

NEWS

St. Andrews mission team goes to Detroit

By Record Patriot Staff
Oct 27, 2025



Volunteers from St. Andrews Presbyterian Church helped complete four tiny homes in Detroit.
Courtesy of Jack Harnish

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A team of 21 Benzie County volunteers recently visited Cass Community Social Services in Detroit. It was the 10th year St. Andrews Presbyterian Church has sponsored teams to work on projects related to housing for the homeless. This year the primary focus was on the completion of four tiny homes, part of a neighborhood of 24 such homes which have been built over the past eight years. The team spent most of their time painting and installing cabinets. Hopefully they will be ready for new residents by the end of the year.

Cass Community's tiny homes are built with donated labor and funds and are paid for as they are built. Occupants move in on a rent-to-own basis, paying \$1 per square foot rent. The house vary from 200 to 400 square feet. If the resident lives in the house, pays rent and takes part in the homeowner training for seven years, they then own the house. To date three persons have completed the process and received their deeds.

Executive Director Rev. Faith Fowler said, "The goal is to help people move from homelessness to home ownership."

The second project for the mission team was to clean and paint rooms in a former hospital building which will be used for overnight housing for homeless. Cass Community currently houses over 300 people in emergency shelter or longer-term supportive housing and prepares over 700,000 meals a year. Last year the St. Andrews team worked on cleaning out an old warehouse which was converted into a daytime warming shelter accommodating up to 200 people.

Judy Harnish, team leader and former staff member at Cass, said, "To see the difference 20 eager volunteers can make in just one week is really exciting. We are creating opportunities for homeless persons to find emergency support, but also to move toward a new life."

Rev. Anne Hebert, pastor of St. Andrews Church and a member of the team said, "The work of St. Andrews touches lives in Benzie County and around the world. This is one

way we seek to be the hands of Christ, working for the sake of others.”

For more information on Cass Community Social Services, visit casscommunity.org.

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