



Specific Ways YOU Can Help

Service

EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE IN AREAS WHERE THEY HAVE A PASSION TO LEAD.

Ways to Volunteer During the Holidays

The holiday season offers many ways to give rather than receive - and there is no better way to experience the real meaning of Christmas than to reach out in love to those in need. Shepherd has many opportunities to get involved this holiday season.

Christmas Store: Wrapping gifts • Helping families shop • Set up • Clean up **Christmas Festival:** Store Sign up

For more ways for your family to get involved with Shepherd this Christmas season, visit: Volunteer.ShepherdCommunity.org/Christmas

GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

Health clinic: serve breakfast on Saturday mornings from 8:00am-noon

Shepherd Buildings: Deep cleaning needed at Shepherd's Main and off-site buildings.

INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITIES (some may require orientation)

Academy and After-School: Tutor students 1 hour per week anytime between 8-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

After-School: Give guitar, bass, piano, or drum kit lessons to students from 4-6p.m.

Kitchen: Prepare and serve breakfast on Monday mornings from 7-10 a.m.

IN ADDITION TO VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, THERE ARE MANY ITEMS NEEDED TO HELP OUR FAMILIES:

IN-KIND NEEDS: Wrapping Paper / Scotch Tape / Gift Tags / Ribbons and Bows / Toilet Paper / Shampoo and Conditioner / Hand Sanitizer / Hygiene Products / Canned Foods / Colored Pencils / Guitar and Bass Strings / Bags of Potting Soil (for Shepherd's Greenhouse)

Shepherd believes in empowering its volunteers to serve in areas where they have a passion to lead. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering in one of these areas or any other area at Shepherd, please contact Phil Merki at 317-375-0203 or philm@shepherdcommunity.org.



Shepherd is a faith-based, non-profit organization established in 1985 with a simple but staggering goal: to break the cycle of poverty on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. Located centrally within the community it serves, Shepherd offers programs for children, teens, adults, and families. Our primary tools? Education and love.

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A Store That Offers Hope

Shepherd Community Center strives to provide joy and hope for families in poverty living on the near Eastside of Indianapolis, during a time of year that is often filled with stress and challenges. Christmas! Instead of looking forward to presents under the tree, many families are thinking about how to provide their next meal. The Christmas season offers little relief to their daily struggle - and their need for hope.



Here at Shepherd Community Center, hope is the essence of what we aim to bestow on our neighbors suffering from the negative effects of generational poverty. This holiday season, we have the opportunity to do just that with **YOUR** help.

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YOU Can Help

Thank you to our partners for making Shepherd's newsletter possible.



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A Store That Offers Hope (continued)

Every year around Christmas time, Shepherd holds what we call our Caring at Christmas Toy Drive. This event was not only fashioned to reinstate hope within the community but to form deeper and healthier relationships with our families. We do this by serving together to help provide something as simple as a present under the tree for their children.

Shepherd's Christmas Store has come a long way since its original début. With the help of our volunteers, Shepherd gives families a hand up, not a hand out. Our Store aims to empower parents, build relationships, and restore the joy in providing Christmas for their families. How do we do this?



It starts with YOU, and your generous donation of time, toys, and other items that act as a tangible display of love and affection. This transforms Shepherd's East Washington Street facility into a shopping wonderland, full of age-appropriate gifts and other essentials such as hats, scarves, gloves, underwear,

and socks. None of this is possible without the help of our valued volunteers who give their precious time and energy to help coordinate, sort, and distribute Christmas gifts to Shepherd's families.

During our Christmas Festival, parents are able to sign up for a personal "shopping time" to come to the Christmas Store without their children. Volunteers lead parents throughout the various rooms of our Christmas Store, welcoming them to select the desired gifts that they will later share with their family. Once the gifts have been selected, parents are guided into a room where eager volunteers await with colorful wrapping paper, ribbons, and bows. After the presents are wrapped, the parents take these beautiful gifts home with joy – providing them perhaps their first experience of a Christmas morning shared with their family.

At Shepherd, it is a priority to get to know the families we serve by becoming familiar with their situational needs. There is still great joy in giving gifts to children at Christmas; however, there is an even greater joy in seeing parents empowered to provide for their family – restoring their hope. After all, restoring the hope is the foundation for breaking the cycle of poverty.

This holiday season, **YOU** can help Shepherd give a gift that will last far longer than the wrapping paper. ■

THE POWER OF ONE

Tom Plimpton: 50 Years of Ministry



For the last 50 years, Tom Plimpton has been faithfully following his call to ministry. Tom, now a retired banker, was a Board Member for Area Youth Ministry, a ministry that merged with Shepherd Community Center in 2008. Tom has worked primarily with teenagers over the years, and loves the fact that Shepherd works with children of all ages. "I like that we start with Preschool, the younger we can get a kid here the more opportunities we have to be a positive influence in their lives," said Tom.

Every Thursday Tom walks through our doors, willing to do just about anything from working on computers to conducting a deep cleaning of the cafeteria. Tom volunteers at Shepherd because he appreciates the values we teach and sees the potential in every child.

For Tom, volunteering at Shepherd is more than just "helping us out." Volunteering is a continuation and extension of Tom's giant heart for serving the community. Everywhere he goes, Tom spreads his love for God with his smile and his hard work ethic. After 50 years of work in the field of ministry Tom told us, "It thrills me to be around Shepherd, and it is a privilege for me to be here."

Tom is a powerful example of how one person can make a difference in the lives of so many. No matter how he serves, Tom brings a joy and light to all he encounters at Shepherd. We're thankful for the difference and Power of One found in Tom Plimpton.

Did You Know?

Summer EXCEL and YLIFe Outcomes

78% of our elementary students increased or maintained their listening comprehension skills.

100% of our 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students increased their math skills according to the Algebra Project measurement standards that is based on Indiana state standards.

86% of middle school and 70% of our high school students increased or maintained their knowledge of college readiness, including application procedures and statistics relating to furthering their education.

100% of middle school and 88% of our high school students demonstrated an increased leadership capacity, based on staff observation and average daily attendance.*

*Based on 94% average daily attendance

98% of the parents of our elementary school students believe that the Summer EXCEL Program had a positive impact on their son or daughter.

81% of parents stated that their child would not have attended a summer camp if not for Shepherd.

96% of middle school and 86% of high school parents believe that the YLIFe Summer Program had a positive impact on their son or daughter.

Year-End Giving



In the midst of a busy holiday season you can give HOPE! Your financial contribution, canned goods, or paper products make a big difference in the lives of our kids and families. You can donate online at www.ShepherdCommunity.org or contact Development Director **Rex Fisher** at ref@shepherdcommunity.org to discuss other ways to give the gift of HOPE this Christmas season!

THE POWER OF ONE.



It is the most joyful and busy time of the year! Yet, for some, it can be the worst time of the year – a reminder of loss and difficult times experienced throughout the year. Thankfully, Shepherd is blessed by so many who invest in the lives of our neighbors and families, making it a beautiful Christmas. A Christmas that reflects the real reason for the season: the giving of ourselves.

Giving of ourselves, like the woman who purchases new socks and underwear for our family Christmas Store. The student who brings his friends to help deliver Christmas food totes. The church that collects food for students to eat during their school break. The business that collects toys for parents to give their children through Shepherd's Christmas Store. This is the reason for the season. **This is the Power of One!**

The Power of One baby, born in a manger, who forever changed the world. The Power of One Savior. The Power of One Hope.

We are truly blessed to have YOU celebrate with us this Christmas!

Merry Christmas!

Jay Height
Executive Director