HEART MATTERS

Issue 8 - 2026

Working to end homelessness, one life at a time. CATHEDRAL CENTER

Celebrating Connection and Community

PLUS A SPECIAL ASK: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Time and time again, we are reminded that behind every step forward in our work is an entire collection of individuals who have put forth their time and efforts in support of Cathedral Center's progress. While there have already been countless reminders of this throughout 2026, one of the biggest signifiers was Pathway Home just a couple months ago.

On July 29, 2026, we came together as a community to celebrate our pursuit of ending homelessness and recognize the resilience of the women and families we serve. Thanks to the generosity of everyone in attendance, and of our friends who couldn't join in person but made their impact felt, the night was a truly meaningful success. Not only did we raise an outstanding $133,031 in support of Cathedral Center's transformative services, but we also had the opportunity to connect with our friends and neighbors and celebrate the steps we've taken toward creating a brighter future for our community.



2026 Crystal Heart Awardees, Barb Haag (left) and Cindy Reiske (right).

Thank you to our entire team who made this special event possible and to our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and everyone else whose unwavering support fueled the wonderful night. The success of this year's Pathway Home is a testament to our incredible staff who put their energy and heart into fulfilling our mission. On that note, we are incredibly proud to share that our agency-wide trauma-informed care (TIC) training has officially begun!



A trauma-informed care board with resources and handouts at one of our locations.

Thanks to the hard work of our TIC committee, staff have begun a specialized training program developed in partnership with Share Collaborative, a Milwaukee-based TIC consultant. This training illustrates Cathedral Center's commitment to providing critical healing services to our clients through trauma-informed practices in safe and welcoming environments. Thank you to Share Collaborative as well as The Otto Bremer Trust, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and The Zilber Family Foundation for supporting our endeavors to better understand trauma, its effects, and how best to implement a TIC framework in every aspect of our work.

Pathway Home and our TIC training program are both examples of the power of community. It takes more than just one voice to create positive, lasting change, but together, we can make meaningful impacts. As we approach our 25th anniversary in 2027, this sentiment rings true now more than ever. There are so many of you that have helped us make a difference over the years, and we look forward to celebrating all the progress Cathedral Center has made over the last 25 years. We hope you'll be inclined to share your connection to our agency and *your story*, as we look to honor those who have walked alongside us for a decade, a year, or one day. It's true that we would not be here without all of YOU!



Share YOUR Story!

2027 will be Cathedral Center's 25th anniversary! To celebrate our history, we want to hear your stories. Whether you've been here since day one or are new to the community, we want to hear about your connection to our agency and your impact on our journey.

Please contact Cal Gessner at cgessner@cathedral-center.org

Urgent Needs



See back page for an Amazon update!

We Are Currently in Need of:

Emergency Shelter
- Pillows & Blankets
- Shower Shoes
- Women's Sweatpants (Sizes: M-3XL)

Friendship House:
- Baby Bottle Organizer
- Baby Highchair
- Food Storage Containers

Community Case Management:
- Paper Towel Rolls
- Microwaves
- Dinnerware Sets

Emergency Shelter Needs:

Friendship House Needs:

Community Case Management Needs:

Scan to purchase items off our Amazon Wishlists or email volunteer@cathedral-center.org to schedule a drop-off.

Moving Beyond Homelessness

Emergency Shelter



At Cathedral Center, we are honored to have a team full of incredible, devoted, and hard-working individuals who make positive impacts on the lives of our clients and fellow staff alike. While facing difficult situations outside of our control this past year, our Emergency Shelter staff maintained their priorities to our clients, going above and beyond on a daily basis to ensure that our clients had the support they needed to achieve their goals. From July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, we're proud to share that our shelter case management team achieved an 87% safe placement rate across all households (unaccompanied women and families with children).

What this number means is that for all the women and families who stayed in our Emergency Shelter for seven or more days, 87% of them exited into safe housing placements, regaining stability and independence. These placements include getting into transitional/rapid/permanent supportive housing programs and receiving Section 8 housing vouchers, among other various housing situations. Comparing this to the same July 1st to June 30th timeframe from 2024-2025, this current data represents a 21% increase in safe placements for unaccompanied women and a 5% increase for families with children. This success was achieved despite displacement from flooding in August 2025 and Milwaukee's Coordinated Entry system going through significant changes.

We thank our case managers, guest support staff, leadership staff, and our entire Cathedral Center team for ensuring our clients feel welcome, valued, and cared for the entire time they participate in our programs. We are deeply grateful to have such dedicated team members who work tirelessly to uplift our community, remind our clients of their strengths, and advocate on behalf of our clients so that they have crucial resources accessible to them in order to secure safe housing and transform their lives.

Friendship House

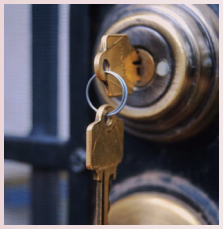


We are grateful to have recently reconnected with an individual who previously received services at Friendship House. They returned with their sister to seek services, sharing that they believed it was the best place for their sister to receive help.

During their time at Friendship House, they worked closely with our Clinical Services Coordinator to address their mental health needs, develop coping strategies, and better understand the challenges that were impacting their ability to move forward. The former guest shared that the clinical support they received made a significant difference in their life, describing Friendship House as a place where they felt supported, heard, and encouraged to work toward their goals. After successfully transitioning from Friendship House into safe placement, they have maintained their permanent housing while continuing to work and achieve their goals.

During their recent visit, they expressed how grateful they remain for the support they received through our services, stating to staff, "I wouldn't be where I am without you." Ultimately, this story is a powerful example of how consistent trauma-informed support can help individuals build stability, develop confidence and life skills, and successfully move toward long-term housing and independence.

Community Case Management



Through our Community Case Management (CCM) program, Cathedral Center has served 63 families and 108 single women year-to-date, providing individualized case management, financial assistance, housing navigation, and connections to critical community resources. By addressing challenges early, CCM helps women and families maintain stability, strengthen self-sufficiency, and avoid homelessness before a crisis occurs.

To expand this prevention-focused work, Cathedral Center recently welcomed a new Community Case Manager dedicated to our growing Family Flex program. Supported by the Zilber Family Foundation and United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County, Family Flex provides flexible financial assistance and ongoing support that can help families overcome barriers to housing stability, including rent arrears, security deposits, utility costs, transportation needs, and other urgent expenses that could otherwise lead to homelessness. Since launching the expanded program, we have served an additional 13 families, with eight already securing stable housing with rental assistance. Two families are now preparing to successfully transition out of the program after significantly increasing their income and achieving greater financial stability.

One client, Bernadette, has embraced the support and resources available through Cathedral Center to pursue her education and long-term goals. After earning her GED this spring, she enrolled at Milwaukee Area Technical College and is working toward a career in culinary arts. Stories like Bernadette's reflect Cathedral Center's commitment to addressing the root causes of homelessness and empowering women and families to build brighter, more stable futures.

Employment Services Program Impact Numbers

So far in 2026...

- *Our clients have...*
  - *attended **74 job interviews***
  - *received **59 job offers***
- ***40 clients** have started a new job*

Your Support Helps Make This Possible!

*Names and images have been changed in all stories to protect the identity of our clients.

Working to end homelessness, one life at a time. CATHEDRAL CENTER

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Looking Back with Gratitude. Looking Forward with Hope.

FROM THE DESK OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – DONNA RONGHOLT-MIGAN



At Cathedral Center, we often talk about dignity. We believe every woman and family deserves to be treated with respect, compassion, and care as they work toward stability and a brighter future. That belief has guided our work for nearly 25 years, and as we prepare to celebrate this milestone in 2027, I find myself reflecting on the people who have made this journey possible.

Whether you have volunteered a few hours, made a donation, attended an event, served on a committee, referred a client, or championed our mission in the community, you are part of Cathedral Center's story. Every act of kindness, every gift, and every word of encouragement has helped create opportunities for women and families experiencing homelessness in Milwaukee. For that, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

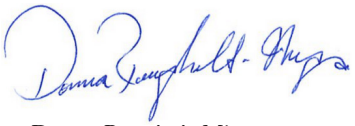
The cover story of this newsletter celebrates the power of connection and community. I cannot think of a more fitting theme. Time and again, we see that meaningful change happens when people come together around a shared belief: that everyone deserves a safe place to sleep at night and the support needed to thrive. That spirit has sustained Cathedral Center through challenges, growth, and transformation over the past quarter century.

As we look ahead, there is much to be excited about. We continue to invest in trauma-informed practices that strengthen our programs and ensure that every interaction promotes healing, trust, and dignity. We are committed to creating environments that are welcoming, safe, and centered on the unique needs of the women and families we serve. This work is not simply about providing services. It is about restoring hope, building stability, and creating pathways toward lasting success.

Our 25th anniversary will be an opportunity to celebrate how far we have come, honor the individuals who have shaped our mission, and look toward an even stronger future. Together, we have built something remarkable. Together, we will continue ensuring that women and families in our community have access to the support, dignity, and opportunities they deserve.

Thank you for being part of this journey. We look forward to celebrating with you throughout 2027 and sharing the stories, milestones, and vision that will guide us into our next chapter.

As always, thank you for helping us provide ***DIGNITY WITH EVERY STEP.***



Donna Rongholt-Migan
Executive Director

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Volunteer with Cathedral Center

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT CATHEDRAL CENTER

1 PROVIDE AN EVENING MEAL FOR GUESTS IN SHELTER

Our program offers healthy meals every day of the year to shelter guests. Volunteers can sign up to provide a home-cooked or catered evening meal. Whether dropping off or serving in person, it's a fantastic opportunity for corporate, church, sports teams, or friends to make a difference!

2 HOST A DRIVE FOR URGENTLY NEEDED ITEMS

Challenge others to collect basic needs items and urgent program supplies. Items can be purchased from our Amazon Wishlists!

3 PARTICIPATE IN SANTA'S WORKSHOP

During Santa's Workshop clients from all our programs have the opportunity to shop for free, brand-new gifts. We need your help with volunteer assistance, replenishing event supplies, and we will be accepting gift donations between 12/7-12/12.

4 BE AN ADVOCATE: FOLLOW, LIKE, SHARE POSTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Thank you to all of our Hospitality Groups! (Pictured: Abide MKE Hospitality Group)

To learn more about our Hospitality Meal Program, Santa's Workshop, and other ways to get involved, contact Jeannie Stranzl at volunteer@cathedral-center.org or 414-831-0394 ext 2133.

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mission

PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN & FAMILIES WHILE WORKING TO END HOMELESSNESS ONE LIFE AT A TIME.

VISION

Through compassionate care and excellence in service delivery, Cathedral Center will serve as a leader in ending homelessness for women and families with children in Milwaukee. Cathedral Center envisions a community in which women and families with children are empowered to access support to meet all of their basic needs.

HEART MATTERS

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Join Our Team!

CURRENT VACANCIES:

- Shelter Case Manager (Full-Time)
Responsibilities Include:
+ Conduct comprehensive assessments and support guests to create and pursue goals to increase income, secure safe housing and attend to health and well-being.

- Program Assistant (Full-Time)
Responsibilities Include:
+ Provide frontline support and shift leadership at our Emergency Shelter, ensuring program procedures are carried out with respect to client needs and program capacities.
+ Complete tasks as they relate to crisis response, the client intake process, staff and volunteer coordination, and rotating on-call responsibilities.

Amazon Update:

Amazon no longer provides receipts with donor info when items are purchased off of wishlists. As a result, Cathedral Center no longer knows who purchased these items. If you make a purchase from one of our Amazon wishlists and would like an acknowledgement for your donation (or have any other Amazon donation questions), **please contact Jeannie Stranzl at volunteer@cathedral-center.org or (414) 831-0394, ext. 2133.**

Thank you for your support and understanding!