



The IHNSider

Spring 2021

A Publication of Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati
The Community's Interfaith Response to Family Homelessness



A Year of Gratitude

Stacey Burge, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Along with the entire world, IHNGC recently marked the one-year anniversary of the Covid-19 pandemic. What a year it has been! We had to completely re-organize the way we deliver services from diversion, to emergency shelter, to community-based housing programs.

While this was not easy, all of you made it bearable through your flexibility, and willingness to support families in whatever ways possible. Host and Support congregations that typically provide overnight accommodations, volunteer staffing, and meals for the emergency shelter program have continued to do as much they can from a distance.

Through YOUR donations of dollars, supplies, and time, we have not only been able to offer uninterrupted services during the pandemic, but expanded support. The conditions created by Covid-19 have meant more families experiencing job loss, reduced work hours, childcare and school closings that have led to housing insecurity and homelessness. We have been able to maintain what is usually reserved for summer surge capacity (when we go from 8 families to 12 at a time in shelter) for most of the pandemic. We have also been able to serve more families in Aftercare, as well as to provide more food, household, and PPE supplies across all IHNGC programs.

Many of you are asking when you can resume direct care for families and we do not have an answer to that yet. We are working with the City and County to utilize CARE funds for facility changes at the Day Center and Grace Place to make them more pandemic proof, but this a work in progress. We will keep you posted on when you can get back to doing what you do best—providing loving hospitality to families in need.

This has been a year of challenges. It has also been a year full of gratitude to know that we do not face these problems alone. We have all of you right here with us—right there for families—helping us to find the way forward.

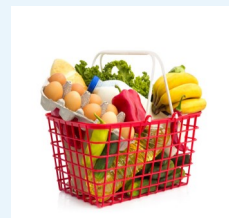
In Gratitude,

Stacey

IHNGC Wishlist

During this difficult time, IHNGC has been providing hygiene, cleaning and food resources to families in shelter and in our housing programs in the community. We currently need :

- Paper towels
- Gallon sized Ziploc bags
- Baby wipes
- Dish soap
- Hand soap
- All-purpose cleaning spray
- Large reusable bags/totes to assemble resources
- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, hot sauce, mayonnaise)
- Salad Dressing (Ranch and Italian)
- Prepackaged muffins and pastries
- Pop Tarts
- Microwaveable rice, mac and cheese cups, and mashed potatoes
- Canned tuna and chicken
- Individually packaged snacks (chips, cookies, crackers, pretzels, fruit cups, fruit snacks, etc.)
- Hearty canned meals such as Ravioli, Spaghetti O's, Dinty Moore
- Socks and Underwear, all sizes and genders
- Razors and shaving cream
- Body wash
- Phone chargers for android and apple devices



To schedule delivery contact:
Meghan@ihncincinnati.org



Pet Support Program Expands Again !



What does the Pet Support Program do during a pandemic when the kennels are empty, pets are in foster homes, and volunteers are quarantining? Renovate, remodel, and expand, of course! With the generous support of PetSmart Charities, the Pet Support Program has doubled on-site kennel capacity and redesigned the space to include 2 cat rooms, 3 dog rooms, a walk-in dog wash station, and storage. Next step is adding PT staff and updating the play yard.



Pets are Family Too!

PetSmart Charities awarded \$50,000 to establish the SAFE Emergency Assistance Program where coalition members can access funds to help people and pets impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of SAFE (Saving Animals from Eviction) Coalition include IHNGC as the lead, as well as Ohio Alleycat Resource & Spay/Neuter Clinic, UCAN Nonprofit Spay & Neuter Clinic, YWCA of Greater Cincinnati, and Cincinnati Animal Care, to name a few. When PetSmart Charities approached us with this idea, of course we replied, "Yes, how soon can we start!" Thanks to the generosity of PetSmart Charities, not only do people get to stay connected to pets during economic crisis; pets avoid the risk of surrender to animal shelters that are already taxed.

Volunteers Making Difference!

IHNGC congregations and volunteers have kept up their support during the pandemic. Here are just a few of the ways supporters have continued to help. **Bellarmine Chapel:** During their assigned host weeks as a support congregation for Church of the Advent, BC has made individualized activity and supply bags for each guest in shelter, including the pets! They ask for a list of names, ages, and general ideas. Then they gather donations and assemble. **Christ Church Glendale:** On the last Saturday of the month, CCG does a *Fill the Truck* event. They have pickup trucks in the driveway in front of their building. Congregation members and people in the larger community bring donations of non-perishable food and household supplies. Donations are distributed to IHNGC and the Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center. **Indian Hill Church:** They have provided grants to IHNGC as well as kept the congregation updated on how many families their funds have helped to reach during the pandemic. **St. Columban:** Sets fundraising goals for their congregation, as well as support congregations. They then provide running totals to keep their volunteers engaged and motivated. **Clifton 7th Day Adventist Church:** Did a winter drive-by donation event where they gathered enough Visa gift cards to provide each person in shelter with a \$50! **Temple Shalom:** Does Costco bargain shopping to ensure each dollar donated is stretched and feeds IHNGC families! **Laura Warren:** This former IHNGC Board President from **Hyde Park Community United Methodist** shows up to tend to the plants and flowers in front of the Day Center and to decorate for holidays. She brings such joy to staff and visitors alike! **Westside United Methodist:** Along with their support congregations, they have conducted Facebook fundraising efforts. Thanks to all!

Welcome new Partners!



A Message from the IHNGC Board on Affordable Housing

Dear Friends,

By now, you have seen articles, flyers, and evening news pieces on Issue 3, which will be on the May 4, 2021 ballot for Cincinnati residents. This Issue proposes a charter amendment that would require the City of Cincinnati to invest \$50 million dollars per year in affordable housing and set up a body to monitor and distribute funds.

As a non-political organization, IHNGC is not taking a position on Issue 3, but we have a long-standing position on housing that we think is important. Housing is a fundamental human right. Food, shelter, love. These are the basics that all of us need to survive; these are the building blocks that any family requires to have a chance at growing and thriving. These are three things the IHNGC community has helped to provide through hosting, volunteering, and donating.

The loving, temporary shelter that IHNGC offers, however, is not sufficient to meet the basic need of shelter. Families must have access to safe, permanent, shelter that they can afford. For so many in our City, this is simply not a reality. Wages have not kept pace with inflation, or rising costs of goods, and have certainly not kept pace with the rental housing market. A single mom working full-time at \$12/hour --a wage that is significantly higher than many of the moms and dads that come through IHNGC receive--cannot afford a two-bedroom apartment in the market.

To be affordable, housing costs should not exceed 30% of a

person's total income. This leaves room in the household budget for food, transportation, medical care, and other needs. Instead, when families move into housing after spending time in shelter, 50, 60, sometimes 80%, or more of their income must go to maintain housing. This leaves nothing left to raise children, meet other needs, or to bear any crisis. This reality keeps too many families locked in cycles of eviction and instability. Many families can only afford housing under these circumstances with the help of a subsidy, which are in limited supply.

Advocates for affordable housing options have worked for many years to collaborate with the City to identify solutions to this problem. There has not been the political will to tackle it in the substantive way needed to truly move the needle on poverty and homelessness for Cincinnati families.

Whether you vote for or against Issue 3, we need all of you to engage in efforts to support affordable housing solutions. Please see the *Housing Our Future* report, resulting from years of research and community strategizing to inform your efforts. You can find it at: <https://www.lisc.org/greater-cincinnati/what-we-do/housing-our-future/>

We appreciate your support of IHNGC, and thank you for continuing to support equity and access in housing for all families.

The IHNGC Board of Directors

COMING FALL 2021

**IHNGC 30th
Anniversary
Celebration!**

Sponsorship opportunities
available—contact :

**Jamie@ihncincinnati.org or call
(513)471-1100 ext. 118**





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Wanted Pet Foster Homes for Dogs and/or Cats



Want to help keep pets with their families and out of shelters? Become an **IHNCG Pet Support Program Foster!** Based on your household, we can make the best feline or canine, (or both!), match for you. Interested? Email: Garrett@ihncincinnati.org



CHARLES H. DATER FOUNDATION



Thank You to the Charles H. Dater Foundation for providing not one but two \$25,000 grants to assist families experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness due to economic impacts of Covid-19. Their support helped IHNGC cover new and unexpected expenses in the ever-changing pandemic environment.

Our Mission

To provide homeless families emergency shelter and hospitality through interfaith communities and work with families to find and retain stable housing.

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