

Willow Tree Missions 2021 Annual Report

Achievement and Accomplishments

WILLOW TREE MISSIONS

2021

Submitted by: Jill A. Maxey, Executive Director

2021 was a year like no other, that's for sure! It was challenging as we returned to a new normal with constantly changing rules but also some wonderful opportunities took place! Here's a look at our year.

Resale Shop:

2021 brought additional COVID challenges however we saw an amazing amount of growth to our mission, shop, team, and customers!

The beginning of the year we faced a closure due to no heat but were blessed to purchase a new furnace for our shop and reopened in just a few days. Both our team and customers were excited to get back into the swing of things while being warm!

Throughout the year, the team continued to use social media platforms to reach out to our community and surrounding counties. We now have regular customers that drive an hour just to shop at Willow Tree Missions!

Support from our community continues to grow. In 2021, our community volunteered 6,110 hours of their time to our mission! That is almost 153 people working for a 40-hour week.

Our community also showed their support by dropping off lots and lots of donations. This upcycling allowed us to earn 40% more in sales revenue over 2020. As you know, this is a much needed blessing as it helps support the Family Service Center as well as the costs of the New Building!

I believe the biggest blessing we've received is the ability to purchase our new location for both the resale shop and our Family Service Center. Its size and location is both an asset to our mission and our community.

As we move into 2022, be on the lookout for pop up shopping at the New Building that coincides with other events around the Square! We are hopeful to have a portion of the new store open in late Spring.

Domestic Violence Services:

You may remember that we announced the purchase of a New Building in the summer of 2021. The historic Kaiser Department Store and former Monticello Dance Academy is going to be our new home. In October, we moved our Family Service Center (FSC) to the second floor of the New Building at 100 E. Washington Street. The center continues to be staffed Monday through Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm. Individuals in need (domestic violence or other) can call us at 217-631-1018 to seek help and resources.

October also welcomed changes in staff. Heather Denam was promoted to Director of Operations and Jill Maxey was hired as the new Executive Director. In December, Rachel LeJeune, Director of Operations retired. Rachel served the mission for 10 years. She began as a volunteer, became Shop Manager, and then moved up to Director of Operations where she managed the FSC too. She is a beautiful person inside and out and truly lets her light shine for this mission and for our wonderful God. We greatly appreciate the time and efforts she contributed over the past 10 years. Upon Rachel's retirement, the Director of Services position was created. Susan Houston is currently serving in that position on an interim basis. In the spring of 2022, a permanent Director of Services, who will run the FSC, will be hired.

In 2021, we provided direct services to 80 local families in crisis. 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. Our largest grant for \$7500 for direct services is from the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois. We thank them for their support! 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.

With the New Building, our costs have increased significantly. We sincerely appreciate your past giving and look to continue that partnership as we move into 2022. All gifts are welcome including, but not limited to –

- your **time** – keep shopping and volunteer at the Resale Shop,
- your **resources** – keep bringing in those donations to the Resale Shop and building materials to the New Building,
- your **talents** – we need grant writers, historic investigators, book keepers, contractors, painters, cleaners, etc.
- and last, but not least, your **financial** support!

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!