

ARISE

HELPING HOMELESS PEOPLE SURVIVE, FIND HOUSING AND REBUILD THEIR LIVES

"In Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha; she was always doing good and helping the poor."



MAISEE, JOHNNY, LEXI AND KENNADI IN FRONT OF THEIR CAMP

CLIENT STORIES

Homeless With Baby Girls

In Des Moines lies a wooded area with barren trees, a winter breeze, and a frosted pond where two little girls emerge from a tattered tent. A dented metal lunch pail dangles from the hands of the three-year-old. As she bends down to add to her leaf collection kept inside, her parents watch, dreaming of the day they can escape the perils of homelessness and give their daughters more.

Johnny, 25, and Alexis, "Lexi," 23, met through mutual friends a couple of years ago. Johnny fell in love with Lexi right away and quickly bonded with Maisee, Lexi's three-year-old daughter. "Maisee is not biologically mine, but she's my daughter," he says. He worked to provide for them while Lexi was pregnant with their other daughter, Kennadi, who is now two years old. It was exciting to be expecting another child, but financial struggles engulfed them when Johnny lost his job as a subcontractor.

Johnny and Lexi found jobs at Pizza Hut, but their financial troubles kept mounting when Johnny's mother started her third battle with cancer. They both lost their jobs while caring for her.

CONTINUED...

OUR MISSION

To create communities of unconditional love, support and hope for the homeless, as we work together to prevent and ultimately end homelessness.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTHLY VOLUNTOUR
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Each second Tuesday at Joppa

SECOND SATURDAY WORKDAY
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Each month at Joppa

**DOWN & OUT HOMELESS
FUNDRAISER**
November 2024

IOWA HOMELESS MEMORIAL
December 21, 2024

**HOMELESS CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATION**
December 21, 2024

Homeless With Baby Girls, *CONTINUED*

They moved into an apartment owned by a slumlord with broken stairs and a barely working shower. Johnny and Lexi repeatedly asked for repairs, but the slumlord instead threatened them with eviction and eventually coerced them into taking \$350 to leave on their own as an alternative.

Johnny, Lexi, and their two young girls were now homeless.

"My biggest worry since losing permanent housing is losing my kids... DHS coming down here... taking my kids away from me. That's what I live with every day. It eats at me," Lexi said.

To be able to work consistently and escape the binds of homelessness, Johnny and Alexis list several difficult barriers: they need their driving licenses reinstated, reliable transportation and safe childcare – none of which they've

been able to secure without adequate finances. It's the same dilemma for most people experiencing homelessness: you need to have money to make money.

Johnny also battles depression, guilt and anger. Losing his dad suddenly when Johnny was seven caused a downward spiral. Even though he received professional help during his school years, his mental health struggles continue today

as he grieves not only the loss of his father but now also his mother. The love he has for his daughters is what keeps him motivated to work on his mental health. "I've got these kids, and I'm trying to do whatever I can to pull myself up outta that hole," he says.

Joppa collaborated with Primary Healthcare to move Johnny, Alexis and their daughters into a family shelter. Joppa continues to help the family overcome their barriers including social security cards and jobs for both of them... Watch update.

Your donations at joppa.org/giving help families and individuals survive and find housing. Joppa is helping an average of one family or individuals off the streets each week with your help.



Scan the QR code or visit jop.pal/HomelessFamily to meet family and watch an update



I Serve at Joppa

VOLUNTEER: Lori Drafahl

INVOLVEMENT: Video and newsletter teams. Thriftmart and donation sorting.

BACKGROUND: I took a video production class where I met Joe and Caleb Stevens, and they told me about Joppa. It grabbed my interest because it was faith-based and helped homeless people.

DRIVING PASSION: I've always been interested in people's stories, and I'm passionate about following whatever path God has for me. I think God was leading me to get involved the day I learned about Joppa.

ON MY OWN: My husband and I are both freelancers, and we've been blessed with two kids, Andy (20) and Julia (23).

BECOME AN EVERYDAY ANGEL MONTHLY SUPPORT PARTNER

Make a long-lasting impact by providing monthly support for Joppa programs and services!

Everyday Angels contribute monthly to:

- Help homeless people survive, find housing and rebuild their lives
- Educate and engage the community in providing homeless services and support
- Develop fundamental solutions to help end homelessness

Sign up at: joppa.org/angels



Matthew 25:35-40

BECAUSE OF YOU

- NEARLY 600 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LIFTED OFF THE STREETS
- MORE THAN 80% OF THESE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN REMAIN IN HOUSING TODAY
- JOPPA HELPED OVER 200 PEOPLE SURVIVE AND STAY WARM LAST WINTER

RECENT EVENTS

Down & Out Homeless Fundraiser Highlights

Joppa was honored to welcome over 300 guests for the 15th Annual Down & Out Homeless Fundraiser in November to help celebrate the 15th anniversary of Joppa. The event featured heartwarming stories and insightful videos about homelessness in Des Moines and what Joppa is doing to help end it. Special thanks to our loyal supporters, volunteers and speakers, which included Mayor Frank Cownie and emcees Rich and Kim Willis.

“...All the good things that have happened in and around Des Moines...because of groups like this coming together and working together and thinking together and planning together and dreaming together about what makes Des Moines a good place to live.



I am just so amazed tonight to see all the faces in this room and know that your hearts are there and you're willing to support not only Joppa, but their mission is to support those who can least help themselves.”

Mayor Frank Cownie, November 16, 2023
Down & Out Homeless Fundraiser

HOW YOU CAN HELP

GIVE:

Your generous contributions provide critical funds for outreach and survival programs, housing and aftercare services, and the Homeless Resource Center:

- Rated 100% on Charity Navigator
- Candid Platinum Seal Award
- No federal or state funding
- Joppa is a 501(c)3 nonprofit
- All gifts are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law

GIVE ONLINE OR MAIL TO:

Joppa
2326 Euclid Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50310

joppa.org/giving



VOLUNTEER:

Volunteer opportunities are available for groups, families and individuals, including:

- Homeless Resource Center
- Homeless Outreach & Aftercare
- Thriftmart Store Opportunities
- Sunday Afternoon Hospitality
- Donation Center Sorting
- Event Planning Team
- Fundraising Team
- Second Saturday Workdays

BECOME A VOLUNTEER:

We depend on volunteers like you! Sign up at joppa.org to attend a VolunTOUR or email to learn more.

Email: volunteer@joppa.org

DONATE:

Provide survival items & Thriftmart goods:

- Blankets, sleeping bags & pillows
- Coats, gloves, hand & foot warmers
- Bottled water (24 oz)
- Backpacks, headlamps & AAA batts
- Pop-top canned goods & meats
- TP, paper towels & antibiotic cream
- Cleaners, laundry & dish soap
- Clothing, shoes & accessories
- Home goods & home décor

BRING SUPPLIES TO JOPPA:

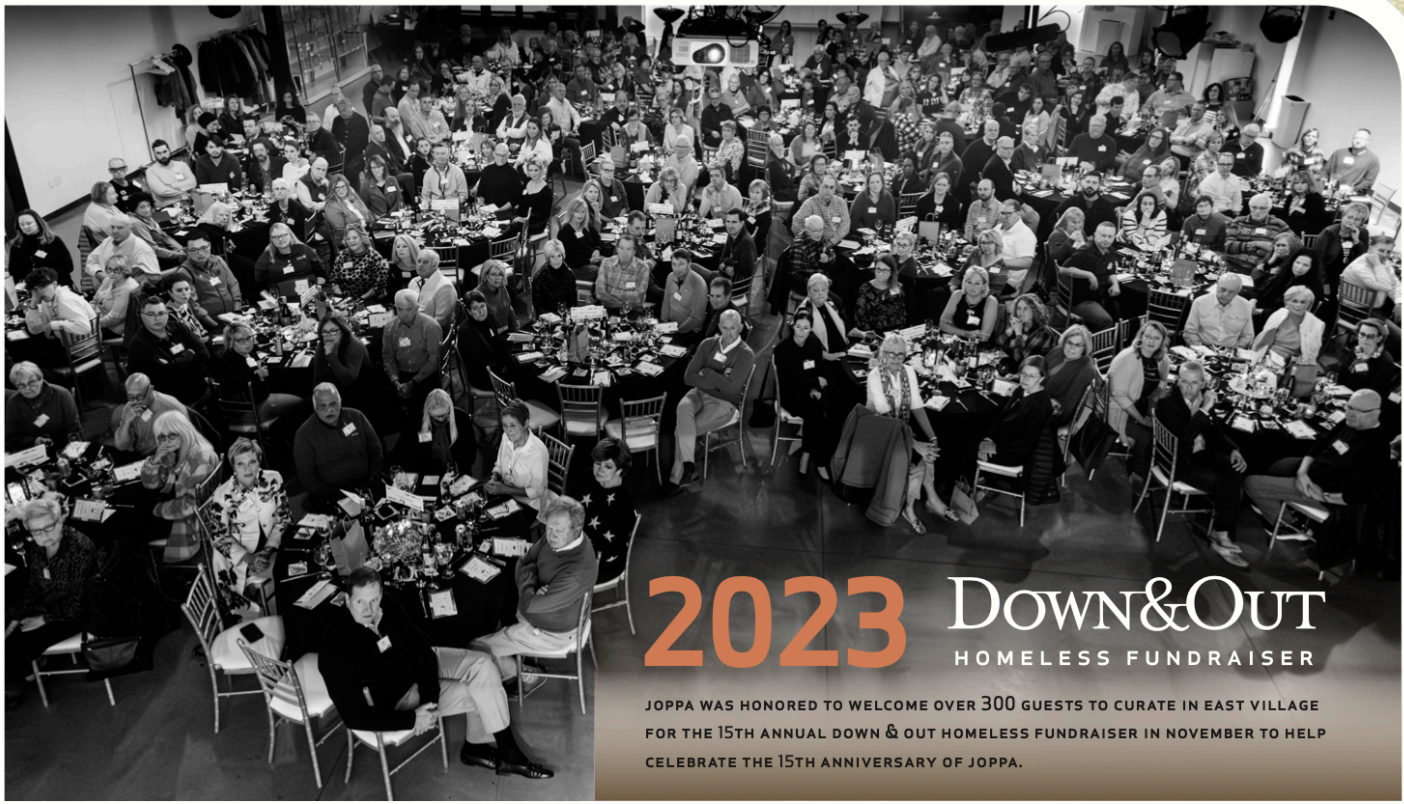
Monday – Saturday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
2326 Euclid Avenue, Des Moines
Or call (515) 288-5699, ext. 3

Thank you for your generosity!

FROM THE HEART

“I’ve got these kids, and I’m trying to do whatever I can to pull myself up outta that hole...”

— **Johnny, Homeless with Lexi and Baby Girls** (see cover story)



2023 DOWN & OUT HOMELESS FUNDRAISER

JOPPA WAS HONORED TO WELCOME OVER 300 GUESTS TO CURATE IN EAST VILLAGE FOR THE 15TH ANNUAL DOWN & OUT HOMELESS FUNDRAISER IN NOVEMBER TO HELP CELEBRATE THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF JOPPA.



HOW WE DO IT

JOPPA COLLABORATES WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS, HELPS HOMELESS PEOPLE ACCESS EXISTING RESOURCES AND MOBILIZES PRIVATE DONATIONS FROM FAMILIES, CHURCHES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO FILL GAPS IN HOMELESS SERVICES, HOUSING AND EDUCATION.

EDITORIAL

The Des Moines Register

JOPPA: A Model To Help Those In Need

It all began with a photo in the Des Moines Register last winter. I recall seeing two volunteers from a homeless resource center, Joppa, all bundled up, walking down a snowy embankment to reach out to unhoused folks in the greater Des Moines area. With my comfortable life and focus mostly on national and international issues, I wanted to find ways to get more connected and involved with our own community. I was moved and called Joppa to ask about volunteering.

Homeless folks in our community live in tents under tarps and bridges. In the winter, those with enclosed encampments may have portable heaters fueled by propane.

Soon after reading the article, my introduction to Joppa volunteering was at their Joppa Center on Euclid Avenue, where I joined a family cleaning and organizing items in a warehouse of sleeping bags, tents, propane heaters, surrounded by canned foods, and fresh foods ready for delivery.

My wife, Claire, and I started our monthly work after that, joining a host of volunteers on a Sunday afternoon, loading up our vehicles, now emblazoned with magnetic Joppa signs with the supplies to be shared with folks we met. Before each trip out, all the volunteers meet and are reminded of the mission to serve all with respect and kindness. Someone in the group offered to say a prayer, and we were off for the afternoon.

Using iPads, we follow a well-organized "route" of folks who have been entered into the Joppa mobile app with names and approximate locations of their encampments. We each have a role — all to be friendly and as helpful as we can to the folks we meet, taking turns handing out toilet paper, water, hot sandwiches, frozen foods, fresh foods, first aid supplies, hygiene supplies, and even mail delivered to the central office. When our Joppa vehicles pull up to the edge of the woods, we holler out, "Joppa!" to announce our arrival. I continue to be impressed with

the many people who come out of the woods to meet us and get their weekly supplies of sustenance. Each of us engages each person we meet — asking their names, if not known already, and asking them if they need anything else. A lot of needs are batteries, more propane for their heaters, and other items they might request.

And while Joppa describes itself as "faith-based," I find that volunteers I have met and worked with run the gamut from conservative to progressive, religious and political views. A pastor in training prayed with some of the homeless folks we met, but otherwise, religion was not mentioned in the field. Instead, we are all involved in the practice of putting our beliefs into action. I am impressed with how this and other efforts in our community in the areas of food banks, soup kitchens and disaster support are examples where partisanship is set aside.

This can be a model for our community and beyond to find common ground to help those in need.

I know we all see folks on street corners and highway exits with signs saying, "Any Amount Helps," and often "Homeless Veteran," among others. Before my work with Joppa, I would always wave or say hello to those folks on the corners. Now, if traffic allows, I offer water, which is always accepted, and share that I am a volunteer with Joppa, which brings out a smile, thanks, and recognition. I pass out Joppa cards that explain their services and hours. Many are already connected. As a gift to myself, I no longer feel uncomfortable just saying hello but can offer and be part of a community resource that helps save lives and provides options for those who are unhoused. Since its beginning 15 years ago, Joppa has helped nearly 600 individuals get off the street and into housing.



jop.pa/
RegisterArticle

The Des Moines Register
January 2, 2024

Dr. David E. Drake
Iowa psychiatrist and Joppa volunteer



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Des Moines, IA 50310

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INSIDE

Johnny and Lexi: Homeless With Baby Girls

Des Moines Register Editorial by a Joppa Volunteer



JOPPA.ORG

(515) 288-5699

SPRING CLEANING!



Quality finds. Every time!

**BRING
DONATIONS TO**
2326 Euclid Avenue
Monday - Saturday
10 AM to 6 PM

**Higher-end items are sold
online to maximize the
value of each gift*

**Donate These Supplies to
Help End Homelessness:**

- CLOTHING • FOOTWEAR • ACCESSORIES • HOME GOODS • WALL ART • HOME DÉCOR