

## Mother

My mother and I moved to Wilmington, Delaware following the death of my father in January 1978. We were originally from Wilmington, although we spent the preceding 18 months in Del Ray, Florida where my father worked as the general manager of a country club. In February of 1978 my mother and I moved into a house at 1011 N. Clayton Street. The home was owned by a long-time family friend, and functioned as a halfway house for people dealing with substance abuse issues. My mother acted as the live-in house manager, and in time, purchased the property and created a ministry called Christ the Bridge Inc. The Ministry was active and vibrant, providing housing and counseling for a broad array of clients and was a refuge for many people.

In, or around, 2004 my mother's parents moved into the ministry. Her parents were divorced, and had not lived under the same roof for decades, which created quite an interesting dynamic. Several years later, my grandfather died; followed by my grandmother. The house had always been cluttered, but now it started to get dirty. The house, which had not been maintained properly, started to fall apart. The roof and ceiling, over one of the guest bedrooms, caved in. The window fixtures were rotted so badly that several windows were on the brink of falling out of the house. My mother's possessions began to pile up, making it impossible to clean the house. As time passed, my mother became increasingly isolated, and she refused help.

In April of 2018, my mother fell and broke four ribs, which necessitated a three-week stay at the hospital, followed by a month of rehabilitation at a recovery facility. Due to the extent of my mother's injuries, and the onset of dementia, twenty-four-hour care was required. The fact that I lived so far away made the situation feel even worse. In July, I flew home to Delaware to help facilitate my mother's transition into a nursing home, and to sell her house. One year later, on April 5, 2019, my mother died.

I made the photographs for this project in 2013. At the time, I did not understand why I was taking the photographs, but the extreme conditions of my mother's home compelled me to document her situation. A home that was once a thriving ministry that provided housing and counseling for a broad array of people, and that offered the possibility of freedom and a new beginning, had become an isolated prison.