

Birthright Of Ithaca
Celebrating 39 Years of Service

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Serving Tompkins County & Surrounding Areas
Birthright Helpline 1-800-550-4900

YEARLY NEWSLETTER 2020

“It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born” - Louise Summerhill, founder of Birthright

We thank Gnomon Copy for their generous support and Great Service.

Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Happy New Year to all!

Does anyone else feel like they are in a time warp this year? I keep coming back to what I have been taught over the years: God is the same; yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This has been so reassuring during this unprecedented time in which we are living.

How do I know this to be true? I see it, I feel it, I hear it. I see it in the beauty that continues to surround us. We had autumn colors that lasted so much longer than the past few years. I feel like God was telling us to “Hang in there”. I feel it in the love and support of the amazing people who have been inspired to support and help us at Birthright (my beloved family included). I hear it in the voices of our volunteers as they assist our clients, assuring them and giving loving support.

All of this gives me hope. If God has been so visible to me during this difficult time, how can I doubt he won't be with me in

future times of trouble. THIS is the message I want to be able to share with our clients when they come in troubled, weary, and scared. There are so many ways to show God's love.

In Peace,
Beth Janowsky

Birthright Happenings 2020:

Our numbers this year were definitely affected by the shut down. We temporarily closed on the 13th of March. In late June we started offering curbside service. We wanted to see how much the COVID numbers rose with re-opening before we opened again for in-office service. By mid July we felt safe to fully open again.

This year we've had a total of 129 office visits and 6 home visits. We helped out 258 children. We gave out 133 bundles of diapers and 11 canisters of formula. We had clients come in for both children's and maternity clothing. We gave out 7 layettes to new mothers and gave one pregnancy test. We assisted four families with financial

aid. My suspicion is that we will be feeling the financial effects of COVID for a long time and I strongly expect to see our numbers rise in the new year.

In December of 2019 we received many lovely gifts from the Immaculate Conception and St. Catherine's church Giving Trees. These gifts provided diapers, formula, warm coats, and clothing to many children. We are so blessed by the support of these parishes.

On March 13th the state shut down due to COVID 19. However, just days before this, we visited potential new office spaces with the help of Larry Berger of Lama Real Estate. By late March we had signed a lease for our new space at 223 Elmira Rd. Suite 1. What an amazing space this is! Ground level, our own bathroom, very spacious, bright, and welcoming, and it's on a bus route! Everything we were looking for and then some.

Also in March, the Mercy Associates were going to host a baby shower for Birthright. Unfortunately, due to COVID the actual event was cancelled. However, we received many beautiful donations (layette clothing, onesies, bibs, books, formula, blankets, etc...), It was wonderful to know that even in a pandemic Birthright's mission was not forgotten.

By April, we were in full swing preparing our new space. Between my family and some of our younger volunteers we got everything in ship shape, fresh paint, clean windows, all our furniture and provisions moved in and set up. Now we eagerly waited for the state to re-open!

In May we mailed out letters and called our clients to inform them of our move. We also informed them that even though we were closed, we could still get provisions to them if need be.

In May we had to cancel our annual Mother's Day flower sale; this is one of our major fund raisers. Instead we mailed letters to many of our supporters. Between these letters and a very generous grant from the TRIAD Foundation we were able to make up for the lack of the flower sale. We thank all who so generously gave. It is a true and necessary help.

In June we started providing curbside service to our clients. They could come to the office, call us from their car and tell us what they needed. We would happily bring their items to the door.

In July, we finally opened for in-office business. Clients started coming back slowly. We have a handwashing station at the entrance, with gloves and masks available so clients can feel free to look around.

In September, we held our board meeting in our new space. We were able to maintain social distance in comfort. Fr. Augustine Chumo from Immaculate Conception Church came and blessed our new home. We DO feel blessed!

In October, the Cornellians for Life group put together an online drive for Birthright and the Ithaca Pregnancy Center. We received several boxes of diapers, diaper wipes, formula, and socks. What a wonderful way to celebrate Respect Life month. We are truly grateful!

Throughout the year we received many donations of clothing and sometimes diapers and formula. These are all things that help our many clients and we so appreciate these gifts.

We welcomed four new volunteers this year. Each one brings something different to the table and all freely share their talents. As a result of this, as of December 4th we will start offering Friday hours from 11am-2pm!

In the coming year we pray for an end to COVID 19. When that happens we will have a grand open house and welcome all our supporters to view our new home . We hope to be able to offer classes and coffee hours for our clients. We want so much more than to just provide them with the “things” that are needed - though these are important, it is also important to provide support. And I believe our new space allows us room for that and so much more.

God is good.

Will you join us at Birthright? Training is provided for all volunteers: WE NEED YOU. Will you help?

YES! I can offer my time to Birthright:

As an office volunteer

Substitute (sit in with a trained volunteer)

A place in my home for an expectant mother

YES! I am willing to offer:

Used and new maternity clothing

New and used baby clothes

Washing donated clothes

YES! I can't give time, but I can help financially:

Enclosed is a one time gift

I want to contribute regularly

Please contact me when special needs arise

Your Name

Address

Phone

(If you have filled out this form, please detach it and mail it to: Birthright of Ithaca, 605 W. State St. Ithaca, NY 14850)