

Western Oaks Christian Church Disciples Women Provide Comfort & Warmth to Area Foster Children

What does a gift of \$1,000, a dozen caring hearts, nimble fingers, fabric and time have in common? Beautiful handmade quilts for foster children.

The disciple Christian women's fellowship group at Western Oaks Christian Church, Oklahoma City, began making and donating several quilts in 2015 and 2016 for foster children serviced by Citizens Caring for Children. Citizens Caring for Children provides each new foster child a quilt on the first visit to the organization. Many times the children arrived at their organization with nothing. The handmade quilts provide comfort and something that remains theirs forever.

In 2017, the Western Oaks' women decided to make the foster quilt program their full-time project. Since then, they have provided quilts to all the children coming to the organization. They also give funds to assist the organization with other needs for the children including Christmas gifts.

This ministry is a true partnership of many as a resale shop in the city assists the quilters by providing their overage of denim jeans for quilt squares. The women also purchase sheets from the resale store and estate/garage sales to make quilt backs. Funds for these purchases come from individual members or their group funds. Often, fabric is donated to the group. After hearing about the quilt mission this year, the women were able to purchase new fabric from a quilter at a reduced cost. She also donated three quilts. As of November, the group has donated 547 quilts to foster children just this year and 2,276 quilts total.

Approximately 12 members work on the quilts year 'round. Three church members piece the quilt tops, three members back the quilts and several people, including a couple of husbands, help cut fabric squares and tack the quilts.

Last year the women's group applied for grant funding through the ODF Grants Program. The women wanted to purchase new fabric in bright, colorful children and youth friendly prints. The group received a \$1,000 grant last year and this year to purchase a variety of fabric.

"Every quilt your group provides is a treasure. When you received the grant and were able to purchase a wider variety of kid-friendly prints, the joy just increased as children received a quilt," wrote Lynne Roller, Executive Director of Citizens Caring for Children. "We can never thank you properly for this extraordinary gift of quilts. The children who receive them feel loved and cared for, and you have given them something to keep forever."

ODF GRANTS PROGRAM TOUCHING LIVES

When the ODF Grants Program was implemented in 2017, nine permanent endowment funds provided funding of more than \$50,000 to the program. This year, endowment distributions for the grants program totaled over \$96,000; together with additional contributions from anonymous donors, ODF's grants committee was pleased to award \$100,000 to support 54 programs and missions.

There are now 14 permanent endowment funds that benefit the grants program.*

Due to the vision of donors and closed churches who wished to share their philanthropic passions, the Foundation's Grants Program

continues to impact lives, touch many and make a difference in communities within Oklahoma and beyond.

It is our hope to see the Grants Program grow to fund more Disciples projects, outreach and missions today, tomorrow and well into the future.

Grant guidelines and applications are available on the Foundation's website at <https://okdfdn.org>. The deadline for submitting 2022 grant applications is February 15, 2022.

**More information on the grants program and the endowments funding the grants can be found on the ODF website at <https://okdfdn.org/grants>. If you or your church wishes to establish an endowment to benefit a mission or ministry through the grants program, please give us a call.*



Western Oaks members Linda & Max Patzack show a few of the quilts they helped make for foster children.



Completed quilts ready to donate to foster children.



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Christmas for Others Ministry Celebrates 51st Year Giving to Those in Need

Christmas for Others is celebrating its 51st year in December. This ministry began in 1971 at Midwest Boulevard Christian Church in Midwest City.

In the beginning, it served a few families in need within the Mid-Del and Choctaw-Nicoma Park School districts. Over the years, it has grown to support up to 72 families from the community with groceries, new shoes and socks as well as Bibles and Christmas gifts for the children. They have also provided needed items such as coats, bedding, diapers, pet food and other special items requested by a families.

Although Christmas for Others is a one-day event, it is a time-consuming, strategically planned yearlong project. Initial planning starts in February and fund-raising efforts are ongoing. In mid-October, letters are sent to the school counselors so they may identify families in need. Then, Christmas for Others volunteers meet with each interested family to determine specific needs. In early November, volunteers shop for requested items, Christmas presents and appropriate size clothing and shoes for the children. They also provide a list of items to church members who may want to gift particular things. Following Thanksgiving,

volunteers set up and sort donated items, groceries and the special items for each family.

The first or second Saturday in December, the Christmas for Others festive event is held. Volunteers dress up in Christmas sweaters and hats. Additionally, Santa and Mrs. Santa usually make an appearance. Prior to the pandemic, children were allowed to shop for (pick out) and wrap a special gift for their parent(s) or guardian. Due to COVID restrictions, volunteers now pick out the selections for the children and families. Used clothing, toys, books, household items, parent gift selections and gift-wrapping are all donated. Since the pandemic, the event has been held as a drive-thru event. Next year, hopes are to have the event return to in-person.

This is an annual community event which begins the Christmas season. Three churches have been actively involved in this ministry: Midwest Boulevard Christian Church (now closed), Nicoma Park Christian Church and First Christian Church, Midwest City. Additionally, four or more community organizations like the Boy Scouts, High School club members, and students from Rose State College often assist with the event.



(L to R) Regional Minister Pam Holt; Rev. Don Johnson, Central Christian Church, Enid; Julie Moler, FCC Midwest City; Holly Day, ODF and ODF Executive Director Eric Gray display donated shoes from Central Christian Church Enid for Christmas for Others.

This year and last year Central Christian Church, Enid, donated shoes and socks from their Foster Feet program to Christmas for Others. The socks they provided were [Bombas](#) socks which they received for their mission. For those who are unaware, Bombas' mission is to help those experiencing homelessness by donating a pair of socks for each pair purchased. Bombas' has donated more than 50 million items to more than 3,500 community organizations.

ODF has provided grant funds to the Christmas for Others mission for the past five years and the Foster Feet mission for the past two years. ODF Grant Funds and grantees are truly serving as the hands and feet of Christ.

 **Oklahoma Disciples**
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Mail this form and check to the Foundation at the address listed above. Gifts may also be made via credit/debit card or by checking account on our [website donation](#) page. Or use the Givelify mobile app to donate.

THANK YOU!

☐ I am interested in establishing a permanent endowment to benefit a heartfelt cause or church mission.

☐ I am interested in receiving information on making a bequest to the Foundation.

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☐ Disciple Club supporting ODF Operations.

☐ Named Endowment Fund as listed below:

(Please list fund name)

☐ Yes, I have included ODF in my estate planning. Please call me to discuss my wishes.

*Gifts to Oklahoma Disciples Foundation are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Gifts may be made to a specific Endowment Fund or to Disciple Club. A list of funds is available on the Foundation website at <https://okdfdn.org>. We are grateful for your gifts, support and prayers.