



Happenings

NEWS & NOTES FROM ST. MARGARET'S HOUSE | *Creating community, changing lives.*

Winter 2026 | Vol. 36, No. 1

A new place to begin together.

This year's Winter Walk begins in a new place—at the future front door of our new building—the spot where our next chapter begins.

For nearly three decades, Winter Walk has reflected our mission of accompaniment, the many ways we walk alongside the women who come here for support and encouragement. This year, that symbolism feels especially powerful.



As we get ready to begin our long-awaited building renovation and expansion—a safer, more beautiful, more flexible space designed by and for the women who find a sense of home here—we are keenly aware of the community partners who are accompanying us through this transition. The Cathedral of Saint James, our original mission partner, has opened its doors to us so our work can continue without interruption. South Bend City Church is providing storage space during construction and hosting our post-Winter Walk celebration. Every day, other partners offer their support and encouragement in tangible and intangible ways. These acts of generosity remind us that we could not accompany our guests without the ways the larger community accompanies us.

Winter Walk reminds us that transformation does not happen alone. It happens when a community chooses to move forward together. Thank you for walking with us.



Winter Walk

Sunday, February 15
1:00– 2:30pm

The walk will begin promptly at 1:00pm at the parking lot south of St. Margaret's House on Washington Street near Lafayette Blvd. Please arrive no earlier than 12:45pm.

Our one-mile route loops through downtown South Bend and ends at South Bend City Church with a warm-up celebration including cookies, hot cocoa, popcorn, Silk Creations pop-up shop, and plenty of fun for all ages.



Walk with us!
Scan here
to register or donate.

CALENDAR

February 15

Winter Walk

We can't wait to see you there!
Please see the front cover for details.

Month of March

Women's History Month

Our guests will prepare a special community lunch as a meaningful way to highlight the month.

Friday, April 17

Guest Retreat

Our guests are invited to a day of prayer, reflection, and rest, graciously hosted by the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

April 19-25

Volunteer Appreciation Week

We celebrate and give thanks for our **373 active volunteers** whose generosity, time, and hard work make our mission possible all year long.

Friday, April 24

Baby Shower

We'll share simple baby gifts, joy, and encouragement while honoring the arrival of new babies and those expected in the months ahead. We will be collecting baby toiletry items and bottles, pacifiers, bibs, and sippy cups.

May 18-22

Undie 500

Join us again this year as we "race" to collect brand-new underwear and bras for women and children.

Check our website for more details on these events:
stmargarethouse.org

Scarfed in the design of this newsletter was hand-painted by Silk Creations artists Patricia and Ravini.



AROUND THE HOUSE: Settling in.

Our mission continues uninterrupted! We are grateful for the hard work, flexibility, and patience of our volunteers, guests, and staff as we begin a new chapter in our temporary home at the Cathedral of Saint James.

Our space is already alive with the rhythms of daily life. Meals are being prepared and shared, guests are attending meditation classes and other programming, and as always: we are here for the one-on-one conversations that honor each woman's story.



BY THE NUMBERS: Our mission in action.

In 2025, our Guest Services team offered over **682 hours** of dedicated one-on-one support through **2,334 appointments** with guests. These were the top categories:

CONNECTING TO ESSENTIAL NEEDS

337 Housing

216 Government Benefits

178 Medical Care

SUPPORTING ECONOMIC MOBILITY

174 Employment

171 Faxing/Printing Applications

35 Education

FACILITATING ACCESS TO RESOURCES

96 Mental Health

81 Legal Aid

122 Utilities

34 Clothing

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

DIRECTOR'S CORNER: **Good for what ails us.**

"I don't know what she's saying, but I can feel her pain," Maria said with tears in her eyes. The fact that she couldn't hear what the woman on the other side of the room was actually saying did not keep her from having a visceral reaction to another human being's pain. Little did Maria realize that, in that moment, she was modeling for the rest of us the biblical understanding of compassion—to allow your innards to be moved by another's suffering.

Each day at St. Margaret's House, the community gathers before lunch to share announcements, victories, prayer requests, and bless the meal. Such rituals are an opportunity to practice what makes us human, as Maria did that day. In this way and so many others, St. Margaret's House is an antidote to the division that plagues us in 2026 America. Within the walls that hold this ministry—whether they are the walls of our former building, our here-and-now walls in the Cathedral of Saint James, or the much-anticipated walls of our redesigned and expanded building to come—women find a listening ear, a posture of humility before God and others, and frequent reminders that we are more alike than we are different.

Our annual Winter Walk has always been an act of solidarity with the women and children we serve, a chance for the larger community to come out in support of our guests who find welcome, rest, and care here. This year, Winter Walk is also a timely reminder that what happens at St. Margaret's House is balm for all of us, for our city, even for our nation. This humble place of hospitality for any woman who rings our doorbell is vibrant, living proof that love wins and we belong to each other. Let's rally in great numbers for Winter Walk 2026 and proclaim these truths together!

As always, thank you for all that you do to make this work possible—

Katie Elliot, Executive Director



A long history. Pictured at left: Deacon Joe and Lillian Illes after Winter Walk 2010. Top center: Mary Pyles, Deacon Sarah Tracy (our founder), Margaret Kenney, and Mary Louise Bizzaro on the Feast Day of St. Margaret, November 2000. Top right: Katie Elliot with Bishop Frank and Karen Gray at the Volunteer Luncheon in May 2025. Bottom center: Bishop Doug Sparks and Angelica Healy, Christmas 2023. Bottom right: Cathedral members after Winter Walk 2010.

PARTNER OF THE YEAR: **Rooted in accompaniment.**

"We are simply asked to make gentle our bruised world." ~Robert Byrne, SJ

These words were part of the worship aid for the funeral liturgy of Margaret Kenney, one of the formidable women from the Cathedral of Saint James who were instrumental in the early years of St. Margaret's House. Margaret herself chose these words to be included in her funeral booklet, leaving us with a reminder of our fundamental calling to be a place of gentleness for women in a world that too often leaves them bruised.

The vision of Margaret and her sisters in faith, under the guidance of then Bishop Frank (and Karen) Gray, is etched into the DNA of this place. Saint James (and, by extension, the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Indiana) are truly our lifetime partners in ministry.

This year, however, we are also naming the Cathedral of Saint James as our **2026 Community Partner of the Year** in acknowledgment of how they are stepping forward with extraordinary generosity to house St. Margaret's House as our building undergoes construction. In doing so, we are adding the names from today's Saint James, under the guidance of Bishop Doug Sparks and Dean Brian Grantz, to those of their predecessors.

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.

You can donate online at stmargarethouse.org.

If you prefer to send payment by mail, please make checks payable to



St. Margaret's

House. Estate gifts, QCDs, and gifts of stock are welcome, too.

Thank you for your generosity!

VOLUNTEER.

Bake cookies for Winter Walk or help with one of our spring events. Many hands are needed! Visit the "Get Involved" section of our website or contact Felicia Metoyer at felicia@stmargarethouse.org

DONATE ITEMS.

Please note that we are NOT accepting clothing during building construction.

Right now, the items we need most are:

- full-size shampoo/conditioner, lotion, deodorant, razors
- diapers and pull-ups in sizes 5 & 6
- sanitary pads

Please check our website for more details regarding ongoing needs. Thank you!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

stmargarethouse.org





**St. Margaret's
House**

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For I was hungry and
you gave me food,
I was thirsty and
you gave me drink,
a stranger and you
welcomed me, naked
and you clothed me.

~ Matthew 25:35-36

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Winter Walk

Sunday, February 15

The Walk kicks off from the parking lot south of St. Margaret's House (off of Washington St. near to Lafayette).
Walk begins promptly at 1:00pm.

The one-mile route ends at South Bend City Church for a reception with homemade cookies, hot cocoa, live music, Silk Creations pop-up shop, and more!

REGISTER AT **stmargarethouse.org**

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