I JUST WANNA

I just wanna take a minute, or just maybe two
Not to ask or beg, but just to honor you
Because you brought me close, so I can live the truth
And putting trust in me, enough to guide your youth

I just wanna thank you for the way that you protect them
If its danger in their path, you redirect them
And tho, the devils on the move, to come abuse them
When he locks them up in shackles, you come and remove them

I just wanna say, I see up close how "youngins" live
And the fact that through it all, you always will forgive
When they make mistakes, they think that you would be enraged
But to their surprise, they find your love could never change

I just wanna thank you for your guidance it's a blessing
I trust in you to see them through, without a question
And when the Devil, preys and tries to come confuse them
You guide and open their eyes, so you can use them

I just wanna thank you for the change in their community
For favors, open doors and opportunity
For making ways, no obstacles too big for you
For breaking chains so that they always finish through

I just wanna thank you, simply for being the Father
For accepting each of them to be your sons and daughters
I just wanna thank you for your Love and Sacrifice
I just wanna thank you, for its you who paid the price
I just wanna thank you for the things they cannot see
I just wanna thank you, for its you who set them free

Now they can win and live their lives in victory!
And I know its real cause he did it all for me
Who would've known, you would chose just little me
To usher youth as close to you as they can be

You are great, and Lord, I am forever Grateful
I just wanna tell you Lord, that I'm forever thankful
MORE THAN AN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM
WE ARE A LOCAL MISSION, serving the entire family

Meet Ms. Faith! The House got to know Ms. Faith this past summer through her daughter Rachel. Rachel attended our Summer Elementary Enrichment Program which was made possible by a few very special donors who covered the entire expense of the program, enabling students to attend free of charge.

Ms. Faith believes that the summer camp changed her daughter’s life and because of that, has changed her life forever as well. Rachel is often bullied and mistreated at school by the students and some teachers. The summer camp was different for her because the camp was designed to intentionally show love, make learning fun, and build confidence. Ms. Faith said that her daughter felt something she never felt outside of her home before: love, patience, kindness, support, gentleness and of course plenty of fun! By the end of the summer Rachel was singing a duet in front of her peers, parents, family and a room full of strangers with confidence and excitement, something her mom was surprised to see in a public setting.

“The joy felt day after day seeing my daughter’s transformation and happiness was truly a blessing, but nothing prepared me for what I saw in her on that day she performed. I knew then I would have to do something to help The House. I want to be a blessing to them the way they bless others. I have seen them give to the community over and over for years, from the Thanksgiving Outreach, to the huge Christmas celebration for the entire community, to putting food in my neighbor’s home, or paying their electric bill, assisting in funeral costs for a child, and even giving jobs to the people in the community. I can’t think of an organization that does so much for so many people but have very little themselves.”

Ms. Faith jumped into action this school year full speed ahead. She started a cooking class with the high school students called “Cooking with Faith” and it has proven to be a blessing every time. She volunteers every Thursday and has taught the students to make simple but great meals and desserts from scratch. Not only is it fun but the food has been great! Cooking for us on Thursdays saves us money and allows the entire staff to participate in our Life Session and small groups on that night. Ms. Faith loves every second of what she does and is looking for other ways to help us save and raise money. She’s no stranger to tough times, growing up seeing her parents murdered in war, being sent to America and abused physically and mentally by foster parents, and finally being adopted by great parents who taught her how to cook various ethnic meals. She identifies with our children and loves teaching them and showing them love.

Elementary children lining up for a field trip.
HOUSE DC GOLFERS
FAITHFUL TO A "TEE"

The 16th Annual Golf Tournament was a beautiful day full of sun, fun, and great fellowship thanks to the tireless commitment of our Golf Committee. Golf Chairman Ed Tarbutton had much to celebrate with the birth of his son, and Tournament sponsor Co-Chair George Dunn gave a moving, heartfelt speech to the golfers about how they are blessed and what an even greater blessing it is for them to pay those blessings forward to The House. Co-Chair, John Yetman proudly reflected on The House’s tremendous success over the past 16 years and reminded the golfers how critical the golf tournament sponsors have been to that success. The tournament raised $57,000! The golf tournament has been The House’s most consistent and successful fundraising event over the past 16 years—rain or shine—and we are so grateful for the continued support of our golf friends.

Tournament Sponsor:
George Dunn

Platinum Sponsors:
John Lynch,
John Yetman, Capitol Bay Group at Ameriprise Financial,
Zion Church
THIS TIME THE COOKIE DIDN’T CRUMBLE

Late one evening former House student Danielle, aka “Cookie,” stopped by to say, “I have so much ‘Good News’ to share and I can't wait to tell you and all the staff!” I gave her a big hug and right away I knew something was different because Cookie never let me give her a hug without putting up a fight.

When Cookie was a student she was very angry and protective of her feelings, and rightfully so. She had experienced everything from abandonment and abuse to homelessness. Whenever I would ask to give her a hug she would reply, “Why?” and “No.” One day I hugged her anyway and she laughed uncontrollably, so I realized that she really wanted a hug but didn’t know how to receive it. That became the nature of our relationship - Cookie running and laughing as I would chase her to give her a hug.

After the hug, Cookie started to share her story:

“Mrs. Andrea!” she said excitedly, “I’m saved and I got baptized! I have been through more than you know, but on April 1st my life took a turn for the worst and I couldn't take it any more. I was at my lowest point ever, my best friend got murdered and I wanted to join him. I kept saying Lord I can't take any more of this and I wanted to end my life. I felt like nobody could help or understand me. I had sharp pains shooting through my chest while feeling like someone had dropped bricks on my chest. My mind went back to the retreat we went on and you told us that God could do anything and that He loved us no matter what. I asked, God if you love me please heal this pain or let me end my life! The song from the retreat started playing in my mind and even though it's old, it's still my favorite until this day! ‘After you've done all you can, you just stand.’ I stood long enough to make it to church that Sunday and I accepted Jesus in my life as my Lord and Savior! Can I please share with the students?” She asked. “I've been where they are and I know they may not totally get it right now, but I know they will listen to me.”

Cookie was right! She shared her story and the students tuned in as if they were watching their favorite movie. Cookie left them with a statement that they couldn’t let go of: “If you can read a book and believe there is an author, look at a painting and believe there is an artist, how can you look at creation including yourself and not believe there is a creator?” That creator is the same God that loves us no matter what! Cookie knows that truth for herself, and it is that truth that kept this very special Cookie from crumbling!

IDENTITY

We never take Life Sessions for granted. Every Thursday we do something a little different. We set aside time before dinner to address real life issues relevant to our kids and offer practical and Biblical solutions. This gives us an opportunity to have a healthy dialogue, answer questions, and offer wisdom from our own experiences.

Our Spiritual Life Director, Jarmone Davis, presented a Life Session titled “Identity.” The youth were challenged to consider who or what defines their identity and how that affects their behavior. We had an open discussion about how society identifies their generation by money, material things, and fitting in.

We were also able to talk about how God identifies us in His Word, and instead of integrating into their culture they can influence others positively by realizing their true identity. It was awesome to see our youth identify with Moses and Joseph as Jarmone showed them parallels in their lives.

Jarmone prayed for our young men and our most troubled group of guys came up for prayer at the end. Now no matter what, they never leave The House DC without asking us “can somebody pray before we go.”
COMMUNITY OF PRAYERS

Violence in our community is at an all-time high and our students often find themselves in dangerous and life-threatening situations. Because our students face evil on a daily basis—at school, in the streets, and sometimes even at home—we believe it is our responsibility to keep them covered in prayer. So, in addition to our daily prayers for the community, we decided to host a prayer breakfast so leaders of the community and other organizations could join us for a morning of prayer, worship, fellowship, and delicious food.

It was a powerful moment as we all came together to pray over our youth and their families. Afterward, we fellowshipped and dined over a delicious breakfast lovingly prepared by our volunteer cook, Ms. Faith.

We know that the prayers of the righteous avail much, and we encourage you to join us at our next prayer breakfast as we continue to intercede on behalf of the community we serve. If you would like to pray for The House DC contact: pray@thehousedc.org.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

Ephesians 6:18

THANK YOU, McLean Bible Church and volunteers, for Turkey Outreach 2015.
250 food baskets were distributed to the community
MEET DAVID

“Intelligent”, “funny”, “serious” and “respectful” are the adjectives the staff used to describe House student David, and the funny thing is, David used those same words to describe himself—except he also added the word “handsome!” We know that modesty is not up for discussion!

David is a great young man that lives with his grandmother like a lot of our students. He says he comes to The House because it keeps him safe and out of trouble. “Seriously, I know we all say this but it’s true,” he explained. “Several of our friends that never came to The House are already dead or in jail. We are smarter than people think, we know we need this place,” David said with a stern look on his face.

When Executive Director of Youth & Family Outreach, Andrea Counts asked him why he considers The House a safe place for him and his friends, David answered, “last year when a rival gang came to fight us, the staff went out with no hesitation and made them leave. And, when they came back with guns threatening to shoot up The House, the staff never thought for a second that the problem would go away if they just put us out. Instead, we sat down and talked about it and they came up with more ways to keep us safe and to mediate between us and the other gang. I know we are all living today because of that interaction with the other gang. What other organization would risk their life for us? What person do you know would do that?” Of course, we know there is One who really laid down His life for David. And, we are so thankful that The House has provided us the perfect setting and opportunity to introduce Jesus to David.

Earlier this Fall, David participated in Faith Day with the Washington Nationals baseball team. Reflecting on his visit to Nats Stadium, David said, “I loved being a part of Faith Day! Going on that field and being a part of that day made me feel like I was doing my part to help The House. I want to help every chance I get, I have a little brother that has to come here when I’m gone and he has friends that need to come as well. Always get me to help out because I get it!!”

What a blessing it was to see those efficient assembly lines of REID TEMPLE A.M.E. CHURCH members eager to help and give back. They turned mundane tasks into marvelous ministry moments! Thank you Rev. Russ for reaching out to The House and helping us as we reach the community for Jesus.
A HALLOWEEN BLESSING?

A mother brought her children to The House DC’s “Scary House” Halloween event and explained that despite the ominous sounding name, she felt the peace of God at the event and was “going to take that peace home with her and into her situation.” She also shared that, at the end of the night her children would not stop asking her questions about God and the devil, and she was so happy that this was the topic of their conversation. “I can’t ever remember feeling blessed for Halloween,” she said. “Thanksgiving and Christmas yes—but Halloween?” She said with a puzzled look on her face.

This year the staff put on a “Scary House” for the community. The thought behind it was that life without JESUS is very scary, hence the name of the event. We presented three scenarios together in each room as “the devil” gave visitors a tour of how he roams the earth like a lion looking for someone to devour—1 Peter 5:8.

The scenarios presented very realistic and very scary life issues like teen suicide, depression, and living in severe poverty. At the end, Jesus showed up to the one who called on Him and wanted Him in their life. Although the situation was bad they survived it with peace, and Jesus defeated the devil and made him flee—John 16:33.

It was truly very scary until God came on the scene, but they received a vivid lesson on how the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy, while Jesus came to give life, and life more abundantly.

The young people enjoyed a candy buffet line and a cookout with a fire pit on the back deck. To top it all off, participants won prizes like brand new tablets, cell phones with activation, gift cards and more. The community had a blast thanks to the sponsorship from Zion Church!

MI CASA ES SU CASA? (MY HOUSE IS YOUR HOUSE?)

Normally, the phrase, “Mi casa es Su Casa” doesn’t come with a question mark. However, when it comes to distinguishing The House DC, Inc., from the countless other ministries with the word “House” in their names, the question definitely arises as to which “House” is The House. Time and time again we hear from individuals about the difficulty in sorting through the list of “Houses” to determine which ministry was ours. There’s “Freedom House”, “House of Refuge DC”, “Diane’s House”, “Beacon House”, “Jesus House”, “Open House”… need we say more?

The House was aptly named because from the very beginning it was set up by followers of Jesus to be a warm, welcoming, loving, safe home for the students who come through our doors day in and day out. Also, although we are not a church in the traditional sense, our facility is definitely “the house of the Lord” because the Lord is definitely in The House DC.

There are many “houses” in the market today, and the time has come for us to explore a new name—one that may creatively reflect who we are and what we do in the community through the power of Jesus Christ. Please pray for us as we look to and listen for God to reveal to us what He would have us to be named. In the meantime, feel free to stop by The House DC any time. You are always welcome because, regardless of the name, our house is your house—no question about it.

Have a suggestion? name@thehousedc.org
NATS HIT A HOME RUN FOR THE HOUSE DC

The Washington Nationals baseball team hosted “Faith Day at the Park” this past September, and what a blessing it was to have them recognize and support The House DC during this special event. For every ticket sold directly through the team’s Faith Day site, $5.00 was donated to The House. Thanks to all of the churches and families who came out in full force; we are excited to report the event raised $10,000 for The House!

Not only did the Nats support us financially, they treated us like royalty. House students participated in the team’s opening line up and were on the field to see the players up close. We also set up a special House DC information booth where our students did an outstanding job sharing about the great things happening at The House.

We enjoyed a great game—made even better with the Nat’s win in the final inning—and an uplifting musical interlude from local church choirs, including two of our very own church partners Zion Church and McLean Bible Church. Another church partner, The Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church and others brought busloads of people in support of The House. Olney Baptist Church and Faith Assembly of Christ choirs also performed at this event.

After the game, Nats players shared specially prepared videos featuring their inspiring testimonies of faith. Ian Desmond and several other players also came out and personally shared their faith.

Faith Day is an exciting and easy way to support The House DC, and our first experience with Faith Day was a winner in every way. We definitely look forward to seeing even more churches and supporters next September at Faith Day 2016 to help the Nats hit another home run for The House.