



Emma Norton's e-news

December 2025

Dear *{{Informal Name}}*,

As we move into the final weeks of 2025, we've been reflecting on the many ways our community has shown up for Emma Norton this year. We have such deep gratitude for the support you and the whole community have given over the past 12 months as we've dealt with new uncertainty and challenges. Your generosity has allowed us to keep expanding even in these uncertain times, increasing the capacity of our Scattered-Site program and beginning telehealth services for the Living Room.

You may have received a call or e-mail recently from our **Donor Thank You Call Night**. If we missed you, please know that we are so grateful for you and the many ways you show up for Emma Norton—through donations, in-kind support, telling a friend about Emma Norton, and/or being an advocate for ending homelessness in our community!

Your support over this past year and through this holiday season helps ensure safe and stable housing for our clients, and facilitates communities of belonging and healing—especially important in the winter months. We are deeply grateful for your compassion and look forward to continuing this work with you in the new year.

With warmth and gratitude,

The Emma Norton Team

Help Make the Holidays Bright for All – Last Call!



The holidays are fast approaching! We are doing gift shopping and distribution this week,

so this is the last chance to get your holiday support donations in! You can give online at <https://emmanorton.org/give-now/> to **help support last minute gift and gift card purchases** so we can fill in the gaps for kid age groups that didn't see as many donations this year.

Due to timing and staff capacity, the only physical holiday donations we are still taking at this point are gift cards to stores like Target, Walmart, Dollar Tree, Aldi, and Cub. Gift cards put the power in our clients' hands to celebrate the holidays in their own way. While some clients use these gift cards to get gifts and/or holiday meal supplies for themselves, many use them to get gifts for their friends or family! ***We still need approximately 100 gift cards to ensure everyone across programs receives one.***

If you are going to donate gift cards for the holidays, please contact our Advancement Associate Victoria at vvirasy@emmanorton.org to schedule that donation drop off as soon as possible.

Thank You Neighbors, Faith Partners, & More!



We have some big thank yous to share from the last month! First, just a couple days after we sent the November e-news, we had an amazing collaborative event with **zAmya Theater** and our neighbors at **Marvella**. zAmya Theater is a nonprofit organization that creates and performs productions starring people who have experienced homelessness, and much of the script is made of them telling their own stories. They reached out to us about bringing their critically acclaimed production *Living in America: The Waiting List is Full*, and our wonderful neighbors at Marvella offered to host the show so we could have more space for attendees. Thank you to both zAmya Theater and Marvella for bringing this special performance to our clients!

Second, **Advent UMC and Board President Ann Girres** have been a stellar supporter over the past month, with both donations and special activities for our clients. They hosted bingo in late November and chose Emma Norton as one of their upcoming Christmas offering recipients—inviting Shawna to speak to the congregation earlier this month. Finally, last week Advent UMC brought some beautifully decorated holiday cookies to Restoring Waters, adding some much-needed holiday cheer on a chilly day.

Thank you also to **Edina Realty Foundation** for inviting us to be their nonprofit partner for their recent Holiday Party—collecting toys and donations for our children and housing

programs. A shout out also to our neighbors at the **Highland District Council** for collecting gift cards and gifts for Emma Norton at their holiday party. We are so grateful for your support at this time of year!

The final special thank you is to **Pastor Bryan Odeen from St. Peder's Lutheran Church** and again to our neighbors at **Marvella**, for joining us for a holiday cookie open house and treat exchange! Pastor Bryan played guitar and sang Christmas carols, while both Restoring Waters and Marvella neighbors traded treats! *It was so wonderful having our lobby filled with beautiful music and new connections!*

Cooking Class at Restoring Waters



On the first of the month, **Board Member Jennifer Bessinger** visited Restoring Waters to put on a cooking class for the residents! The class made *chicken stew*, had a community meal, and then jarred up the leftovers to bring home and share with their neighbors. Each jar came with a recipe card so everyone could easily make the delicious stew again on their own!

Do you have a special skill you'd like to share in a class for our clients? Reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator Mo Mayberry at mmayberry@emmanorton.org to learn more and/or schedule a class! We'd love to offer a monthly cooking class and other enrichment opportunities in 2026. View current volunteer opportunities and sign up to receive alerts at www.emmanorton.org/volunteer/.

There is Still Time for a 2025 Donation



As 2025 winds down, your support matters more than ever. There is so much uncertainty in funding and services at all levels of government for 2026, so private and philanthropic donations are vital for our operations and programs. This has been a year of incredible

growth for our organization, and every contribution helps us keep that momentum going.

Donate easily and securely online at www.emmanorton.org/donate or mail your contribution to 2265 Hillcrest Ave, St. Paul, MN 55116. Your generous end-of-year giving helps us step confidently into the new year and navigate the challenges ahead.

Do you need to make an IRA distribution, interested in donating stocks, or want to make a gift in honor or memory of someone? Please contact Shawna Nelsen-Wills at snelsen@emmanorton.org or 651-251-2632 to discuss a special gift as the year comes to a close. Thank you for your generosity!

Office Hours & Living Room Hours



Our offices will be closed on December 24 and 25 as well as January 1 in observance of the holidays. The Living Room will also be closed on these dates. Thank you for your understanding, and we wish you a joyful and peaceful holiday season!

Share the good E-News!

We love our many supporters and volunteers, but don't keep us to yourselves. Please share this E-news with your friends and family, like us on social media (see below), and let others know about the great work we are doing to help end homelessness and help women and families thrive!

Make a [donation today](#) to help us continue to provide safe, stable homes for women and families on their journey of recovery.





Emma Norton

The Journey Home Begins Here