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HAPPENINGS

Spring 2025
Vol. 35, No. 2

News & Notes from St. Margaret's House ~ Creating community. Changing lives.

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me.

~ Matthew 25:35-36

Finding peace and understanding

When Andrea (*name changed*) first came to St. Margaret's House, she remembers how she had "nothing and no one." She and her children stumbled upon St. Margaret's House on the day of our annual guest picnic, when the parking lot was filled with joyful summer activity. At the time, her family was without a home, her husband was looking for work, and she was struggling to find support as a mother of three young boys.

Andrea was eager to fully engage as a guest at St. Margaret's House. She immediately became involved in *Talk With Your Baby*, a class for mothers and babies hosted in collaboration with the Robinson Community Learning Center (see below). There, she relished learning about her children's development surrounded by other mothers to whom she could relate. This space restored a sense of peace and understanding to her life as a mother. She explains, "thanks to programs like *Talk with Your Baby*, I understand now that crying is part of my children's growth. They're going to cry whenever they need something. Now, I'm much more calm."

Andrea likens the experience of being at St. Margaret's House to "a breath of fresh air. It is a relief, because I feel like we are one here. I feel like I belong to the community. I see that everyone is willing to help me here." While the community of St. Margaret's House has connected Andrea and her family to necessary resources such as housing, education, childcare, and healthcare, Andrea says that she is most grateful for the relationships she has here. "I feel like I can count on St. Margaret's House as my family—my sisters."



Each woman who enters our doors carries her own powerful story. Whether a woman has aged without support, faced life with a disability, lost her loved ones, or survived life-altering events, each is strong and resilient. The women who come to St. Margaret's House navigate uncertainty, work through challenges others don't always see, and hold onto hope.

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Andrea's quiet determination led her to St. Margaret's House, where she has started a new chapter in her life. "We've been through so many things, but there's a future ahead of us and we have to live to see it. When I'm feeling overwhelmed, I remind myself to be calm. My son tells me, 'Mama, let's go to St. Margaret's House right now.' And I say, 'Yes, let's go.' I love it here."

Mothers and babies: learning together

In partnership with the Robinson Community Learning Center, St. Margaret's House offers *Talk With Your Baby*, a popular program that helps parents and caregivers understand the importance of engaging with children from birth to age three. Through classes focused on talking, singing, and reading, participants learn simple techniques to support early language development and boost social and emotional growth.

Pictured at left, mothers and babies gather amidst strollers and car seats for a recent session of *Talk With Your Baby*. Leader Gail Thomas from the Robinson Community Learning Center shares the book *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* with its engaging story and whimsical illustrations.



Experiencing the St. Margaret's House Magic

We have a (not so) inside joke here at St. Margaret's House. When a staff member raises both hands and snaps her fingers, it means that she's just witnessed the "St. Margaret's House Magic" at work. There are so many moments that contribute to this sense that there is magic in the air here. In recent days:



- Two of the women who participated in our annual Guest Retreat cried upon receiving the invitation to the retreat, moved to tears by the knowledge that someone cared enough to plan a special day just for them. Hosted by the Sisters of the Holy Cross on site at Saint Mary's College, and led by three of our staff members, the retreat is a day of reflection, prayer, good food, companionship, and nature—planned lovingly with our guests' particular needs in mind.
- A guest recently told a staff member that the sewing class—hosted expressly for our guests by our neighbors and good friends at First Presbyterian Church of South Bend—had "changed her life," and she is now looking into opportunities to pursue her love of sewing through Sew Loved.
- A staff member had the humbling privilege of accompanying a guest as this guest reached out—with empathy and forgiveness—to the mother of the young man whose reckless behavior killed her toddler son.
- Each and every time we put out a call to the larger community to help us meet a need—currently it is for items for our upcoming Baby Shower—you all respond with generosity and kindness.

With shocking regularity at St. Margaret's House, we get glimpses like these of the Kingdom of God among us, here and now. With my sincerest gratitude to all of you, our faithful supporters, who make possible this place of "magic."

Katie
Katie Elliot, Executive Director



2025 Community Partner of the Year

At Winter Walk, we announced the **City of South Bend** as our Community Partner of the Year. Under the leadership of Mayor James Mueller, numerous City Departments help make our work possible: The Department of Community Investment, led by Caleb Bauer; Carl Hetler as Coordinator of Homeless Services; the South Bend Police and Fire Departments; and the City employees who volunteer at our annual Thanksgiving feast.

WINTER WALK 2025

On an especially wintry day in February, our annual Winter Walk brought our community together to support the women of St. Margaret's House. This year's event kicked off from South Bend City Church. (pictured at right: Board member Angela Cole joins South Bend Cubs mascots Stu and Ivy in welcoming participants). The one-mile route looped through downtown South Bend and featured a series of stops (pictured below) highlighting the places and



\$106K
RAISED
A new record!



477
WALKERS

paths that are part of the daily lives of many of our guests. The walk finished with a celebration at St. Margaret's House, including live music, tours of the building, and artist demos. Thank you to everyone who participated and made the day a wonderful success!

AROUND THE HOUSE



Join us in the race to collect 500 (or 5,000?) pairs of new women's and children's underwear and bras! Last year, we collected 3,279 items (*above*). We would love to beat that record!

We distribute more than 4,000 pairs of underwear and bras each year.

We are accepting women's NEW underwear (all sizes), bras (particularly sports bras and bralettes), and children's (boys' and girls') underwear.



Undie 500 Week

Monday, May 19 – Friday, May 23

Donations accepted 10am-4pm;

Extended hours on Thursday, May 22, until 6pm.

Can't be there? Cheer us on with a donation to support St. Margaret's House by visiting stmargarethouse.org!

UPCOMING DATES

Friday, May 2 • Deadline for Mother's Day Cards

Honor your mother with a card from St. Margaret's House. See the back cover for the details.

Wednesday, June 18 • Our 35th Anniversary

With heartfelt gratitude, we celebrate the 35th anniversary of our founding. This is a significant milestone! These 35 years of offering hospitality to women in our community have been made possible by the unwavering support of friends like you.

Friday, June 20 • Shortcakes on the Blacktop

Join the Cathedral of Saint James for this *berry* popular and delicious event in our parking lot from 11am-4pm. A portion of the proceeds will benefit St. Margaret's House.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Make a gift.

The majority of our funding comes from individuals like you who believe in the life-changing work of St. Margaret's House.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email address _____

Donation amount: \$50 \$100 \$200 other: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to St. Margaret's House and mail to: St. Margaret's House • 117 N. Lafayette Blvd. • South Bend, IN 46601

I have included St. Margaret's House in my estate plan.

I would like more information about estate planning.

Donate online at stmargarethouse.org or scan this QR code.

Thank you for your generosity!



Volunteer with us.

Make a difference this summer: volunteer at St. Margaret's House! We have opportunities on our Kitchen Team, Front Desk Team, and In-Kind Donations Team. We also need help with children during our summer programs. To learn more, please submit a form on our website or contact Felicia Metoyer at felicia@stmargarethouse.org

Donate items.

We are currently accepting women's and children's **summer clothing** that is clean and in good condition. We also need:

- casual pants: leggings, sweats, shorts
- women's socks
- shoes: athletic shoes, sandals
- linens: bath towels, sheets
- kitchen utensils/silverware
- pots, pans, dishes
- full-size shampoo/conditioner, deodorant, razors

We are accepting donations on **Thursdays 10am-4pm.**

Please check our website for more details. Thank you!

St. Margaret's House *Happenings* is published three times each year.

St. Margaret's House is a project of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Indiana and the Cathedral of Saint James, South Bend, Indiana.

The scarf used in the design of this newsletter was created by St. Margaret's House Silk Creations artists Alma Nicholson and Ravini Fernando.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

stmargarethouse.org

574.234.7795



**Send a Mother's Day
gift that celebrates
the power of love
and support!**



Are you looking for a way to celebrate the extraordinary women in your life on Mother's Day?

This spring, when you make a donation of \$25 or more to St. Margaret's House in honor of a mother (grandmother, auntie, godmother, etc.) who is special to you, we will send her a beautiful card featuring artwork created by women in our Silk Creations program.

Bonus! For gifts of \$200 or more, your recipient will receive a pack of six springtime notecards (with envelopes) each showcasing the work of our Silk Creations artists.

Your gift is more than a tribute—it's an investment in the life-changing work of St. Margaret's House!

*Please order by **Friday, May 2**. Card designs may vary from the one pictured at left which was hand-painted by Silk Creations artist Anjelita Lera.*



Scan here or visit stmargarethouse.org