



spring 2021

# Brother Francis Shelter

1021 E. 3rd Ave.

## When COVID changed everything, YOU helped us change to meet it.

*With your help, Brother Francis Shelter has adapted to meet the needs of the moment, and we are beyond excited about the impact we're seeing.*

When COVID was on the horizon, we knew that more people would struggle in 2020 than ever before, not just with illness, but also job loss, anxiety, and all the uncertainties that come with a crisis. We knew the shelter system needed a larger facility to increase space between guests. With your help, we advocated for a large-scale emergency shelter so that everyone had safe shelter. We are thankful to you, our community, and our city for making that happen.

With your help, we've taken this



**ABOVE:** *Ada was able to recover from ankle surgery at the Medical Respite at BFS, where there are no stairs to climb.*

opportunity to transition, to give specialized care to our most vulnerable neighbors: the elderly and medically fragile guests.

With the support you give, the results of this transition have been nothing short of spectacular. We now provide 72 beds, which keeps our guests safely socially distanced. With fewer guests, our staff can give each one of them more personalized care. The shelter is now decongested and much more spacious.

***continued on page 5...***

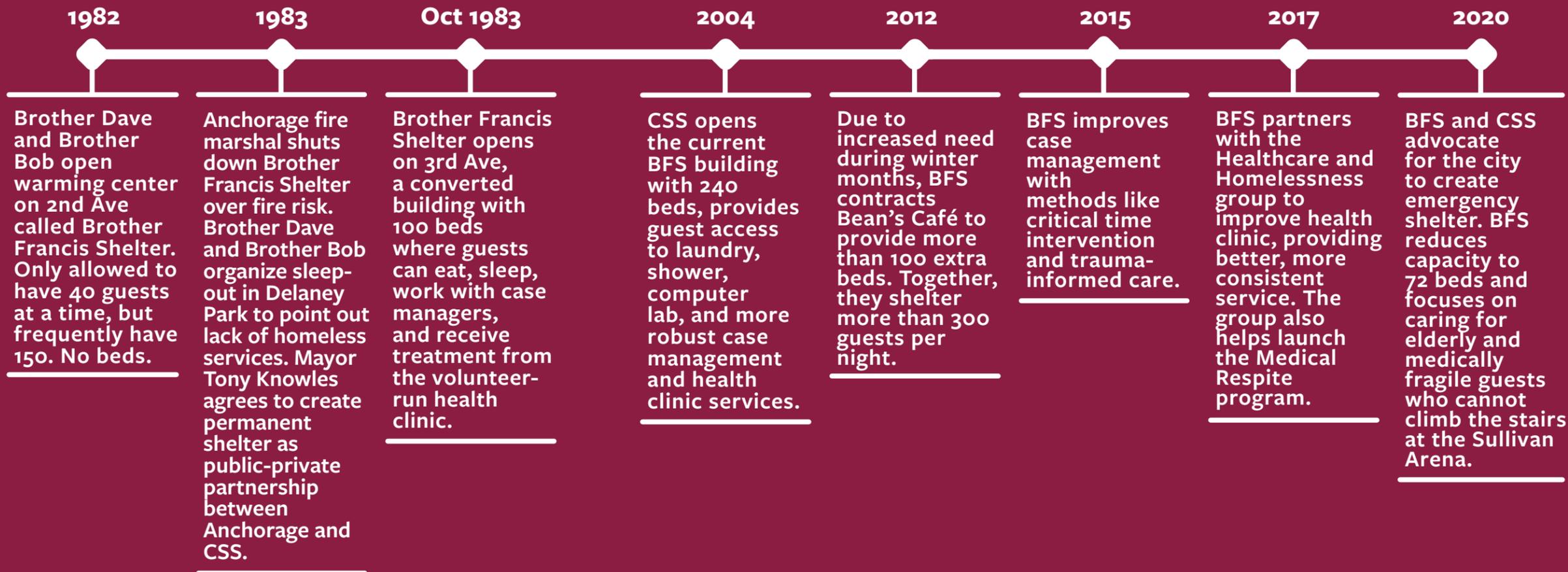


## A Timeline of BFS

Since the first Brother Francis Shelter opened in 1982, you've helped us grow and adapt to Anchorage's changing needs. From a small warming center to the largest shelter in the state to a specialized, health-focused shelter-clinic hybrid, you, our community, have enabled us to be what Anchorage needs us to be. The tens of thousands of people we've served would never have gotten that help without your constant support.

For nearly 40 years,

YOU've helped us grow and change.



**ABOVE:** Brother Bob and Brother Dave, the founders of BFS, in 1983.

**BELOW:** Anchorage community members and guests of BFS joined the sleepout in Delaney Park, calling attention to the city's lack of homelessness services.



**ABOVE:** BFS in 1997, before the current building with more amenities was constructed.



**ABOVE:** BFS opened its current building in 2004, providing 240 beds for guests to sleep in and escape the cold winter nights.

**BELOW:** Our partnership with the Healthcare and Homelessness group enabled us to keep our Caring Clinic permanently staffed, so guests can always have access to the help they need.



**BELOW:** With our current emphasis on health and wellness, BFS staff lead guests in stretching activities to promote exercise.



# Thank YOU for bringing Medical Respite to life!

**Your ongoing support and our partnership with the Healthcare and Homelessness group have made the Medical Respite program a highlight of 2020.**

In Medical Respite, people who've recently been discharged from the hospital after surgery or illness have a safe place to rest and recover, giving their bodies the time they need to properly heal. Not only does Medical Respite provide a place for these guests to recover, it also helps local hospitals and the municipal budget. When someone has the chance to recover safely and completely from an injury, they are far less likely to re-injure themselves and need another expensive stay in the hospital. With our 10 Medical Respite beds and your generous support, we save the city over 1.5 million dollars per year.

The Medical Respite program also gives staff the opportunity to build personal, nurturing relationships with guests. We've begun our First Fridays program, where medical professionals talk to guests about relevant health issues. Each month, the staff also host a Wellness Wednesday where they host exercises and other wellness



**ABOVE:** Tom was a carpenter until a serious workplace accident broke his jaw and nose. Medical Respite gave Tom a safe place to recover from surgery. It also gave him access to a blender, where he processed food to eat while his jaw healed.

activities. Volunteers are also building relationships with guests in Medical Respite. Nick Bachman from Anchorage Community Land Trust is volunteering with Medical Respite and shared his agricultural knowledge to move the Medical Respite garden indoors with basil, thyme, oregano, and chamomile plants. Sharing activities provides an opportunity for guests to build social and emotional support systems. "You start with planting, and soon people are talking about foods, families, jobs, other stories," Nick said. Guests continue to care for the herb garden: "Guests have been taking pride in it. They're watering and tending the plants. And sometimes things die, and that's okay. We just start over and try again."

Without your support, none of this would be possible. Thanks to you, patient-guests are creating the foundation to permanent stability through wellness and recovery.

*...continued from cover*

Brother Francis Shelter is a calmer, quieter space to be in. Guests spend their days talking with case managers and staff, creating a plan to permanent stability. Guests also spend time recovering from past traumas, reading and doing puzzles building a strong foundation for permanent stability.

This new environment, made possible by your constant support, even gives us space for community events like a Christmas party and community talent show, where guests cheered each other on as they performed.

This past year of the pandemic has been hard on everyone, but it's also given us a new vision for the future of shelter care. Seeing the incredible impact that our less crowded shelter has had on our guests and staff, the compassionate, individualized care we can offer, we believe that this model is the way of the future. With your help, we will continue to learn and grow.



[cssalaska.org/charityball](http://cssalaska.org/charityball)

This year, please join us virtually on Thursday, May 6th 2021.



# Christmas at BFS



This winter, Brother Francis Shelter was able to throw community events like a Christmas party and talent show, and conduct a virtual Christmas Mass! These were great opportunities to build relationships.



*"Every woman deserves to know what's going on within her body mentally, physically, and emotionally. I'm glad that I was able to help the women at the shelter feel that empowerment so that small health issues don't become long term conditions."*

**- Emily Cornish Haury, RN  
speaker at First Friday**



**Support 6 programs with a single click.**

## THANK YOU, PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL!

On behalf of Providence Hospital, Kirsten Schultz, CSS Board Member, donated a box of pedometers to Brother Francis Shelter to encourage physical health!



## THANK YOU, SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION!



Southcentral Foundation worked on-site at BFS to give COVID vaccinations to BFS guests and staff!

Thanks to them, guests like Benjamin will stay safer and healthier.

## Hope Endures. So can your giving.

When you give to the Brother Francis Shelter Endowment fund beyond your regular giving, you create hope that will sustain the shelter for years to come. Since what you give grows, your gift sustains the mission of Brother Francis Shelter as a permanent source of support. Whether it's \$25 or \$25,000 your investment makes a real difference and builds permanency that will benefit the lives of our shelter guests now, and in the future.

To learn about the many ways to make a lasting gift today, contact Tricia Teasley at [tteasley@cssalaska.org](mailto:tteasley@cssalaska.org).

