

Offering a Ray of Sunshine in the Stormy Times of Life



This year has been a challenging time for many of the ladies in the Sunshine Ministries CARE Program. We have two women who are battling cancer and a few that are facing surgeries. Several of our moms and grandmothers have lost family members due to fentanyl and other drug related use or overdoses. And the number of adults as well as children who have been victims of gun related incidents, deaths or injuries has been staggering!

Desiree is wearing a pendant with angel wings and a picture of her husband who died this past winter. Within two months of losing her husband, she also lost two of her aunts. The encouraging lessons at our Sharing Time during the CARE meetings are uplifting for her and her daughter.



All of us at Sunshine consider it a privilege to be called to come along side of the ladies, to share God's love, and to comfort them through these tough times. They need healing from their grief and fear, help to just get through each day, and hope for a better tomorrow. They need a ray of sunshine!



Jeanteet appreciated a visit from her friends at Sunshine after she had to miss her CARE meeting to attend her grandson's funeral after he died from complications from exposure to mold and asbestos in his home.

Beverly was thankful for being able to get some much needed clothing and personal items from our Community Closet after her home was badly burned when her oxygen tank caught fire in the middle of the night. Deborah, her friend who is also in our CARE Program, is helping Beverly while she is also caring for her own husband who is in ill health.



Everlena took this fun picture with Santa at our Family Christmas party right before her grandson was shot and murdered in downtown St. Louis. Her nephew was also shot and killed in September. She is very grateful for all of the prayers and lets us know that Sunshine "lifts my burdens!"

**Let your light shine
before others that they
may see your good
deeds and glorify your
Father in heaven.**

Matthew 5:16



SUNSHINE MINISTRIES

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MISSION

Sunshine Ministries is committed to providing high quality Christian social services to the poor and needy of St. Louis by offering healing from the past, help for the present, and hope for the future.



A Note from the CEO

Dear Friends,

I have to admit that I have spent most of my 26 years at Sunshine Ministries wondering why our founders decided to give us the name, "Sunshine!" I thought that word was possibly more appropriate for a happy little children's daycare rather than a refuge for homeless men which it was in 1903.

But my quandary has come to a screeching halt recently as we are living through some very dark days in our area. Forbes has rated the City of St. Louis as the #1 most dangerous city in 2023 with the north part of the city (including our 63106 zip code) being "much more problematic than others." Almost every family we serve has been affected in one way or another by the spike in violent crime and the out-of-control drug use on our neighborhood streets.

Norman Vincent Peale once said, "*No situation is so dark that there is not a ray of light!*" On April 25th this year, Sunshine Ministries will celebrate 120 years of being a ray of light in St. Louis. And now that ray of light needs to be stronger than ever . . . perhaps as strong as the light from the sun . . . to overcome the current darkness we are experiencing today! Thank you, founders, for your encouragement and vision to call us "Sunshine!"

And thank you, our faithful donors today, for your partnership that enables us to continue our work in St. Louis. To share another inspiring quote, "*There are two ways of spreading light; to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.*" God is the source of all light, but He is using you to be the candle to shine His light on us. We could not do anything without your generosity. Our job is to be the mirror that reflects that light by offering healing, help and hope to every man, woman and child that comes through our doors!

Sincerely,

Carol Clarkson

Does God Have a Message for His People When Calamity Strikes?



A massive fire that was started by squatters living in an abandoned old church next door to our Youth Clubhouse has caused significant damage to our building. We are very thankful that no one was in the building at the time.

After the remains of the church are demolished, we will be able to begin the process of repairs and restoration.

As the last fire truck was driving away after putting out the flames that damaged our Clubhouse, the lights from the engine cast a shadow of two large smoldering beams that were laying on top of the rubble of bricks. It was the shadow of a cross. Our message? Yes! God is there for His people when calamity strikes and He will protect us.



Building for Fun and Games



Both our little Preschool kiddos and the big kids in Kid's Club love to build with the blocks in our classroom!

A volunteer challenges the big boys to build a tower as high as they can at their Sunshine Saturday fun day. (The tower collapsed 2 seconds after the picture was taken.)

And 4 year old Cash thought he was pretty cool when he was captured in the castle that the Preschool teachers built around him . . .



Thanks to a friendly workman willing to halt his work for a few minutes, the Preschool children were able to take a short field trip to see the big "scooper truck" after the fire.

Building for the Future

. . . but the building blocks that we use to build strong character and insure that our kids have a solid foundation for a purposeful and rewarding future are the goal of our youth programs!

Our three building blocks are:

- RESPECT, honesty and integrity
- Personal RESPONSIBILITY
- Caring and healthy RELATIONSHIPS

The brick and mortar buildings may be crumbling in their neighborhoods, but the lifetime potential that we are building in our children is strong and built to last.

Thank you for helping us stay safe!

Protecting the Preschool and Kid's Club children is a priority for all of our staff! After taking on-site security awareness training classes, it became obvious that we needed to upgrade our entrance system at the Sunshine Youth Center.

Thanks to the generous donations from Emerson, a well-known St. Louis Fortune 500 company, and the Richard A. Baker Foundation, we were able to design and construct a secondary security wall with safety doors that will safeguard our precious little people!



SPECIAL NEEDS

that will help us serve our
kids and families this
Spring and Summer!

SPECIAL CAMP ITEMS

- Swim goggles and pool toys
- Beach towels
- 50 SPF Sunscreen
- Skin lotion (Lubriderm or CeraVe)
- Breakfast bars
- Individually wrapped chips & cookies
- Individually wrapped snacks such as Teddy Grahams, cheese crackers, goldfish and pretzels
- Canned Pineapple chunks or rings
- Brownie Mix
- Powdered lemonade mix
- Grocery store gift cards to buy fresh meat, fruit, milk, cheese, bread and buns, frozen food and POPSICLES!

NEEDED PANTRY ITEMS

- Cereal and Oatmeal
- Canned Vegetables and Fruit
- Canned Soup, Chili and Stew
- Canned Pasta Meals like Spaghettios
- Canned Meat, Tuna and Manwich
- Canned Baked Beans
- Boxed Macaroni and Cheese
- Peanut Butter and Jelly
- Pasta, Rice and Rice-a-Roni
- Boxed Potatoes
- Boxed Meals like Hamburger Helper
- Soda Crackers
- Snack Crackers and Cookies
- Jiffy Cornbread Mix
- Cake, Frosting and Muffin Mixes
- Flour and Sugar
- Powdered Milk and Coffee Cream
- Drink Mixes like Lemonade
- Coffee
- Grocery store gift cards to buy fresh meat, fruit, milk, cheese, bread and frozen food

COMMUNITY CLOSET ITEMS

- Linens such as sheets, bedspreads, fleece throws, towels, washcloths and kitchen towels
- Kitchen items such as small appliances, pots, pans, serving dishes and cooking utensils
 - School supplies such as spiral notebooks, 3-ring binders and notebook filler paper
 - Laundry soap, Dish soap, liquid cleaning products, microfiber rags and Kleenex

I would like to give a financial gift to support Sunshine Ministries as they continue to serve our St. Louis neighbors in need during these challenging times.

- I want to support Sunshine Ministries with a gift of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____
- I want to partner with Sunshine Ministries with a new monthly gift of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____
- My gift by check is enclosed.
- Please charge my credit card Visa Mastercard American Express Discover
- Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____
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 You may also make your secure donation online at sunshineministries.org.
 To charge your gift by phone, call us at (314) 231-8209.



A higher standard.
A higher purpose.