

# SMILE

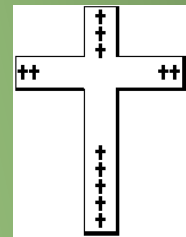
Thrift Store and Food Pantry

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## Community Impact Report 2023

Smile Makes  
Individual  
Lives Exciting



“If you have two coats,” he (Jesus) replied, “give one to the poor. If you have extra food, give it away to those who are hungry,” Luke 3:11 NIV

**Mission: To provide food, clothing and financial aid to those in our community in need. We are dedicated to treating everyone with dignity and respect and we welcome all clients without judgment.**

### **President's Message to our generous community!**

Thank you to everyone for making SMILE's 2023 our best on record. Our volunteers are our strength. Many of our volunteers are never seen because they are busy when we aren't open to the public, doing food and furniture pickups, stocking shelves with food and housewares, steaming and hanging clothing, organizing jewelry and books and testing electronics. A special shout-out to all 200+ volunteers - without you we wouldn't be able to operate!

It warms my heart to hear people say that the Thrift Store reminds them of a department store or how pleased they are with more selections of fresh fruits, vegetables and other condiments in the Food Pantry. With many government programs severely restricted this is very important for our clients.

Much of our increased success is thanks to our effort to promote SMILE and its services on social media. This year, we sponsored two community vendor craft fairs and several story times for kids as well as our annual activities such as an Easter egg hunt and visits with Mr. and Mrs. Claus. As a result, we have seen a significant increase in new customer participation. These and other special events have generated over 37,000 views on Facebook helping to spread the word in the community that we are here to help.

This increased awareness has generated more visits to our Thrift Store which has increased our revenue and subsequently the number of clients we can serve since 95% of our revenue comes from store sales and monetary donations from you. The remaining 5% is from grants to assist us with our mission of feeding those in need. A special thanks to our sponsoring churches and every individual that donates their clean, gently used items for re-sale, and for everyone who shops at SMILE. YOU make this outreach ministry possible.

As you review our annual report you will see over 15 separate programs to support the community and those in need. We thank ALL of you. God Bless.

Bill Brier





## THRIFT STORE

We thrive on our community donating their unwanted items which we can sell. Sales from the Thrift Store make up 80% of our revenue!

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to shop at our Thrift Store.



Men's

- Children of clients receive free clothing every quarter
- Children of clients receive free toys each Christmas
- Clothing and miscellaneous items are donated to Solomons Mission Center weekly



Women's



Jewelry and Accessories



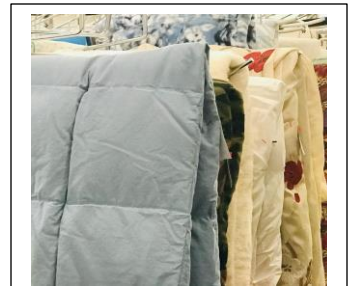
*"SMILE has saved me so much money over the years - especially with clothing for my children who grow out of them so quickly!"*

*"I recently went back to work and was so happy to find and be able to afford many name-brand high-end office clothes."*



Children's

Other departments include shoes, coats, electronics, housewares, books, furniture, fabric, arts and crafts, games and toys, cards, and linens.



## FOOD PANTRY

Anyone in need of food is welcome. We are open five days a week for anyone to come once per week for food. We offer additional food for holiday celebrations at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. Your Thift Store purchases help buy the purchased food!



- 23,000 people fed
- 307,000 lbs. of food distributed
- 670 families fed
- 79 Food Pantry volunteers
- 5100 volunteer hours

Did you know? 62% of people fed last year were children and seniors

Multiple fresh produce donations come from The Middleham Garden, Farming4Hunger, Annmarie Gardens and Chesapeake Bounty, and the numerous private supporters who help keep our shelves filled with variety!



*"Thank you for being here with food each week - this helps me stretch our tight budget. The fresh produce is wonderful!"*



Thank you to our community businesses and neighbors for on-going weekly food donations: Weis, Starbucks, WaWa and Asbury Residents

***"SMILE has been a fixture in the community since I was a kid, but since partnering with their food pantry this past year, I have seen even more what a blessing they are and what a positive impact their services have on the community.***

***Not only do they provide an abundance of resources for community members, but the volunteers take time to truly get to know each individual whether they are there to shop, pick up food, or receive other services." - Katie H. Calvert County Health Department***

## HOMELESS PREVENTION

In 2023, the homeless prevention program was blessed to serve 29 households and prevented 91 individuals from becoming homeless.

*A family member called in tears to say “Thank you for your assistance! Is there anything I can do to repay SMILE? I am willing to do whatever.”*



The homeless prevention program had its beginnings with a Calvert County grant. In 2016, the program became self-funding. Today the SMILE Homeless Prevention Program continues to provide monetary assistance to families who are in danger of becoming homeless.

*“THANK YOU SO MUCH!! I just received a message from my mortgage company that a payment was received. I am so grateful for this opportunity to get back on track again.”*

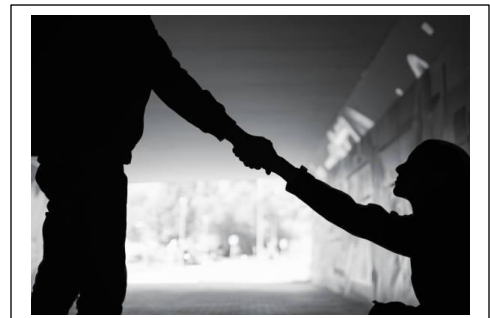
## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Clients can complete a separate application for assistance, which is reviewed by a case manager. The information is vetted, and appropriate funding is allocated.



- **52** families received assistance with rent and **4** families that did not qualify for the Homeless Program received mortgage assistance
- **96** families received assistance with their SMECO bills
- Families also received assistance with fuel oil/propane bills, as well as water bills

**8** individuals were able to start their journey to alcohol/drug free life through the Sober Gals or Sober Gents program





## Supporting our community in other ways

- Backpacks and school supplies for children of clients
- Medical equipment donations to ACTS - (A Community That Shares)
- Small toys for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes
- Craft supplies to Annmarie Gardens Art Lab
- Baby formula donated to CareNet Pregnancy Care Center
- Community Resource Fair – food boxes donated

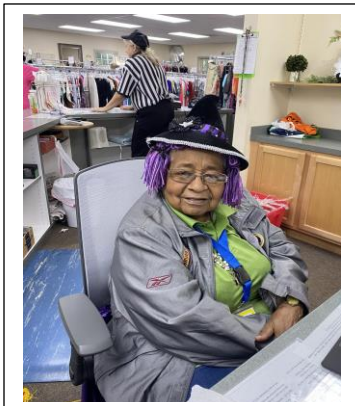


American Legion Christmas Day Dinner  
– 176 meals served



## Enriching the lives of those in our community

- Working with DHS (Department of Human Services) to provide volunteer opportunities to those awaiting full time employment
- Offering volunteer opportunities to those in need of community service hours
- Meaningful volunteer experiences in our Thrift Store and Food Pantry – join us!



## Recycling - Our efforts to keep items out of the landfill



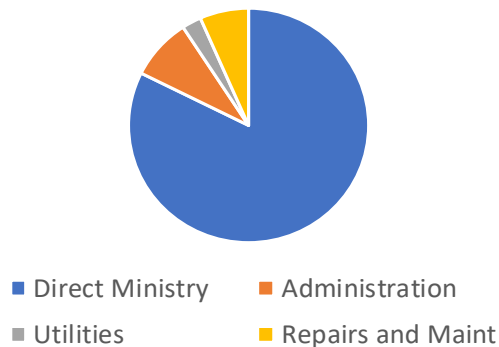
- Recycling center - Metals, glass and cardboard
- Recycling Company - 12,000 pounds a month of unusable clothing and textiles
- Bags to Benches - Plastic bags and wraps recycled into benches
- Books - donated to the library or recycled

## SMILE Finances

SMILE is a 100% volunteer organization. There is no payroll and all Thrift Store proceeds and donations go to directly support our local community outreach programs.

Direct Ministry 82%  
Administration 8%  
Utilities 3%  
Repairs and Maintenance 7%

SMILE Expenditures 2023



## Supporting our community through monetary donations

- Lifestyles - providing shelter for the homeless
- Christmas in April - home improvement for those in need. This group also gave back to us by rebuilding our pantry storage and new Toyland area!
- Friends of Calvert County – providing care for Seniors
- Providing free vendor tables at our Spring and Fall Vendor/Craft Fair

# SMILE

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Facebook: SMILE Thrift Shop