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For Immediate Release

## GRANT AIDS GOSPEL MISSION EFFORTS

*\$275,000 will help open Ruth House, remodel Men's Shelter*

EAU CLAIRE, Wis., Jan. 31, 2005—The homeless in the Chippewa Valley will soon have more options and better services to help them in their challenges. Hope Gospel Mission announced at a press conference Monday morning that funds have been secured and construction is underway for the 12-bed Ruth House Women's Shelter, set now to open this summer. Currently, the Chippewa Valley does not have a shelter designated for single, homeless women.

Through the generous support of donors, contractors, and the community, Hope Gospel Mission raised over \$265,000 toward the Ruth House Campaign goal of \$330,000. The goal was met and surpassed with a \$275,000 Affordable Housing Program (AHP) grant from the Chicago Federal Home Loan Bank (CFHLB), through a partnership with RCU. The grant is designated for construction, often labeled "brick and mortar," projects. Funds from the grant may not be applied toward rehabilitation programs, staffing, or utilities.

"Receiving the AHP grant is an amazing blessing to our organization. It allows us to move forward vigorously on the Ruth House and make vast improvements to the current Men's Shelter," stated Brent Hafele, Hope Gospel Mission Stewardship Director.

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“The grant exclusively covers construction; therefore, community and donor support is still critical to our program’s success.”

Roughly half of the grant funds will be used for construction at Ruth House Women’s Shelter. As with other Mission programs, Ruth House will focus on the rehabilitation of the homeless. “Meals, clothing, and nights of shelter are important,” stated Gary Steward, Executive Director, “but we are working long-term for healthy, independent, changed lives.” The shelter will house women for 6-18 months as they develop life skills and complete education degrees, job training, and addition counseling as necessary. Ruth House will be located adjacent to Hope Gospel Mission’s Bargain Center at 2517 Moholt Drive, Eau Claire.

Over \$100,000 of the AHP grant will be used to make upgrades to the current Men’s Shelter facility on Farwell Street. Project plans include the addition of a chapel/multi-purpose meeting room and exercise/activity center in the basement, as well as a kitchenette on the second floor. The Men’s Shelter opened on a tight budget in October of 2000 following extensive upgrades to the facility. After serving over 900 men, the Shelter will receive its second major upgrade starting this fall.

The \$275,000 grant from the Chicago Federal Home Loan Bank is the largest single gift in Mission history. The Hope Gospel Mission project ranked an impressive sixth of the 52 projects approved for funding. CFHLB distributed \$42.8 million to projects in Wisconsin and Illinois in 2004.

For more information, please contact Brent Hafele, Hope Gospel Mission’s Stewardship Director, at (715) 552-5566.

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