



# Family Renewal Initiative

www.familyrenewalinitiative.org

Bimonthly Newsletter

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## A Word From Our Executive Director

Hello, My name is Illona Roman and I am the Executive Director of Family Renewal Initiative. I have been a social worker in the field of Family Preservation, Foster Care, and Adoption for almost 20 years. 15 years ago, I moved to Martinsburg as a single mother and found my Family Support Friend in neighbors that God allowed to enter my life for the season I needed them the most. At that time I didn't even know what Family Support Friends were, but as I learned more about programs like Family Renewal Initiative, I knew that this couple ministered to me in the way the Church is meant to, by God's design. In my career, I have witnessed so many hurting and bro-

ken families who find themselves in situations that leave them hopeless, discouraged and feeling alone. Women facing an unplanned pregnancy who desire to do what is best for their child, whether through parenting or adoption, single parents who find themselves lacking a social support network required to raise healthy and well-rounded children. Parents in our own community face circumstances, decisions and situations that God never meant for them to face alone, but instead, with the support from the body of Christ. Family Renewal Initiative is devoted to connecting hurting and broken families with believers from local churches in this commu-



Illona Roman  
Executive Director FRI

nity, committed to providing support, hospitality and unconditional love and acceptance. I am so privileged to be a part of what is happening through Family Renewal Initiative, helping families as I was once ministered to in a compassionate, loving and supportive way.

## Annual Goal Achievements to date

Children Hosted	1
2022 Goal =	15
Families Served	2
2022 Goal =	10
Host Families	
Certified	3
In Process	5
2022 Goal =	25
Family Support Friends/ Resource Volunteers	
Certified/In Process	6
Church Partnerships (Volunteers)	4
2022 Goal =	15
Church Partnerships (Financial)	1
2022 Goal =	10
2023 Budget	51,400
Goal is	\$160,000

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/18—10:30A Presentation @ Westview Baptist Church
- 10/16—11:30A-3P Training @ Connections Community Church
- 10/23—11:30A-3P Training @ New Hope Church

## Ways You Can Help!

### Do You Know A Videographer?

F.R.I. is looking for a local, experienced videographer to produce a couple of short videos. If you know someone that shares our Christian values who might be available, please contact us at 304-620-2788. Thanks!!

### Support Us Financially

First and foremost, we want you to be a part our ministry by hosting, being a family friend, a church volunteer coordinator or a family coach, but we would also be blessed by your financial support. Click "[Donate](#)" on our website.

## A Word From Pastor Mark Johnson

I believe that pastors, churches, and Christians in our region should get behind this exciting new local agency, *The Family Renewal Initiative*. On pro-life Sunday this past January, I preached on God's Heart for the Vulnerable. As one of the applications of the message, I explained why we should support their efforts.

First, consider **what God is like**. The Holy Spirit inspired King David to describe God this way: *"Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home..."* (Ps. 68:5-6a). Our God has a heart for the vulnerable and hurting among us.

Second, remember **what true Christians are like**. In James 1, James described true believers as "born again" by the Word of God and as "doers of the Word" and not hearers only. Then he pointed to the evidence of such a true Christian life, *"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the*

*World"* (1:27). True Christians have God's heart. The most vulnerable in the first century society were widows and orphans because they were often left with no means of support. We can apply this principle to our own call to help the vulnerable and hurting among us today.

The Family Renewal Initiative is a unique opportunity to touch vulnerable children and their families in our community in the name of Christ. I love it that families, in our congregation are beginning to impact lives that we might never come in contact with without F.R.I. For example, right now a 7 year-old girl is temporarily living with a loving family and is regularly coming to our church with them to hear about Jesus. The girl's family is grateful for the respite being provided.

The Foster Care system in WV is overwhelmed; and keeping a child like this out of the system is a win-win for vulnerable parents, children, and the community. It is a big sacrifice to take in such hurting children.

But such radical hospitality by God's people shows God's heart is a powerful way.

As a pastor, I am also thankful that F.R.I. provides opportunities to assist those for those in our congregation who may not be able to host a child. They can be a Family Friend, supporting those who host or they can donate supplies or support the ministry financially. It's all part of impacting our local neighborhoods with God's love in a practical way.

I'm glad that IBC supports the Family Renewal Initiative monthly in our Outreach/Missions budget and encourages our people to volunteer. It is my prayer that many more pastors and churches in the Eastern Panhandle will feel led to join the churches already participating in this partnership by allowing Illona Roman and the F.R.I. team to present the ministry to their congregation, recruit volunteers, and consider financial support to this vital cause.

F.R.I.'s board is a group of local believers who



Pastor Mark Johnson  
Pastor-Teacher at  
Independent Bible Church

have been used of God to raise up this exciting outreach to impact children and families in our area for Christ. Pray that many hurting children and parents will be in heaven as God's people share the love of Jesus and His Good News through the doors this ministry is opening. Pray for the Family Renewal Initiative and then pray, "Lord, what would you have me to do to help?"

### **LATE BREAKING PRAISE!**

Lifesong For Orphans sees the Family Renewal Initiative potential to serve vulnerable families in Jesus' Name. They have provided a \$10,000 matching grant to help us to meet our 2023 budget goals!