



Update on Reality Housing

Over the past two years, the leadership of the Reality staff and board have been in a season of discernment around the sustainability of Reality housing. As a result of this thoughtful and intentional process we have decided to transition out of operating the Friendship and Isaac Houses. These homes have been meaningful expressions of shared life, but we've determined that long-term residential support is beyond Reality's current capacity. We are in the process of exploring options with mission-aligned organizations committed to inclusive housing, with plans for the Friendship Houses to transition in August 2026. Corner House will continue in its current iteration for the foreseeable future.

Over the past 12 years, Reality has been involved with housing in a variety of ways:

Friendship House, started in 2013, consists of four apartments in the North Street neighborhood where Duke Divinity School students and Reality participants (core residents) have lived together in a transitional model. Students typically stay 1–3 years, while core residents remain longer. Originally owned by Hope Spring Village, the buildings were purchased by Reality in 2018 thanks to the financial support of many people. Now, with core residents nearing the end of their tenure, they are preparing to move into new living arrangements, ideally still in the North Street neighborhood.

Isaac House, launched in 2023 due to the generosity of two major donors, welcomed eight friends of all abilities into home life together. After the first year, several accompanying residents moved out, prompting a pause to re-evaluate the model. Currently, the rooms are rented month-to-month to individuals seeking short-term housing.

With both homes in transition, the Reality board chair formed a committee in the summer of 2023 to do a deep dive into Reality housing. After extensive conversations with residents, families, staff, and community members, and with the guidance of a consultant, the conclusion became clear: providing the depth of long-term support that these homes require is no longer feasible within Reality's current structure.

We have therefore decided to explore options for the Friendship and Isaac Houses with organizations whose missions are centered on inclusive residential communities for adults of all abilities. We've been in meaningful conversations with several such organizations and look forward to sharing more as plans develop.

Friendship House residents and families have been informed of this transition, and we remain committed to walking alongside the core residents as this season comes to a close in summer 2026.

We know this transition carries deep sadness—it marks the end of two beloved expressions of home life. Yet we are also filled with hope and gratitude for what lies ahead. We're pleased to share that Reality Ministries has entered a confidential purchase agreement with a like-minded nonprofit for the Friendship Houses. While contingent on their fundraising and planning, we are optimistic these homes will continue to serve as places of belonging and inclusive community. Public updates will follow later this fall.

Corner House, established in 2016, Reality's other home, will remain unchanged for the foreseeable future. With its self-sustaining model and no transitions on the horizon, Corner House will continue as a witness to one way that friends of differing abilities choose to make home together.

The Reality housing journey has been a rich, transformative, and joy-filled, full of both challenge and deep beauty. As this chapter draws to a close, we look forward to celebrating the past 12 years and embracing what's next with new partners.

If you have questions or would like to talk more, please don't hesitate to reach out—I'd love to connect.

Susan McSwain
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