

HCoHFH HABITAT HOUSE #18, A HOME FOR THE COMBS FAMILY, DEDICATION PROGRAM TEXT:

Welcome & Introductions (Kelley Ellsworth, HCoHFH Executive Director)

Low-income families, even those who earn a steady wage and may work multiple jobs, have very few options for home ownership in our 1,500 square mile county. Habitat believes in assisting such families under its philosophy of providing a 'hand-up, not a hand-out'. Since Habitat's founding in 1976, over 1 million families, an estimated 5 million people, have been served by this ministry in over 70 countries --- 300,000 last year alone with Missy and her children representing one of these households. With your support, Hancock County Habitat has built 18 homes in its 26 years and has worked both locally and globally through the 10% tithe of our unrestricted donations to an affiliate overseas. For several years, this sister affiliate has been in Romania with nearly 26 homes built in all the countries we've partnered with in those same 26 years to date.

Habitat continues to provide the opportunity for bridges to be built between people of different cultural backgrounds, faith communities and belief systems, and socio-economic groups... skilled and unskilled, rich and poor, young and old... Working side-by-side makes neighborhood renewal and economic stability for each family a real possibility.

A Poem by Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley & Norman Cousins

(Reading by Rev. Charles Stephens of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Castine)

If, recognizing the interdependence of all life, we strive to build community, the strength we gather will be our salvation.

If you are black and I am white, it will not matter.

If you are female and I am male, it will not matter.

If you are older and I am younger, it will not matter.

If you are progressive and I am conservative, it will not matter.

If you are straight and I am gay, it will not matter.

If you are Christian and I am Jewish, it will not matter.

If we join spirits as brothers and sisters, the pain of our aloneness will be lessened, and that does matter. In this spirit, we build community and move toward restoration.

Introduction by Kelley Ellsworth:

Our philosophy embraces several Biblical imperatives and recognizes God's special concern for the poor, with our participation in this ministry, our action being a witness to our commitment to God's word. The UCC's moto is "God is Still Speaking". I'd like to ask Ruth Miller to read a few biblical passages upon which Habitat's mission is based and, if so moved, to have you respond with the phrase "God is Still

Speaking”.

Responsive Scripture Reading (Led by Ruth Miller of the Blue Hill Congregational Church)

- *1 John 3:16-18-If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love, in word or speech, but in truth and action.*
 - *God is Still Speaking*
- *Exodus 22:25-If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest.*
 - *God is Still Speaking*
- *James 2:14-17-What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*
 - *God is Still Speaking*
- *Psalms 127:1-Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.*
 - *God is Still Speaking*
- *Galatians 5:14-The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*
 - *God is Still Speaking*

Special Thanks (Kelley Ellsworth)

Perhaps none of our builds has embodied our mission and our history as well as this one – what we called our ‘Disciple Build’. It involved the direct construction support of 9 congregations, multiple small business owners, 40 individual volunteers, 9 community groups comprised of many more individuals, and countless people working behind the scenes. (As featured in your dedication program.)

A special thanks Missy’s family and friends, to each of our Board members, our former Executive Director, Jimmy Goodson, to our volunteer groups from near and far (special reference to Bates group in attendance), and to our volunteer regulars, to whom we owe a special debt of gratitude: Pat Cough, Wayne Ellsworth, Bill Hodges, Pete Horton, Dan Rhodes, and Ken Wilmot.

Words of thanks by homeowner, Missy Combs.

House Blessing Prayer (Kelley Ellsworth)

Give your blessing, Lord, to all who share in this dedication ceremony that they may be knit together in fellowship and companionship here on earth.

A Prayer on Behalf of the Family: O God, protect our going out and our coming in; Let us share the hospitality of this home with all who visit us, that those who enter here may know your love and peace. Send your blessing on us and make us ever thankful for our daily bread. Help us to be grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, we may rest in his peace. Refresh us in body and in spirit, and keep us in good health that we might serve you. Be our shelter, Lord, when we are at home, our companion when we are away, and our welcome guest when we return. Amen.

Adapted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy National Conference of Catholic Bishops © 1988, pp. 297-301 & Liturgies found in The Book of Occasional Services of the Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Book of Worship.

Presentation of Bible, House Key, Quilts and Birdhouse

Ribbon Cutting by Family

LITANY OF DEDICATION (Jimmy Goodson, former Executive Director)

Leader: That this house may serve as a place for rest, shelter, and laughter

All: We dedicate this house

Leader: In thanks to you, Lord, for guidance and wisdom in this project and in our lives

All: We dedicate this house

Leader: As a symbol of cooperative goodwill, work, and sharing

All: We dedicate this house

Leader: For family living, a place of love and respect between all members of this family

All: We dedicate this house

Leader: As a place where this family may grow, play, and learn

All: We dedicate this house

Closing Prayer of Dedication (Rev. Tim Hall of the Trinitarian Congregational Parish of Castine)

We dedicate this home to love and understanding. May its joys and sorrows be shared and the individuality of each person who lives and visits here appreciated. We dedicate this home to work, and rest and play. May our home have joy and high fellowship, with kindness in its voices and laughter running within its walls. We dedicate this home to friendly life. May its doors open in hospitality and its windows look out with kindness toward other homes. We dedicate this home to cooperation. May its duties be performed in love, its furnishings bear witness that the work of others ministers to our comfort, and its table remind us that God works with us for the supply of daily needs. We dedicate this home to the appreciation of all things good and true. May the books bring wisdom, the pictures symbolize things beautiful, and the music bring joy and inspiration. We dedicate the time and talent of those who live here to help build a world in which every family may have a home of comfort and fellowship.

Adapted from: <http://fairhavenucc.org/Pages/HouseBlessing.html>