

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



Serving our neighbors in need for 38 years





Crisis Assistance

426 families served

Through this program, we helped with over \$9,000.00 of assistance in keeping families from eviction, maintaining vital utilities such as water and electricity, and ensuring that our families in crisis could obtain their prescription medications. In addition, over 130 individuals successfully completed AWESOME classes, which continued for virtual attendants all year.



Crisis Management

56 people served

We assisted 17 women, 10 men, and 29 children in the FSS Crisis Management program in 2021. Life Skill class topics included budgeting, stress management, and healthy relationships. Through a grant from a local foundation, we also hosted a four-week youth class in the summer called Mindful Mondays, which educated children ages 10-18 on healthy relationships, nicotine and vaping awareness, self-confidence and attitude, and Narcan training.

Food Program

7,512 food bags given

In 2021, an average of 441 families per month came to us for monthly food distribution, a 26% increase from last year's average. We continued a "drive thru" model of pickup for monthly food. At Christmas, we welcomed the parents on our food list back into the building to choose toys for their children provided by our annual Peggy's Stockings Christmas toy drive.



Soup Kitchen

12,187 meals served

Continuing the grab-and-go meals we began in 2020, we served a record number of dinners, relying heavily on our volunteers to help us prepare an average of 1,000 meals per month. Thanksgiving and Christmas meals are always popular, and in 2021 we served over 300 dinners for each. Over the course of the year we shifted toward heart-healthy meal options and reducing sodium and sugar.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Wow what a year we have had! Many inward and outward improvements came to Prince of Peace Center in 2021, all with the focus of better serving our neighbors in need. We invite you to stop down for a visit to see the changes for yourself! We re-purposed our space to expand our Mission Thrift store, transforming the downstairs meeting room into a dedicated clothing boutique while retaining the furniture and housewares departments upstairs.

Our programs saw an increase in activity in 2021 as well. Throughout the year we distributed over 1400 pieces of

furniture, more than 600 new school uniform items, and other clothing for school aged children. Through collaboration with local school nurses and day care centers, we provided a reserve of new socks and personal items for any children in need during the school day. Our food distribution program supplied over 7500 bags of food to those on our list and anyone who came to us with a food emergency. At Christmas time, more than 500 toys were chosen by parents and guardians for the children in their care, and we welcomed the help of Sharpville middle school students on food and toy distribution day.



SOS Program 9 Clients Served

We officially opened our SOS Employment Program in October. The goal of this program is to provide clothing and interview training for job seekers, to offer resume assistance, and to supply our clients with job-appropriate clothing when they obtain employment. Our Employment Specialist also checks in with each client at one, three, and six months, to assess their current employment status and any potential needs.

Mission Thrift Store

Our Thrift Store is now much larger, comprising furniture, housewares, and children's clothing departments upstairs, and all other clothing, shoes, and accessories downstairs. We also have a commercial washer and dryer, so we can ensure every clothing donation that comes in is properly sanitized before it hangs from our racks!



Volunteers

Despite the complications of group activities in 2021, we welcomed our volunteers back into the kitchen, store, and other programs with joy. These generous individuals and groups completed a total of 10,892 volunteer hours in service to their community, and we are humbled by their dedication.



Christmas Raffle

At the end of the year we held a raffle to benefit our holiday programs. Our Board of Directors took charge of ticket sales, and we were able to award prizes to three winners overall.



Throughout the year we continued to serve soup kitchen meals twice a week, take-out only, and we could never have done it without our dedicated volunteers! They cooked, packaged, and gave out an average of 1,000 meals per month, more than double our average monthly meal amount in previous years. While our other programs have changed and shifted to address new needs in the last two years, it is our community meal, addressing day-to-day food insecurity, that has seen the greatest growing need.

The generosity of this community - our donors, clients, board

members, collaborative agencies, and other supporters - reminds us every day that we are not alone in serving our neighbors in need. It is a true blessing to work together and continue the mission of Sister Benita through providing a hand up to those around us every day. Thank you.

Thank you!

Jennifer Wallace, CEO

Family Supportive Services

Renita lost her employment in Cleveland due to COVID, and came to Mercer County to stay with a friend. Renita was unable to find employment immediately, and after two weeks she could no longer stay with her friend; she slept in her car while looking for help. First, she heard about Joshua's Haven; from there she was referred to Prince of Peace Center and accepted into the FSS Program in June. Renita's Crisis Manager worked closely with Community Action Partnership (CAP) in Sharon in the search for permanent housing. As a single woman with no children, Renita only qualified for a one-bedroom apartment, and the demand for one-bedroom apartments in Mercer County is very high. Several community organizations, including CAP, Joshua's Haven, and the Center, covered the costs of a hotel stay for Renita while she searched. Thankfully a unit became available in Sharon; Renita was approved and moved in early in July. Since moving in to permanent housing, she has been taking classes through Mercer County CareerLink to obtain her GED.

success stories

SOS Program

LaTanya was looking for employment close to home. She started a training program with Pathstone Senior Training and Employment Services in Mercer County. The SOS Employment Program provided her with clothing appropriate to the training site and the tools to secure and maintain a job. After six months in training through the Pathstone program, a job opportunity became available to LaTanya. She interviewed and was offered the job, which she accepted. The SOS Employment Program then provided her with the shoes she needed to properly and safely perform her duties.



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DONATE NOW

All of your monetary donations stay local and assist families in the Mercer County area who come to us in need. Thank you for thinking of us and supporting our mission! You may send a check through regular mail or use the link provided to donate online.

Your donation will
help a family stay
**fed, safe,
and healthy.**

GIVE FOR THE FUTURE

Join our Circle of Friends! For \$10 a month (or as much as you choose), you will join other neighbors who care in helping keep families fed and sheltered in our community. Make sure you change your donation to "recurring" and designate it for the Circle!



<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/popc>

MEMORIAL BRICKS

Two lines with a maximum of 12 characters on each line *(including spaces)*.

Now you can help Prince of Peace Center to fulfill its mission while remembering loved ones or commemorating special occasions. For a donation of \$100, an engraved brick will be placed in the Memorial Grotto and Garden outside the Center.

This peaceful garden provides a space for contemplation and quiet enjoyment of God's many gifts to us, and will continue to exist as a spiritual and calming place for years to come. All profits from donations designated for bricks are used to assist those in our community with emergency needs and concerns.

GIVE IN PERPETUITY

Through a donation to the Sister Benita Repasky Endowment Fund, you can ensure that our community will know your support for years to come. Donations to the endowment can be made at any time, including through end of life proceedings or through an estate.

<https://catholicfoundationnwpa.salsalabs.org/cfsrbenitarepaskyendowmentdonationform/index.html>

