



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE
Commissioner of Health

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Mayor Barrett to Welcome Faith Leaders to Strong Baby Educational Luncheon

Fifth annual collaboration with Columbia St. Mary's and faith community to celebrate Strong Baby Sanctuary locations

MILWAUKEE – On Tuesday, Oct. 6, Mayor Tom Barrett will host local faith leaders and health experts at an educational luncheon to discuss the two most preventable causes of infant death in Milwaukee: Premature births, which account for nearly 60% of all infant deaths, and unsafe sleeping environments, which account for 15% of infant deaths.

During the luncheon, 10 churches will be celebrated for becoming the first Strong Baby Sanctuary locations in the city, and leaders will discuss the connection between chronic stress and premature births, as well as community conditions such as violence that increase chronic stress.

The luncheon, held with support from the Columbia St. Mary's Foundation, welcomes faith leaders prior to the fifth annual Strong Baby Sabbath on Sunday, Oct. 11, 2015. The Strong Baby Sabbath is a day in which faith leaders pledge to share messages with their congregations and communities in support of preventing infant deaths.

The effort supports the goal of reducing Milwaukee's overall infant mortality rate by 10 percent and the African-American infant mortality rate by 15 percent by 2017 set by Mayor Barrett and supported by the Milwaukee Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families at United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County.

The Strong Baby Sabbath is planned cooperatively by Columbia St. Mary's Urban Church Wellness Program, City of Milwaukee Health Department, March of Dimes Wisconsin Chapter, and the Milwaukee Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families at United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County. The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) Northwest Jurisdiction and General Baptist State Convention of Wisconsin Inc. also support the day.

- WHAT:** Strong Baby Sabbath Luncheon
- WHERE:** Columbia St. Mary's Garden Café
2301 North Lake Drive, Milwaukee
- TIME:** 11:30 – 1 p.m.
Speakers to begin at 12 p.m.
- SPEAKERS:** Mayor Tom Barrett
Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker
Dr. Veronica Gunn, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Travis Anderson, President & CEO, Columbia St. Mary's

Additional interviews available on site.

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