



AUGUST 2018

# ST. STEPHEN'S *news*

Ending Homelessness

## Angela's Journey

If someone were to suggest to Angela two years ago that she was experiencing homelessness, she would have disagreed. She was simply going through a rough spot and sleeping in her car with her children. After years of experience with depression and self-medication, she felt things had been worse.

It wasn't until Angela was exiting a treatment program that she conceded that yes, she was experiencing homelessness. Staff at the treatment center helped Angela connect with Coordinated Entry, and soon she was referred to St. Stephen's Family Supportive Housing Program which works alongside families to increase housing stability and overall family well-being.

Hennepin County has a "Shelter All" policy for families, meaning that all families meeting basic criteria have access to shelter. Not all families know this, and some parents feel shelter is not the best choice for their family. In Angela's case, she was concerned that staying in shelter would bring her into contact with people, places, and things she has worked hard to avoid.

It was opportune that Angela and her family connected with St. Stephen's when they did. Two weeks into her work alongside St. Stephen's, Angela received a minor speeding ticket. Her car was impounded, so using it for shelter was no longer an option. Luckily, she was already on her way to finding and moving into a single-family home with the support from staff in our Family Supportive Housing division.



*Housing and supportive services have given Angela the confidence and stability she needs to accomplish her goals.*

She finished a two-year degree this spring and will be transferring to a four-year program in the fall. Angela dreams of becoming a paralegal and helping other mothers. As she continues on her journey back to self-sufficiency, Angela will be sure to save time for two of her greatest joys: spending quality time with her children, and capturing those moments on camera.

## About St. Stephen's Human Services

The mission of St. Stephen's Human Services is ending homelessness. We progress toward this goal through Street Outreach, shelter, and housing programs for individuals and families. We envision a community in which housing instability is rare, brief and non-recurring, ending homelessness as we know it.

### Street Outreach

Street Outreach workers seek out people who are unsheltered, living on the streets, under bridges, in camps or in places not fit for human habitation, and connect them to shelter, housing and services. Our Street Outreach team safely and effectively addresses the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

### Shelter

Shelter is often the first place where people find the safety and stability needed to break the cycle of homelessness. St. Stephen's operates Minneapolis' longest running shelter in the basement of St. Stephen's Church Rectory in south Minneapolis, serving 45 guests each night. St. Stephen's also operates a year-round shelter at First Covenant Church in downtown Minneapolis serving 50 guests each night, with priority given to women and couples. Our shelter capacities are limited to a smaller number of guests, which allows personalized attention to their needs.

### Housing

St. Stephen's housing programs offer people experiencing homelessness the range of support they need to stabilize their lives using the Housing First model. This strategy moves people into stable housing first. Once this basic need is met, we work with families and individuals to address other challenges they may be facing (unemployment, chemical addiction, mental health care, financial literacy). We connect them to support services that avoid a return to homelessness.

### Education and Advocacy

St. Stephen's works to raise awareness and inspire systems change. Key education programs include A Day in the Life program and zAmya Theater Project. The Advocacy in ACTION Network provides updates on homelessness and affordable housing issues, as well as targeted calls to action.



## Spotlight on Volunteering

Volunteers founded St. Stephen's and remain an integral part of our organization. Each year, more than 400 volunteers provide over 7,700 hours of service to further our mission of ending homelessness. There are many ways to get involved and make a difference!

### Volunteer Opportunities

Plan, purchase, prepare, and serve a meal for 50-55 guests at our Clinton Avenue Shelter. Groups are encouraged to eat alongside guests, contribute to a hospitable environment, and help with meal clean-up. We are especially in need of groups who can commit to one night per month for the next year.

Volunteer as a Snack Pack Coordinator by organizing and hosting a donation drive with your colleagues, family, friends, classmates or faith group to put together healthy snack packs for visitors and shelter guests.

Visit [ststephensmpls.org/volunteer](http://ststephensmpls.org/volunteer) to learn more about volunteering. Have questions about volunteering? Or do you have other talents to share? Reach out to Tess, our Volunteer Program Manager at [tajax@ststephensmpls.org](mailto:tajax@ststephensmpls.org).

### Make a Gift from St. Stephen's Donation Wish List

For clients moving into homes, St. Stephen's needs linens, kitchenware, cleaning products, bathroom supplies, and small household appliances.

For shelter guests and people sleeping outside, St. Stephen's is in need of unopened hygiene products, as well as new socks and new underwear in their original packaging.

For a full list of the most urgently needed items, visit [ststephensmpls.org/donate](http://ststephensmpls.org/donate). Too busy to go to the store? Shop from our Amazon wish list and the items are shipped right to us.

# The Power of Volunteers

National Volunteer Week was officially established in April 1974. It is about celebrating the impact of volunteer service and recognizing the power individuals have to make a difference in the world through acts of kindness in service to others.



President George H. W. Bush said volunteers are, “often gifted persons who do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens in the fullest sense, partners in civilization.” That accurately describes our St. Stephen’s volunteers, too. Their commitment to our mission of ending homelessness is inspiring.

At St. Stephen’s, we celebrate our volunteers in April but we are thankful for them year-round. Our volunteers do a myriad of kind deeds that support our mission to end homelessness. They range in age from the third graders who bring Valentines Cards to the shelter, a teenager who organized his church group to put together hundreds of hygiene kits for people experiencing homelessness, to Jerry, age 87.

Jerry started at St. Stephen’s 10 years ago. He spent the next decade as a full-time volunteer with our Street Outreach Team, helping people who were living in their cars, on the streets, or under freeway ramps. He loved it and the people he met loved him. Jerry made a difference in the lives of so many over a decade of volunteer service. Jerry recently retired and we will miss him.\*

If you are looking for ways to make a difference, join us by volunteering at St. Stephen’s. You are always welcome here!

With gratitude to all our volunteers,



Gail Dorfman, Executive Director

\* You can read more about Jerry’s volunteer service in a July 21st Star Tribune article titled, *Volunteer, 87, steps down after a decade of tending to Minneapolis’ homeless.*

*“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”* - Anne Frank

## Join the Advocacy in ACTION Network

The **advocacy in ACTION network** is a partnership of St. Stephen’s Human Services—our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, clients, and communities—working together to end homelessness. The **advocacy in ACTION network** is our way of reaching out to you, our supporters, to keep you informed and to ask you to partner with us. The network will provide you with regular updates on homelessness and affordable housing issues, government policies and proposed legislation impacting homelessness, as well as targeted calls to action. Please consider joining through this link: [ststephensmpls.org/advocacy](http://ststephensmpls.org/advocacy).

Please remember St. Stephen’s Human Services in your will or estate plan.

Thank You 

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# HOMELESSNESS **ENDS WITH YOU**

*Make a difference for individuals and families  
experiencing homelessness.*

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2018**

*(rescheduled from April 14, 2018 blizzard)*

**University of St. Thomas  
Law Center Atrium, Minneapolis**

6 pm ♦ Reception

7 pm ♦ Dinner, Program, and  
auction to make a difference

Seating is limited for this special event.  
Please respond quickly to reserve your place.

Purchase tickets at [sshsmn.org/latest](http://sshsmn.org/latest)  
or use the enclosed envelope.\*

\*If you previously purchased a ticket for April 14th's event, we will  
follow-up individually to confirm your attendance for October 13th.