



Happenings

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

Fall 2026 | Vol. 36, No. 3

Look closely: *How does our community build compassion?*

Can simple cardboard boxes convey a story of hope, sisterhood, and belonging? At St. Margaret's House, the answer is a resounding yes! We invite you to see for yourself at our Opening Night Gala for **Building Compassion**, a community-built art installation at the South Bend Museum of Art.

Inspired by 1960s pop artist Corita Kent—who famously transformed 725 boxes into an iconic message of peace—this exhibit turns ordinary cardboard boxes into an immersive, walk-through installation reflecting what it means to be a compassionate community. Interwoven across the boxes are vibrant artwork, quotes, and personal perspectives shared by the women of St. Margaret's House, as well as local students, businesses, faith communities, and supporters.

Bringing this vision to life is artist and University of Notre Dame design student Emma Brooks (pictured here with guest Anjelita Lera, right), who has made the creative direction of **Building Compassion** the centerpiece of her MFA dissertation! Emma and more than 150 community members (photos below) have spent weeks reflecting, creating, and **looking closely**—together.



Just as no single side of a cube tells a whole story, no single viewpoint captures a whole person. **Building Compassion** invites us to slow down, look more closely, and notice the beauty in one another.



building COMPASSION

OPENING NIGHT GALA

OCTOBER 1, 2026 5:30-7:30 PM

SOUTH BEND MUSEUM OF ART

Join us for our Opening Night Gala
at the South Bend Museum of Art!

Step into a night of immersive art, vibrant connection, delicious hors d'oeuvres, and a craft mocktail bar.

Can't make it to the Opening Night? You can still help us build compassion! Gifts inspired by this exhibition will sustain our daily work while helping us prepare to reopen our newly renovated building.

Scan here for more details and to donate.



CALENDAR

October 1–November 11

Building Compassion Exhibition

The South Bend Museum of Art will host our community-built installation (*see front cover for full details*) throughout the month of October and into November.

Wednesday, November 25

Thanksgiving Feast

Our traditional feast will be held at First Presbyterian Church. Want to help? Contact Felicia Metoyer at felicia@stmargarethouse.org.

Saturday, December 5

Alternative Gift Fair

Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren
Give the gift of Silk Creations this Christmas season with hand-crafted items created by our artists.

In the coming weeks, we will share more ways to find and purchase Silk Creations items for holiday gifts!

Friday, December 11

Guest Christmas Luncheon

We will celebrate the season with a special lunch, caroling, a photo booth, and even a visit from Santa! Volunteers are needed to help serve, also to decorate on the day prior.

A note about this year's Christmas Shoppe

Due to our building renovation project, we are not able to host our traditional Christmas Shoppe this year. You can still bring holiday joy to our guests by donating full-sized toiletries to keep us stocked into the new year. Interested in organizing a group drive with your church, business, or club? Please contact Selina Bauschke at selina@stmargarethouse.org so that we can coordinate together.

Check our website for more details:
stmargarethouse.org

The scarf featured in the design of this newsletter was hand painted by Silk Creations artists Patricia and Alma.

AROUND THE HOUSE: **Entering a new season.**



Construction updates. ▶

Our building renovation project made great progress through the summer. *Clockwise from the top:* the ground has been prepared for the foundation of our basement+three-story addition; expansion of our dining area will allow us to serve 50% more guests each day; the second floor features twice the number of bathrooms with a more private hallway; Guest Services offices will offer more space for one-on-one meetings; staff members gear up to take a look at the construction site.



◀ Summer out of the House.

Our summer included fun field trips all around town. *Top left:* we enjoyed a gorgeous summer day at Prairie Winds Nature Farms riding ponies, feeding farm animals, and touring the gardens. *Bottom left:* our annual trip to the Potawatomi Zoo included time with the giraffes, riding the carousel, watching the flamingoes, and a festive picnic in the park. *Above:* South Bend Cubs mascot Stu entertained us as we cheered our hometown team to victory!

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

What does it mean to look closely?

The idea for our **Building Compassion** art exhibition grew from the simple belief that compassion begins with seeing: slowing down, looking closer, and discovering beauty in one another. In the spirit of noticing, we invited guests, volunteers, staff, and supporters to reflect on their connection to the St. Margaret's House community, and how "seeing" and "being seen" changes all of our lives:

St. Margaret's House has what people need. We can get lunch, pain pills, Pampers. But most of all, we communicate with each other. You can find friendship here. When you can't talk to your family, you can talk to the people at St. Margaret's House. People care about you here.

~KC, guest

What makes this place special is the friendship, the love, the joy, the collaboration. There is more here than meets the eye: we are truly creating something beautiful together. ~Ravini Fernando, volunteer



Ravini and Alma creating art together.

We go far beyond quick solutions to provide deep connection, dignity, and a sense of family. If you ever have the opportunity to step into SMH and witness the magic yourself, jump at the chance—you'll see just how transformative this community really is.

~Selina Bauschke, staff member

The people bring it to life. I am inspired by the faith and courage of our guests and the selflessness and commitment of our volunteers. And finally, the staff. The only way to explain how they are able to show up like they do in every possible moment is unconditional love. They see the inherent dignity and goodness in every person they encounter.

~Ryan Brennan, Board member



Staff and interns after Prairie Winds field trip.

St. Margaret's House breaks the barriers between education levels, backgrounds, upbringings. We meet each other where we're at. It doesn't matter—we are able to learn from each other. We learn to have the confidence to try new things. ~Alma, guest

I asked Mike why he chooses to invest so generously in St. Margaret's House. He was quite moved as he told me about the giving spirit of his mother, Mary Imgrund. He had 7 siblings and money was tight, but no matter how little they had, she always said, "We can always find something to help those in need." That shaped—in a deep way—who Mike is today.

~Mike Imgrund, donor, as told to staff member Lauren Shewman Smyth



Intern Emma at the South Bend Museum of Art.

When I began at SMH, I was immediately surprised by the strong relationships between staff and guests. It is common to see a staff member sitting down with guests, or a guest walking through the doors with a big smile on her face to give everyone a life update. These moments make SMH such a beautiful and open environment. It's genuine connection.

~Emma Parsons, summer intern from Purdue University

GET INVOLVED



MAKE A GIFT.

Every cup of coffee shared, warm meal served, and life transformed at St. Margaret's House begins with you. Your gift directly honors the dignity of our guests, offering them a safe place to belong, grow, and heal.

You can donate online at stmargarethouse.org.

If you prefer to mail your payment, please make checks payable to St. Margaret's House. Thank you!



VOLUNTEER.

We're looking for friendly volunteers to staff our Service and Hallway Desks Monday through Friday during open hours. You'll greet guests, offer support, and build meaningful connections in our community. Please visit the "Get Involved" section of our website or contact Felicia Metoyer at felicia@stmargarethouse.org



DONATE ITEMS.

Right now, the items we most need are:

- full-size shampoo/conditioner, lotion, and body wash.
- diapers and pull-ups in sizes 3 & 5
- sanitary pads

Thank you for remembering that we are NOT accepting clothing at this time because of our construction project.

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

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

stmargarethouse.org





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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

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about how compassion begins with seeing.

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