



St. Matthew's House®

VOL. 8 • ISSUE 3 • SEPTEMBER 2025

**So Much to Be
Thankful For!**

Portrait Exhibition Raises Awareness of Homelessness

Naples-based artist Wendy Wagner states on her website, “All people want to be seen and heard.”

When St. Matthew’s House commissioned her to create portraits for a traveling exhibition called Faces of Homelessness, she was eager to help share residents’ stories with the community.

The exhibition consists of ten portraits — six women and four men. Some are from our Justin’s Place Recovery Program and others are from our shelters. The residents were interviewed on video while Wendy sketched and took photographs to work from. Most importantly, she was able to observe them, note their expressions and mannerisms, and immerse herself in their experiences.

Wendy’s goal in creating a portrait is to capture and convey the subject’s personality.

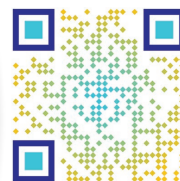
“You get an insight, a feeling that you know them. That’s what makes a successful portrait,” she explains. “Photographs are great, but there’s something about drawing with materials, with your own hand, to create this image and tell this story. When people come in and say, ‘Oh, I feel like I know these people,’ I know I did it right.”

Among Wendy’s recent portraits of women is one she calls, “You Can Bend But Never Break Me.” Wendy tells us, “She was involved in an emotionally abusive relationship. I learned that you may not see it, because she doesn’t have a black eye or a visible scar, there’s a lot of emotional baggage that comes with being in that kind of relationship. I wanted to show that she looked vulnerable, but still had strength in her eyes.”

Asked what impressed her the most about her subjects from St. Matthew’s House, Wendy says, “The strength it took for them to take that first step. It’s hard for a lot of people to ask for help. I hope they understand how much they’re going to help other people by sharing their stories. They’re all warriors. When you hear what they’ve been through, how they’ve been so resilient, it’s really inspiring.”



**For more information
on Faces of
Homelessness
and where you
can view the
exhibition, scan
this QR code now!**



**If you would like to host the installation,
call (239) 774-0500 Ext. 194
or email events@stmatthewshouse.org**



Jill's Place Expansion

Thanks to your generosity, soon more women experiencing addiction in Southwest Florida will have a safe place to recover. St. Matthew's House is expanding Jill's Place, which houses women in our Justin's Place® Recovery Program. Doreen Lockwood, JP Women's Program Director, tells us, "We will be adding 16 beds for a total of 52. We will also be building a fellowship hall where we

can gather in community for a variety of activities such as family gatherings, worship, holiday meals, workshops, and classroom studies designed to bring the hope and healing of Jesus Christ to all who enter. This will provide a safe, helpful, and healing environment for our residents to grow in."

This expansion is part of our Journey Together Capital

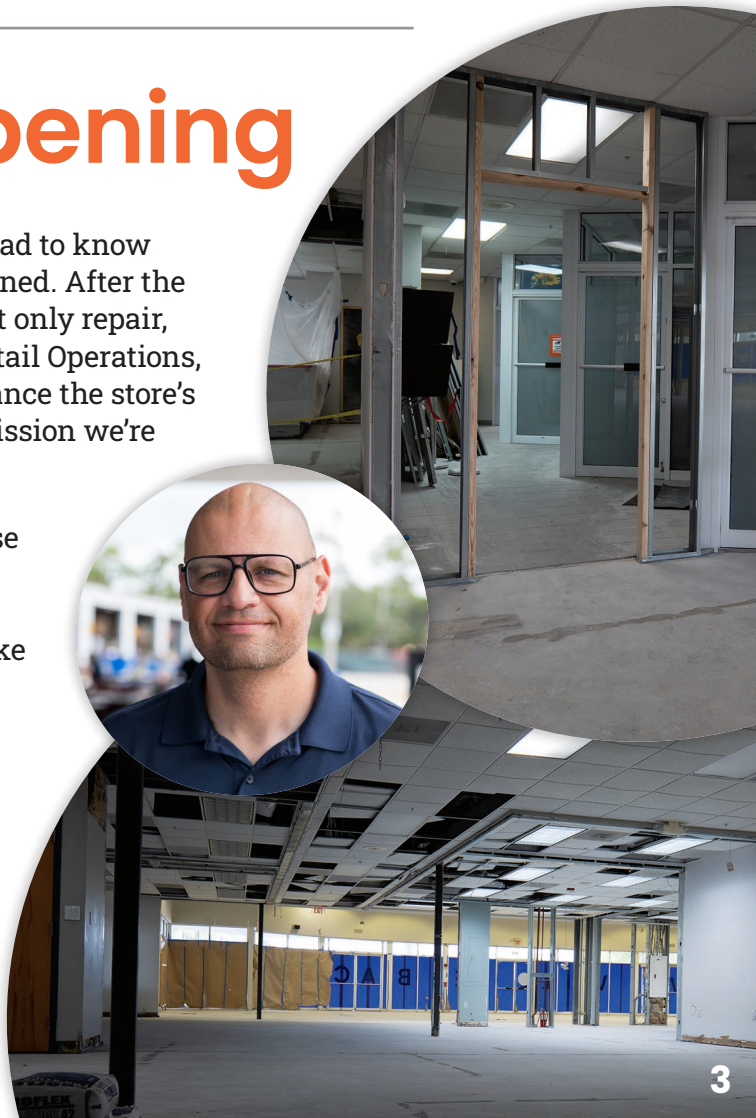
Campaign, designed to move more of our hurting neighbors from crisis to contributor. Doreen adds, "Our hearts are full of gratitude to everyone who has made this vision a reality. It is a blessing to the women we currently serve and those on their way to us. Each of you are the hands and feet of Jesus! God Bless you! We cannot wait to break ground!"

Thrift Store Reopening

Those who enjoy shopping at our Thrift Stores will be glad to know our flagship Naples store at **2601 Airport Road** has reopened. After the damage incurred in April, we took the opportunity to not only repair, but to rebuild with purpose. Daniel Moore, Director of Retail Operations, says, "We approached the reopening as a chance to enhance the store's experience, improve operations, and better reflect the mission we're here to serve."

Daniel tells us, "Every change is intentional — to increase efficiency and elevate the store's overall look and feel. The new layout will make it easier to navigate and help guests discover little treasures more easily. It will feel like a true community retail space, not just a thrift store."

Daniel acknowledges the tragedy that led to the store's temporary closure. "What felt heavy at first has opened the door to innovation, healing, and hope — and we believe that's God at work." Daniel encourages donations to the store and adds, "If anyone feels called to give their time, treasures, or talents, we'd love to get them connected!"



Thankful in All Circumstances

Dear Friend,

Thanksgiving Day comes just once a year, but giving thanks happens every day at St. Matthew's House.

When a hurting neighbor comes in for a meal, or just to get out of the elements and enjoy some rest and conversation, their gratitude is plain to see. For those who stay longer to work toward lasting life transformation, every day is clearly a blessing in their eyes.

That's just as it should be for all of us, every single day. Even in the most trying of times, there is always something, however small, to be thankful for. A wonderful way to show your appreciation is by sharing your blessings with others who are less fortunate — which is exactly what you do when you support St. Matthew's House.

This fall, you can get a unique look at how your gifts help men, women and children at St. Matthew's House. Our Faces of Homelessness portrait exhibition highlights ten residents, sharing their stories and their faces through the eyes of professional artist Wendy Wagner. The traveling exhibit will be hosted at various locations around Naples. We hope you get the chance to view the display and are reminded of the resilience of each man, woman and child we serve.

You are also a part of their stories, and we are all thankful for you — every day of the year.

Sincerely,



STEVE BROODER
President & CEO

GIVE THANKS
in all circumstances,
FOR THIS IS GOD'S WILL
for you in Jesus Christ.

— 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18



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Check Out Our Social Enterprises!

Social enterprise profits
defray administrative costs,
so donations reach those in need.

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RESTAURANT & EVENTS

LuLu's Kitchen is our 8,000-square-foot, free-standing facility that is home to a full-service restaurant and more.

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CATERING

Delicious By Design provides food and service by an award-winning professional catering team for receptions, weddings, dinners, themed buffets and luncheons.

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St. Matthew's House®

THRIFT STORE

St. Matthew's House Thrift Stores offer high-quality, gently used furnishings, decor, clothing and other goods in nine convenient locations.

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