July 15, 2022

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to update you today on the conclusion of our Charlie's Place discernment process. With Reggie's leadership assured, we have adopted recommendations by the small "discernment work group" as a follow-up to October's strategic planning session. Accordingly, St. Margaret's Vestry has approved the following changes that will go into effect on August 1.

**Beginning the week of August 1, Charlie's Place morning programs will be open to the public on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday**, shifting from our current schedule of five days a week. Each of these days, we ***will continue to serve food provided by our in-kind donation partners and distribute clothing and other essentials while also serving as a community gathering space.***

Our strategic partnership with**Miriam's Kitchen** will continue to provide for a case management outreach worker to address our guests' housing and other specialized concerns. Existing services will continue on site:

* **Unity Healthcare** will continue to provide healthcare once a week.
* **Case Management**continues during regular hours and on an as-needed basis.
* **The Food Pantry**will provide emergency staples.
* **The Clothing Closet**remains open for guests to shop.
* **The** **Hair Academy** will continue to offer haircuts on site.
* **Charlie's Place Bible Study** will continue and be moved to Thursdays.

This transition will enable Reggie to be available to guests for more one-on-one support by appointment. Reggie is their first contact for all who are referred for case management. This plan for Charlie's Place also invests in Reggie's leadership growth in balancing the management of the program with his direct work with those we serve. In the same vein, our ongoing relationship with Miriam's Kitchen will ensure that we are leveraging the trust and relationships we have with the community to connect them with the resources in our city's budget to provide housing to all who are unhoused. It is important to note that as we transition to the new schedule, we will never turn anyone away who is in crisis and arrives outside of regular operating hours in need of support.

We also anticipate one staffing reduction for Charlie's Place, that of our kitchen coordinator, effective August 1. **Vincent Freeman** has managed our food service operations with grace and great success over his three years with us. While we are sad to say goodbye to him, we are excited to support his career growth as he pursues other opportunities in the vibrant food industry.

This renewed vision is the culmination of a multi-year journey of bringing Charlie's Place to a more secure and sustainable place. Our work has been anchored on and centered around meaningful conversations with our guests, whose opinions matter most. Through the past couple of years of discerning a "new normal" following the pandemic, we have been able to affirm what Charlie's Place most is: a warm place where our unhoused neighbors can experience fellowship and a sense of belonging while also getting basic needs met. In other words, *community*is and remains the number one reason people come and keep returning to Charlie's Place.

**How You Can Help**

Realizing this future vision of Charlie's Place will very much depend on the involvement of our entire community, and here's how you can help:

* **Volunteer.**We always need people present during program hours to greet guests, help in the kitchen, and distribute clothing. With summer upon us, there are often gaps we need to fill. Please visit our Sign-Up Page online to let us know when you can come and volunteer. First-time volunteers are always welcome.
* **Donate clothing.** Charlie's Place continues to receive and re-distribute much-needed clothing to our guests. Drop off gently used men's and women's casual clothing donations any time during office hours, or bring them with you to church on Sundays. (Remember that we cannot use business/dress clothes.)
* **Donate financially.** This year, St. Margaret's increased its overhead funding to Charlie's Place to cover 19% of the program's annual $200,000 budget. The rest of the program's expenses are raised entirely through individual and foundation support. Please give here:[**https://www.charliesplacedc.org/donate.**](https://www.charliesplacedc.org/donate)

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank our donors and volunteers for your patience as we worked through reimagining our programming. It has been a group effort.

Most Sincerely,

The Rev. Richard Weinberg                Reggie Cox

Rector                                                  Executive Director