Family Renewal Initiative

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www.familyrenewalinitiative.org

Bimonthly Newsletter

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"FAREWELL FRI"—Illona Roman

It is bittersweet as I write this, being the last article I will ever write for the FRI newsletter. When I moved to WV 17 years ago, a single mother of an almost 4 year old at the time, I was alone, in a new place and had no support system. But God kept me in His hands and made sure we were ok. He gave us an apartment next to a young couple who would be our Host Family/ Family Support Friends, even though I didn't know what that was at the time. They ministered to us, cared for us and loved us when we felt hopeless and isolated. My daughter is now 21 years old and I am the adoptive mother of four additional children that God has given me. What a Mighty God we serve.

Over the past 17 years, God has allowed people to come in and out of our lives. People who influenced us for the better and others not so much. God gave experiences that would allow me the honor of being the very first Executive Director of Family Renewal Initiative. The places God sent me, the organizations I was able to learn from, and the education I was able to receive, prepared me to have the skills and knowledge to say "yes", when asked to join the team who developed the ministry. I have never worked with such a loving, caring, God fearing group of people, people who love the brokenhearted and lost of this world.

Through FRI, I have been able to develop relationships with people and pastors I have known,and others I hadn't, getting to know many who shared the heart we share for caring for "the least of these". I have had the privilege of working with many volunteers whom I have come to love and cherish as friends as they step into what God has called them to do, even when it gets hard. Volunteers who have shown me how to love, beyond what I thought I could, or should, the way God has loved us.

WV and especially FRI will remain in my heart forever as I move my family to Minnesota to be closer to family. It has been a learning, growing and stretching experience, one that God has blessed over and over again. We will be praying for this ministry, for the wonderful and irreplaceable volunteers (and for those volunteers who are soon to join this ministry as God grows it) and for the Board and Staff as they seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to vulnerable children and families. I welcome the New Executive Director and will pray for her often, as she seeks the Lord's guidance and direction to reach families who are in desperate need of not only tangible help, but to hear that God loves them so very deeply.

Gotcha Day – June 11, 2024

Reorganize a Trailer, Renew a Family!

Just a reminder that on June 22, at 8:30 a.m., we will meet at 1400 Greensburg Rd., Martinsburg to reorganize the furniture in our storage trailer. Many hands make light work! Bring a friend! Bring your family. Coffee, juice, donuts (or coffee cakes) and fruit will be served!

Next Executive Director?

Drum Roll Please…!

We are pleased to announce that God has clearly guided us to our next Executive Director as Illona Roman has completed her adoption of 4 members of a sibling group (see main article and photo of a lovely family). In this June newsletter, we are proud to announce that Cassidy Morris, a member of Independent Bible Church and passionate advocate for the "least of these" will be joining us on July 8th, allowing for a smooth transition of duties. We believe that Cassidy is God's clear choice for the next season of growth and ministry with the Family Renewal Initiative. Pray for and welcome Cassidy!

Coming this Fall!

FRI Family Tree Appreciation and Fun Day!

Plans are being made to honor and appreciate both those who have been blessed by the ministry of people like you through the Family Renewal Initiative and those who have been a blessing. Would you please hold the date of **September 7, 2024** for this special time of fellowship among the FRI Family Tree? Please plan to bring your family and enjoy! Watch your email for details as we get closer to the date!

Thank you, Illona!

So much can be said about Illona Roman, formerly of Bethany Christian Services and the founding Executive Director of the Family Renewal Initiative. The one thing that we want to highlight above all others is her passion and compassion for those in need. Illona has built her professional and personal life around biblical teaching that we are all to minister to the least of these. As God guides her in the ministry of raising up 4 new children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord", our hearts are full of gratitude for her example and all that she has done to establish the ministry of FRI. She has laid a foundation to allow us to continue "Renewing Families & Transforming Hearts". God bless you, young lady. You will be deeply missed!

Let's Help Get Illona and Her Family on their Way (August 16th at 8:30 am)!

Illona and her now legally adopted kiddos (and her faithful older daughter, Hope) are leaving for Minnesota, the Land of the Mosquitos, in mid-August. She could really use our help on August 16th to load up the truck that she and Hope will be driving.

Don't forget Gobena!

If you love great coffee and wish to support FRI financially, try some Gobena coffee. If you use this exclusive link, (https://my.gobena.org/stories/family-renewal-initiative/?id=794), FRI will receive HALF of whatever you spend. Get your caffeine and be a blessing to FRI. Can it get any better than that?

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