

## Community Visits by Toby & Johanna Mommsen March 8-17, 2021

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### The Hiding Place in Capitol Heights, MD March 10

Brian and JoLeah Gorman have been connected with *Nurturing Communities* for many years. Brian was on the steering committee for some time. He met JoLeah at an event in DC to which he had invited David Jansen, and they were married in 2015. Their little son Ammon is about six months old. They have a house just outside of DC in Maryland, in the Capitol Heights neighborhood.

Brian & JoLeah have amazing vision for community growing and thriving around them there. They have a large network of friends in the DC area.



They host music events, concerts, campfires in their backyard. As shown on their website, <https://hidingplace.us> they are developing an urban farm in their backyard: vegetable garden and a large greenhouse with lush vegetables growing. They're doing this with great enthusiasm for expanding the community garden. There's a small raised bed right on the sidewalk outside their house, inspired by the "[little free library](#)" movement, now widespread around the nation. There is a little free garden: neighbors are welcome to help grow and harvest the produce, and become friends.

They also made a prayer garden right next to their house, with gravel paths, flower beds and a little wooden pavilion, also open for people to find some quiet in the beautiful garden, to reflect and pray.

Hospitality is another important thing they practice. In the five years they have been there, and married, they've had people staying in their house nearly all the time.

Brian is planning to build a straw bale structure in the back yard, to be a studio for his piano lessons.

It was a heartwarming time with them. We sat on the porch, learned about their experiences through the pandemic time and now, and their vision and hope for community to grow and gather around them. Brian & JoLeah believe community will grow there around them: open hearts and hands to neighbors, their faithful practice in this place become known more and more. This inspires us too—may it grow and flourish.