

# Willow Tree Missions 2020 Annual Report

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Achievement and Accomplishments for 2020

**WILLOW TREE MISSIONS**

2020

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2020 was a year like no other, that's for sure! It was filled with some of the most strenuous struggles and stress but also some of the greatest blessings! Here's a look at our year.

### **Domestic Violence Services:**

In January of 2020, we opened our new Family Service Center. This is an office setting at 301 S. Charter that is staffed Monday through Friday 8:30-4:30. Individuals in need (domestic violence or other) can come in at any time to seek resources that may help them. We have a computer and printer available as well for assisting with job hunting, housing, resumes, etc. This move also entailed expanding our staff and forming our Family Care Team to staff the center. We were so excited to see this great space come to life as a help to our community! After selling the Neighbor House facility in November of 2019, we intended to focus on finding/purchasing a new shelter facility in 2020.

And then came March.....CoVid caught us all by surprise. Suddenly, everything had to be done differently and priorities had to shift drastically. All three staff members at the FSC have school-aged children, so we immediately had to get creative on staffing the center. We braced for a massive onslaught of calls, fearing that the isolation and stress would cause enormous levels of crisis in some families. What we saw instead was an amazing community that came together to take care of each other. So many churches, organizations, and local citizens stepped up to care for their neighbors in need in ways never seen before. We were so blessed to see the love and care our community showed during that time.

Overall, we did see an increase in needs this year. By the end of the year, we had provided direct services to 77 local families in crisis, including their 82 children. Thanks to the generosity of our community, our supporters, and supplemental funding from grants, we were able to meet the needs of these families seamlessly. As our community starts to move forward and put CoVid behind us, we will once again revisit some of our plans that had to be put on the back burner. Our goal for the mission is to

help create the strongest safety net possible: one that supports victims safely and holds offenders accountable adequately, and focuses on healing for both. We continue to be ever-vigilant of what the needs are for Piatt County and what resources must be built to meet them.

### **Resale Shop:**

Not enough great things can be said about our amazing team at the resale shop. Things were going great and the team was on a great roll when CoVid suddenly shut the shop down for 11 weeks with zero notice. The team didn't skip a beat. Instead, they started focusing on what they could do from home to help the community and the mission. One of the greatest ways this happened was through mask-making. In the early days when masks were in short supply, the shop team set out making cloth masks. They got very creative, using every scrap of material, shoe laces, elastic, and any other supplies we had on hand to make masks. This amazing team made over 600 masks that were distributed within our community and to other missions in New York City and Maui, where supplies were completely unavailable.

While the team was continuing to make an impact from home, our organization was very blessed by a local plumber and his wife. They took advantage of the time the shop was closed to volunteer their labor and install a brand new ADA compliant bathroom for us! To top that off, State Bank of Bement granted us the funds to cover the cost of materials. When our shop was finally able to reopen, we had a new public bathroom which made our old one a "team-only" one for our team to use. What a huge blessing that was for our mission!

When the resale shop was finally able to reopen, the challenges and hurdles that needed overcome were tremendous. Suddenly, everything had to change. The rules for operating a business changed frequently, sometimes daily. The need to be constantly fluid was paramount. We

suddenly had different rules to follow about how we could receive donations, how our team can interact with the public, how many people can be in the building, how things get cleaned, how many times things get touched, and MASKS, MASKS, MASKS! Add on top of that, the challenges of dealing with members of the public who are stressed, tired, anxious, argumentative, challenging, and angry and you create the recipe for a perfect storm. But instead, this amazing shop team absolutely SHINED during this time. They took some of the most strenuous circumstances possible and handled them beautifully, continuing to focus on shining the mission's light in the community. They are truly amazing!

Thank you all for the part you have played in making this mission so incredible! Lives are being touched and changed! Without every single donor, shopper, staff member, volunteer, and board member, we could not do what we do. **MOST IMPORTANTLY**, thank you to our ALMIGHTY GOD who continues to bless and provide for this mission in ways beyond what we could possibly think, dream, or imagine!