

Over two years, [El Refugio Ministry received \\$40,000 funding](#) from ECF to fund the pilot of a new post-release program that offers short-term accommodations for those released with asylum from the detention center. Not only is the Center located in a remote part of the state, with no hotels or public transportation, but the men sent to the Center are from across the southeast, and their families may be hundreds, even thousands, or miles away.



For more than a decade, El Refugio Ministry has been a safe place for these refugee men and their families, providing visits to the refugees while they are in detention and being a “ministry of hospitality” to the families that visit them. El Refugio believes that their most “powerful role” is “simply to be present to the people [they] visit in detention-to recognize their full humanity, to see them face-to-face and to hear them.”

El Refugio operates a hospitality house a few miles from Stewart Detention Center that houses and feeds families for a short period while they were visiting their loved one at the Center. This small home has welcomed many families, feeding and housing them, while loving them well.

Since opening the hospitality house and serving families of those in the detention center, a new program has emerged, a “Post-Release Program” serving those released from Stewart Detention Center every single day. This program began in partnership with a volunteer group, Paz Amigos, outside of Columbus, GA, which is how St. Thomas became connected with the powerful work of El Refugio. ECF’s funding has allowed El Refugio to continue to answer the call of serving the “least of these” by hiring a Post-Release Coordinator.

How You Can Help

As their work continues to serve some of the most vulnerable in the refugee community, a need for new beds has emerged. If you are called to provide a bed or support this ministry in any way, [please contact El Refugio Ministry](#).



Meghan Bennett (she/her) is the Director of St. Margaret's Community Outreach, a ministry of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Carrollton, GA. St. Margaret's Community Outreach has been assisting its most vulnerable neighbors for almost 30 years and Meghan is honored to have been her Director for the past four years. Overseeing the day-to-day operations and getting to know people from all different walks of life is something she considers a privilege.

Before St. Margaret's, Meghan spent eight and a half years working for the Department of Family and Children Services where most of her time was spent working with teenagers aging out of the Georgia Foster Care System. Early in her career, she worked with victims of domestic violence. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services. Meghan lives with her husband, Drew, their three-year-old son, William, and their newborn son, Charlie, in Carrollton. She loves any time spent with family and friends, traveling, and sharing a meal.

SUPPORT ECF

Your one-time or monthly donation allows us to serve people experiencing poverty and oppression throughout our Diocese. [Make a donation at https://episcopalcommunityfoundation.org/donate/](https://episcopalcommunityfoundation.org/donate/)