

# HAPPENINGS



Together  
we are  
*unlocking hope.*

*Unlock hope: taking steps to end homelessness & hunger.*



# Resilient **HOPE** Through Strength And Confidence.

When you meet Lanonya and see the confidence and strength that beams from her face, you would never know that she was once a homeless mother of four. In the not-so-distant past, during long, difficult nights in a shelter in Calumet Township, she remembers feeling overwhelmed and unprepared for the journey back to being housed. Yet the shelter is where she learned about Sojourner Truth House—which turned out to be the beginning of the journey.

At STH, while she participated in the day center program, Lanonya was able to leave the stress of the shelter behind. “Everyone there was nice,” she recalls. “I felt empowered to be in a place where people told me there’s help, you can overcome this. It was a blessing.”

Staff watched her children while she attended classes and focused on her own needs. Lanonya

conducted job searches, received information on housing and education, and she and her family enjoyed nutritious meals from the STH kitchen. She appreciated the peace-filled atmosphere that staff and volunteers created for moms and children.

“It was a really hard time, and crazy, and I didn’t understand what was going on,” Lanonya shares. “But being there at Sojourner I felt some type of happiness. I felt like mentally it was a break from the reality that I was unhoused. The shelter wasn’t a pleasant place to be, and so I looked forward every day to getting up and going to Sojourner. I think everyone there at the time felt at peace. We were able to let loose, let go, have fun, and just feel normal for a moment. **They looked out for us mentally, spiritually, and physically, but you had to put in the work. That’s what I loved about STH.**”



## Community Ambassadors for STH

Lanonya joined our Community Ambassadors as her way to give back to Sojourner Truth House and others experiencing what she went through.

Community Ambassadors for STH is an auxiliary group launched in 2023 to help support the mission and work of STH. Ambassadors donate their time and talents to helping women, children, and others who are experiencing homelessness or struggling to make ends meet.

Join us!

Ambassadors meet once a month,  
3:30 - 4:30 p.m. at STH.

Learn more online at  
[sojournertruthhouse.org/ambassadors](https://sojournertruthhouse.org/ambassadors)



# Give HOPE All Year Long

It's hard to have hope when you're struggling with homelessness or hunger.

When you set up ongoing support as a Saint Katharina Kasper Calendar Club member, you ensure that we are prepared to assist anyone who seeks our services. Your partnership guarantees a consistent and dependable source of income, enabling us to care for our community *all year long*.

\$5

\$5

1 round trip bus fare

\$10

\$10

medication copays

\$20

\$20

obtaining legal documents

\$25

\$25

1 housing application fee

## SAVE THE DATE

Join us for our 25th Annual Walk for Sojourner Truth House!

Saturday | June 8, 2024  
8-11 a.m. CST

Sojourner Truth House  
410 W. 13th Avenue  
Gary, IN 46407



For more information or to register go to [www.walkforsth.org](http://www.walkforsth.org).



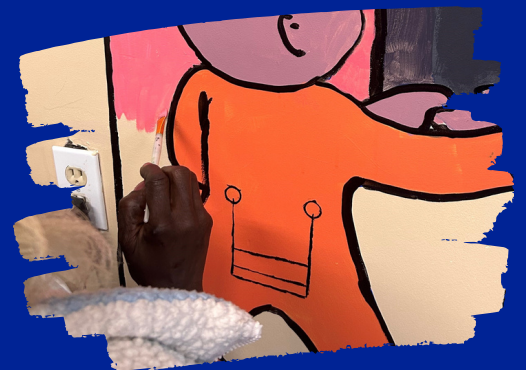
New art mural inside STH classroom.

## Empowering HOPE With Art

In our Summer/Fall 2023 issue of Happenings, we introduced STH's new Art Therapy classes, which featured a classroom mural project. The mural was finished last fall, after three months of work by STH clients and their children, under the direction of Art Therapy Instructor Chasity Armstrong. Designed to resemble a clock, the mural represents the progress that STH participants make after they first arrive.

The women in the mural have no facial features so clients can see themselves working in the Community Garden, caring for a child, taking classes on a computer, and celebrating when they're holding the key to their new home.

**"When the mural was revealed, one client shared: "I saw myself in each woman there, and it gives me hope."**







# Leaving **HOPE** & Legacy

Many years ago, a brother of Sister Kathleen Quinn, PHJC, married Ross Johnson's sister. Ross and Sr. Kathleen—one of the founding Sisters of Sojourner Truth House—became good friends. When she lived at St. Catherine's Convent in East Chicago, Ross was a frequent visitor. He was welcomed at holiday parties, dinners, birthdays, and other celebrations by Sr. Kathleen and the other Poor Handmaid Sisters from the United States and Vietnam who lived there. Over time, Ross became part of their PHJC family.

Sadly, Ross passed away in June 2023 at the age of 89. His estate left a gift for Sr. Kathleen, and she chose to honor Ross's love for helping women and children experiencing homelessness by donating her gift to STH.

"Ross was a simple, wonderful person, and a good friend of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ," Sister Kathleen recalled when she presented her check in September 2023 to a small group assembled at STH.

A planned gift can extend your support for Sojourner Truth House and make a lasting impact for vulnerable individuals and families in need of services and stable housing.

**Please call 219.947.8565 for more information or if you need assistance with your planned giving.**

**We are grateful for the vital support that provided **HOPE** in 2023 through the following grants:**

- Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities
- Old National Bank Foundation, for STH Career Services Classes
- AARP Indiana, for Food Assistance
- PHJC Mission Fund, for Food Assistance
- SIA Foundation, for a new Food Pantry freezer
- Geminus Community Partners, Moms as Teachers Program
- Geminus Community Partners, SAFE Recovery Classes
- Congregation of Sisters of Saint Agnes
- Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) Tax Credits, Food Assistance
- John W. Anderson Foundation

## Providing **HOPE** this Christmas

Throughout the year, STH clients earn "Sojourner Bucks" by doing good deeds like participating in classes, being prepared for class, helping their instructors, or when someone notices them doing an act of kindness. They save their Bucks for the annual STH Santa Store event, where they can shop for gifts and bring their families a sense of normalcy and joy on Christmas. Last December, 80 shoppers spent about 50,000 Sojourner Bucks—thanks to generous donations of items and funds from supporters like you.

