



# The Way Home Newsletter

*To respectfully and compassionately empower persons and families in need of housing to become self-sustaining by providing shelter, needed services, and professional guidance.*



**FEBRUARY 2026**

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- **GRATITUDE**
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## Thank You, Elgin Association of Firefighters, IAFF Local 439!



We're so grateful to the Elgin Association of Firefighters, IAFF Local 439 and the members of Station 4 for spending their Saturday cooking, delivering, and serving a firehouse-prepared meal for our guests and our outreach community members.

Meals like this are about more than food—they're about care, connection, and community. Thank you for showing up for our neighbors in such a meaningful way.

Want to get involved? Community groups, families, and businesses can sign up to provide a meal or support this work with a donation.

Learn more at the link on our website --  
[www.padsofelgin.org](http://www.padsofelgin.org)

# Grateful for the Paul L. Jehle Mission Grant



PADS of Elgin extends our sincere thanks to First Congregational United Church of Christ for awarding our organization the Paul L. Jehle Mission Grant.

This generous support helps sustain the critical, relationship-centered work happening each day inside our shelter and outreach programs. Through this grant, PADS is able to continue providing shelter, meals, and individualized case management that supports neighbors working toward stability, housing, and wellness.

We are deeply grateful for First Congregational United Church of Christ - Elgin's longstanding commitment to serving neighbors with compassion and dignity.

Partnerships like this strengthen our shared vision of a healthier, more connected Elgin community. Thank you for standing alongside PADS and the neighbors we serve.

If you'd like to see the full award acceptance ceremony, visit <https://bit.ly/4kzyp6Q>.



*First Congregational*  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST | ELGIN, IL



This February, we're inviting our community to spread the love in a simple (and meaningful) way—by donating honey.

Honey has been in especially high demand this winter, as many of our guests rely on warm tea for comfort during the colder months. It's a small but powerful comfort—perfect for tea, toast, and shared meals—that helps make the shelter feel a little more like home.

Instead of chocolates or flowers, consider donating a jar (or two!) of honey to

support neighbors experiencing homelessness. You can even dedicate your donation to your "honey," and we'll happily share the love with a social media shout-out if you'd like. ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

# Winter Harvest Reflections: A Series Wrap-Up



Over the past several weeks, we've shared our Winter Harvest Reflection series—voices and stories that look back on what Winter Harvest has meant to our community.

While we are not hosting Winter Harvest in 2026, this series gave us space to reflect on what has always mattered most: people stepping forward with care, creativity, and commitment to neighbors they may never meet.

We are deeply grateful to Tia Aagesen, Dan Fox, Kyla Brittain, and Brian Piñon for sharing their thoughts and experiences so openly and eloquently. Their reflections remind us that Winter Harvest was never just a single event—it was a way of showing up.

If you haven't yet—or would like to revisit them—we invite you to watch the full Winter Harvest Reflection series on our blog or YouTube channel.



The choreography may  
change...

But our commitment to  
the mission remains  
the same.



*Thank you for being part of  
this community, for honoring  
the past with us, and for  
continuing to walk alongside  
PADS of Elgin as this work  
carries forward.*

**To watch the full Winter  
Harvest Reflection series,**



# A Partnership Opportunity in our Community

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**PADS**  
OF ELGIN



KENDRA  
SCOTT



*Elgin PADS Signature Give Back  
Piece*

*Elisa Pendant with a Cobalt  
Cats Eye Stone*

*From February 8-  
15, shop with  
Kendra Scott and  
support Elgin PADS  
at the same time.*

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*Del 8 al 15 de  
febrero, al comprar  
en Kendra Scott,  
estarás apoyando  
directamente a  
Elgin PADS.*

This Valentine's season, choose a gift that gives back.

20% of Kendra Scott purchases during this give-back week will support Elgin PADS, helping provide shelter, meals, and relationship-centered care for neighbors in our community.

Whether you're shopping for someone you love—or treating yourself—your purchase helps spread care beyond the moment.

**Shop online: [kendrascott.com](https://www.kendrascott.com)**

**Code: GIVEBACK-LBRJM**

**Or visit the Naperville store:  
55 S Main St., Suite 111**

**Thank you for sharing the love with our community.**

# Impact in Action: 2024–2025 Annual Report

## OUR IMPACT



**137**

guests sheltered  
including **21** children



**12,397**

nights of shelter



**37,190**

meals served



**38**

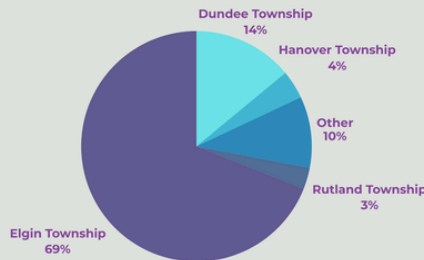
guests housed



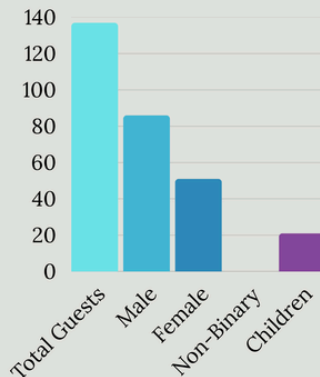
**3,205**

outreach meals  
served

## OUR SERVICE AREA



## OUR DEMOGRAPHICS



**537** volunteers donated **1130.75** hours for a total dollar value of **\$37,868.82**.

3 | 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2025 marked a pivotal moment for PADS of Elgin.

As the year closed, the COVID-era federal funding that had supported emergency shelter and outreach efforts ended, without comparable replacement funding. At the same time, the need in our community did not diminish. More individuals and families remained unsheltered, and the complexity of their needs continued to grow.

Y25 reminded us that emergency services cannot rely on temporary solutions. They require durable systems, transparent stewardship, and a community willing to show up when higher-level support disappears.

Read the full 2024–2025 Annual Report

[CLICK HERE](#)



Because of you, PADS remains a place of stability where people are met as human beings first, and where the path from crisis to possibility remains open.