



# voices

A tri-annual publication from Safe Haven Ministries

JUNE 2025

## Providing 35 YEARS of Pathways to HOPE

For 35 years Safe Haven Ministries has stood with survivors to amplify voices, ignite hope, and transform futures.

In reflection of the years of impact, these words of Walter Brueggemann inspire me:

**"Compassion constitutes a radical form of criticism, for it announces that the hurt is to be taken seriously, that the hurt is not to be accepted as normal and natural but is an abnormal and unacceptable condition for humanness."**

I imagine lively and intense conversations and questions occurred when the first volunteers and board members of Safe Haven Ministries gathered to respond to domestic violence.

These volunteers organized six congregations toward disruptive good, criticizing the norm that ignored survivors' stories and the gap in the need for support. They unleashed compassion to support victims of domestic violence and their children so survivors would enter a path of healing.

These actions of courage, love, and justice created the invitation 35 years ago in our community to a mission we still follow today: to follow Christ's example and be motivated by our community's needs, working to prevent and end relationship abuse and human trafficking.

### Safe Haven Ministries Shelter



1990



2018 - present

We are rooted in a faith that believes in the dignity of all individuals and the faithfulness of a God who does more than we can ask or imagine. It is faith as small as a mustard seed that has contributed to the expansive impact that stewards millions of dollars of funding to serve with excellence, create belonging, address root causes, and change attitudes and policies to prevent violence before it begins.

Together we collaborate to address unacceptable suffering and with compassion, support survivors and prevent abuse, so no one becomes a victim.

Today, we serve thousands of people each year. Our safe shelter and housing resources provide over 24,000 nights of safety in just one year. We connect with what is equivalent to a university stadium full of people with our training and education events every year.

Our sons, mothers, teens, older adults, and neighbors are who we serve day after day.

Many nonprofits are facing uncertainty in the current chaotic funding cuts from state and federal grants. Our mission is steadfast, and our diversified funding creates strength. Yet with the potential loss of funding, we need our rooted partners to give generously.

With our fiscal year ending this month, we humbly ask you to consider taking a step of disruptive good with us. **Please consider helping us meet our final revenue goal this month of \$100,000.**

**By being the disruptive good in our community, we can prevent and end relationship abuse and human trafficking.**

*Rachel VerWys*

CEO, SAFE HAVEN MINISTRIES





SAFE HAVEN  
MINISTRIES

*Celebrating 35 Years*

# Fall Luncheon

Join us to mark 35 years of hope, healing, and empowerment for survivors. Together, we can ensure no victim faces their journey alone.

**Sept  
23**

## **JW Marriott Grand Rapids**

235 Louis St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

11:30 a.m. Networking | 12:00 p.m. Lunch

Register at  
[shmgr.org](https://shmgr.org) or scan  
the QR code



## **Sponsorship Opportunities**

### **Anchor of Hope (\$20,000)**

Provides transitional housing to one household for an entire year

### **Ambassador of Hope (\$10,000)**

Provides 65 nights of emergency safe shelter to families or individuals escaping violence

### **Ally of Hope (\$5,000)**

Provides an in-depth training to multi-sector leaders, influencing policy and systems change

### **Advocate of Hope (\$2,500)**

Provides a classroom of direct engagement with students, helping them develop bystander intervention strategies and knowledge around healthy relationships

### **Agent of Hope (\$1,000)**

Provides hours of trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate support groups for children across all our programs

All sponsors will receive recognition with logo on promotional materials, social media platforms, e-news, and at all 2025 events. These levels indicate approximate costs. Sponsorships will contribute to the unrestricted revenue for Safe Haven Ministries' mission unless otherwise noted.

For more information regarding the fall luncheon, please contact Debbie Murphy at [dmurphy@shmgr.org](mailto:dmurphy@shmgr.org) or **616.452.6664**.

## TRAINING STUDENT STYLISTS

Tony Tendero, Safe Haven Ministries' Fellow in Residence, recently facilitated a workshop on relationship abuse and sexual assault for student stylists at the Empire Beauty School. Research shows that clients often share their experiences of relationship abuse and sexual assault with their stylists.



Pictured here, Empire's Executive Director Megan Smith is presenting Tony with a check representing donations from the National Day of Beauty.



## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Through a partnership with Mercantile Bank and Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis, we were one of the recipients of the Community Multiplier program and received a \$27,500 grant to support our work to ensure safety is accessible for survivors of abuse and human trafficking in crisis. These two partner organizations have journeyed with us for years, along with hundreds of others, so our work to prevent and end violence continues to create impact and change lives year after year.

## SEMINARS & TRAINING

Partnership with Community Organizations is how we equip different sectors to respond well when instances of domestic violence or human trafficking intersect with their work. From the criminal justice system to education, we are building a fabric of trauma-informed response. Join us for the next training or seminar at Safe Haven or request a training for your church or workplace.

June 25th, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Aug. 19th, 1-4 p.m.  
Oct. 9th, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Nov. 11th, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Register for a seminar or training at [shmgr.org](http://shmgr.org).



## CHRISTMAS IN JULY

You are invited to join Safe Haven Ministries' Christmas in July. Host a pantry or hygiene drive today to support the daily needs of our emergency shelter and our transitional housing program.

To take part in spreading cheer, scan the QR code and visit our Amazon wish list!





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SAFE HAVEN  
MINISTRIES

# Church Connect

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & COFFEE

Join us for a meal around the table, networking, and a chance to grow in this work of preventing and ending domestic violence and human trafficking.

## EVENT DETAILS

Wednesday, Aug. 6  
9-11 a.m.

Safe Haven Ministries  
2627 Birchcrest Dr. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Register by Aug. 1



**We will share tangible resources to make your church safer, including access to our:**

1. Church Certification Testimony video
2. Connect the Biblical Narrative booklet
3. Role of an Effective Referrer white paper
4. Intercession Resource connections

616.452.6664 | [shmgr.org](https://shmgr.org)