

**From:** Edith Yoder [mailto:EdithY@bridgeofhopeinc.org]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 2, 2017 10:00 AM

**Subject:** It all started 30 years ago today ... at the first Bridge of Hope gathering!

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**It all started 30 years ago today ... at the first Bridge of Hope gathering!**

**March 2017**



Dear Friend,

30 years ago today, on March 2, 1987, thirty-seven Christians gathered in a church basement in Pennsylvania to hear three women facing homelessness share their stories – and to learn how they could be neighbors to families facing homelessness.

The group represented a cross-section of churches, but was united by a deep sense of Christ's call to compassion for homeless single mothers and their children. As they explored ways churches could make a real and lasting difference, God's Spirit prompted ten women and men to step forward.

You can read more about the [history](#) and Bridge of Hope [co-founders](#).

Co-founder Sandy Lewis was overworked at the shelter and discouraged by the fact that she was seeing the same women return again and again "because a roof over their heads wasn't enough to take care of their needs and their children's needs." Sandy struggled to figure out how to best help her clients. "I remember one time locking the door, putting my head on the desk, and crying to the Lord, 'I can't do this anymore. There's not enough of me. Send someone to help me.'"

Shortly after that cry to God for help, Sandy met Linda Witmer, who was a public health nurse in Coatesville and shared her concerns about the temporariness of the help they were providing. "I felt the Lord had put her there," says Sandy. **And,**



Will you be 1 of 30 people to make a gift of \$30 or more this month in honor of this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary? For every gift made, one of our board members will match it with an additional \$30 gift, toward our goal of 30 gifts! Help end homelessness and celebrate the work of Bridge of Hope for more families in the years ahead!

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**just like Sandy needed the help of another person, she knew that churches could provide relationships, tangible supports, and social capital for homeless families.**

The first Bridge of Hope family and church were served in 1989, and today there are 21 Bridge of Hope locations in 12 states and Canada – that are ending family homelessness for the long-term.

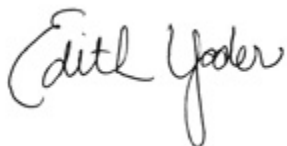
Thanks to the group that gathered 30 years ago, a Bridge of Hope Neighborhood today includes a family facing homelessness, 6-10 trained Neighboring Volunteers from a Christian Faith Community, and a case manager.

Celebrate Bridge of Hope's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary! You can:

- [Make a gift](#) – of \$30, \$130, \$300, or any amount – for Bridge of Hope National or designated for a Bridge of Hope location. Your gift to Bridge of Hope National by March 31<sup>st</sup> will be matched with an additional gift of \$30 from one of our National Board Members in honor of our goal of 30 gifts this month to recognize this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- [Let me know](#) that your agency or church – or a church/agency in your community – is ready to learn more about building a Bridge of Hope Neighborhood with a family facing homelessness.

Here's to the next 30 years of building bridges and Neighborhoods of hope – for once-homeless children and their mothers!

**Blessings,**



We invite you to [watch this video](#) to familiarize yourself with the new Bridge of Hope language that we are very excited to introduce to our network.

**Join us at our 2017 Gala Luncheon!**



Author [Jennifer Grant](#) will speak at our May 12, 2017 [Gala Luncheon](#) at Doubletree Resort in Lancaster (PA). [Sponsors invited.](#)

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