

Cheryl Cobb & Jim Skelton - Cooperation

When the congregations of St. Anne's and St. Paul's Episcopal Churches heard about the new Hillcrest Transitional Housing in Lee's Summit, each of us knew we wanted to be involved in this ministry helping families move from homelessness to self-sufficiency (<http://www.hillcresttransitionalhousing.org/>). However, both of our congregations are relatively small, and the financial commitment and volunteer effort necessary seemed like an impossible hurdle to our participation.

After discussions between the two churches and Hillcrest, we decided to join together to sponsor an apartment - dividing the financial commitment and volunteer effort required between our two Episcopal congregations. We were pleased that we became the first faith communities to sponsor an apartment at this new facility.

Our cooperative effort has been led by two incredible volunteers, Cheryl Cobb and Jim Skelton, and many members of our congregations have been involved in providing time, effort, and financial resources.

We renovated our two bedroom apartment and furnished it with everything from furniture to linens to food in the refrigerator to make it a comfortable home for a family. Each time a family completes the 90-day Hillcrest program and leaves to go to their own place, Cheryl and Jim do what is necessary to enlist help in getting the apartment ready for the next family. While families are with us, we work together to help them with Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas decorations and gifts, and other special needs. We also provide "graduation" gifts and a small party for those who complete the program.

Our congregations' participation in this wonderful ministry would not have been possible without the cooperation of Cheryl, Jim, and the other volunteers. We have been blessed by this work and pray we will continue to be a blessing to the families who live in our apartment.