I believe everyone deserves to live a life free from abuse.



This is only part of Christy's story, in her own words, shared with her permission.



I'm a certified Spiritual Director. I've also published a collection of poetry called *Hanging Onto Jesus: A Gay Christian's Journey of Reclaiming Faith*. I share poems from each stage of my life - childhood and teenage shame, ex-gay years, and **final acceptance of my identity** as a queer woman of faith.



safety to flourish

PROGRAM GROWING

Planning has begun to expand the Children's Safe Exchange and Visitation program to Boyle County next year.

Members of Grace Church have generously agreed to provide space for the services in the children's wing of their facility in Danville.

"As a church, we are committed to helping the families and children of our community flourish," says Assistant Pastor Kevin Dilbeck. "We are excited about the opportunity to open some of our space to help meet this need."

The program currently operates in Fayette and Scott counties.

Services honor the importance of the parent-child relationship and strengthen this bond without the worry of conflict.

"No one issue or need in our community will be met by a single organization," Kevin explains. "It takes many people and organizations playing a small part, and we are excited to play ours."

Additional funding from the Hudson-Ellis Fund at Blue Grass Community Foundation will support start-up costs.



it's about time

PURPLE THURSDAY



October 20 is Purple Thursday, an annual day to show support for survivors during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

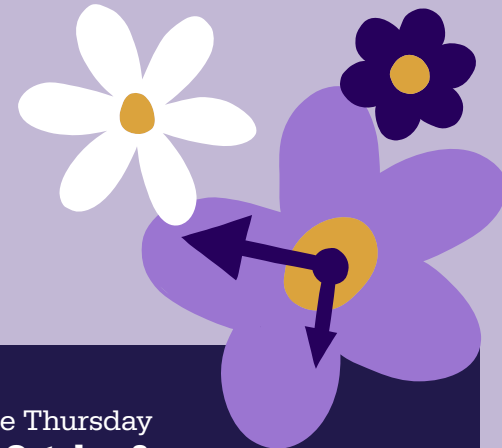
The color purple is a symbol of peace, courage, survival, honor, and dedication to ending violence. It's believed the color's connection to our mission might have begun during women's suffrage.

In 1978, thousands of advocates for women's equal rights wore purple when they marched in Washington, D.C. Today the color honors this history, survivors of abuse, and those lives that have been ended too early.

Raising awareness is an important part of working to end the cycle of abuse.

It's time to wear purple shirts, hats, nail polish, ties, and more! It's time to identify yourself as an advocate and raise awareness. It's time to let survivors know there's a large community here to support their path to safety.

It's about time to end domestic violence.



Thursday, October 20

Purchase your limited-edition Purple Thursday t-shirt at GreenHouse17.org **before October 3 to receive it in time for the day!**

LUNA FEST

LUNAFEST® Lexington is back in person this year at the historic Kentucky Theatre.

This evening of short films promotes women and gender nonconforming storytellers from around the world, while raising funds to support our mission.

Three local women - Geni Osborn, Helue Shalash, and Pam Holbrook - came together more than a decade ago with the goal of organizing an event to support survivors of intimate partner abuse.

"The films are unlike any other you can see throughout the year"

Their efforts brought the traveling film festival to our region, and in the years since, the event has raised more than \$100,000 to support services.

"We all face challenges as we walk through life – some are more difficult to overcome than others," shares Geni. "LUNAFEST is a great opportunity to support the individuals in our community as they chart a new, healthier path for themselves and their families."

This year's event features eight short films, each less than 10 minutes long. The stories range from an animated poem about coping with isolation during the pandemic to a 13-year-old girl building a mobile app to help kids stay connected to their incarcerated parents.



Brought to you by LUNA, maker of the whole-nutrition bar for women.



Thursday, October 27

The Kentucky Theatre
6 pm Doors & Reception

7 pm Showtime

Tickets at GreenHouse17.org



HEALING THROUGH MUSIC

uke can do it

Sometimes you'll hear empowered singing and song playing echo down the halls of our emergency shelter.

Healing through music is helpful for many people who have experienced trauma. Advocate Morgan hosts weekly ukulele sessions to provide a safe space for survivors to express, process, and take back their power.

Morgan enjoys choosing the songs she teaches and makes sure the message of the song and artist supports our mission. At the end of each session, she saves time for lyric analysis.

"They learn so many things at once – chords, finger placements, reading music. I always remind them how much they accomplished in an hour, think of what you can do with a whole day!" Morgan shares.

She also assures survivors they don't have to play. They can just listen and join in on the conversation when they're comfortable.

"They have the freedom to accomplish whatever they want now. It's their choice," she adds.



"Residents leave these sessions with a feeling of accomplishment"

EMPOWERED THROUGH ART



colorful expressions

Making art can help survivors of intimate partner abuse find their own path to healing. That's why advocate Kristen hosts a weekly art group.

Like the nature-based healing approach of our farm, artmaking improves feelings of well-being and self-worth. Making art with other survivors encourages connection, reducing the frequent feelings of isolation some survivors experience.

"It's so awesome to see survivors change their perception of the world through art," says Kristen.

Kristen has introduced more artmaking experiences this year thanks to the Art Meets Activism grant through the Kentucky Foundation for Women.

The generous grant supported training for her to become a certified facilitator of trauma-informed art workshops, while also providing funds for materials, equipment, and offsite artmaking experiences for survivors.

"We're exploring different mediums and ways to express trauma, emotions, and using it as a tool to rediscover oneself," she shares.




"There's something very healing about making something with your hands"



COMMUNITY CARE

nurturing lives

Although the work to end intimate partner abuse always will be difficult,  safer tomorrows are possible in a community that cares about survivors.

(top left to right) We received the Commerce Lexington Nonprofit Impact Award at the Salute to Small Business lunch presented by Forcht Bank.

United Way of the Bluegrass hosted Partner Appreciation Night at Wild Health Field for partner agencies.

Friends Seetha and Raye hosted a backyard soiree to raise funds for survivors with live music from the local band Canvas.


Team members from ProLift Toyota Material Handling volunteered on the farm.

Ashland Terrace Senior Living Community donated two compost tumblers for the farm.

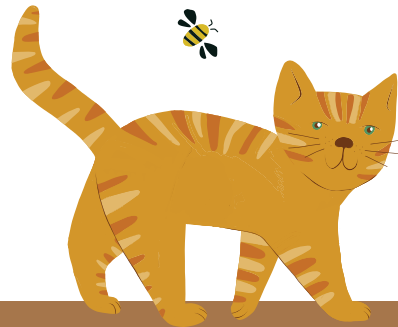
Sweet Sisters Shave Ice served cool treats during a hot summer field day for kids at the shelter.

Members of the Bluegrass Community Bankers Association received gift bags of Handmade by Survivors products during the annual convention organized by outgoing President Christy Carpenter, Springfield State Bank.

Supplies were gathered and dropped off at the Fayette County Sheriff's Department for Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief.

Handmade by Survivors products can now be purchased at the Origin Hotel, our newest retail partner. They're located in the Summit at Fritz Farm. 

We were grateful to be a charity partner once again at CRAVE Food + Music Festival. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped keep the parking lot safe and orderly.



Do you have a great idea to support survivors?

Let's chat! Reach out to Reena at 859.519.1911 or rmartin@greenhouse17.org.



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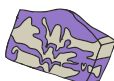
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Green House17

Nurturing lives

harmed by intimate partner abuse.

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