

# [ ] Servant's Heart

The newsletter of the Christian Service Center

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Poverty lives  
in the suburbs too



When we talk about neighbors in need, chances are you think of downtown urban areas and big cities. While this is true locally, with great need in Downtown Orlando, there is also a growing population of hungry and hurting families in smaller, more suburban communities such as West Orange County.

The Christian Service Center began serving West Orange families in 1978 at a small rented facility in Winter Garden. Then in 1996, thanks to the Dr. Phillips Foundation, the Center moved into its permanent Ocoee home, where it stands strong today. Here, three programs are available to serve the diverse needs of this community: (1) Daily Bread provides a nourishing noontime meal for anyone who is hungry; (2) FES provides emergency assistance to folks who have recently undergone a crisis and need help to stay on their feet; and (3) KidsFOCUS offers an after-school and summer program for families with children.

Thanks to a team of compassionate and hard working staff members, volunteers, churches and community partners, the Christian Service Center in West Orange has garnered a steadfast reputation for selfless service and Christ-like love.

The Christian Service Center in West Orange is located at 300 West Franklin Street in Ocoee, Florida. We always welcome new partners who bring new gifts and passion to the table. We invite you to come by for a tour and to learn a little more. Contact the Christian Service Center in West Orange at 407-656-6678 or visit [www.ChristianServiceCenter.org](http://www.ChristianServiceCenter.org).





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### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Years ago, when a group of churches from West Orange County asked us to help out, it was a challenging endeavor for the Christian Service Center. We were still a small and relatively young organization. But we moved forward, knowing that this was God's plan, with hope, with prayer and with remarkable people.

Since the day our doors opened, we have been blessed with the touch of devoted servants. The staff team led by Rosemary Wilsen and Anne Walding, and later joined by Karen Flynn, Linda Morgan and several others, has laid a solid foundation of compassion. Following their lead is a stellar volunteer core that has provided countless hours of ministry, service and smiles for families who need them. And then there are the precious men, women and children who come to us broken, in search of healing.

It is the people who come together at the Christian Service Center that really make this organization exceptional beyond words. I encourage you to remember the value of people, all people, and I invite you to join us as we serve together.

In His Love,

Robert F. Stuart  
 Executive Director

### Helping out is easy! Here are 10 great donation ideas!

- |                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Barbecue sauce           | 6. Men's new socks & underwear    |
| 2. Bottled water            | 7. Nonfat dry milk in envelopes   |
| 3. Cleaning supplies        | 8. Plastic knives, forks & spoons |
| 4. Diapers (sizes 4, 5 & 6) | 9. Reading glasses                |
| 5. Large canned vegetables  | 10. Rice & pasta                  |

For donation drop off locations and directions, please visit  
[www.ChristianServiceCenter.org/who\\_we\\_are.php](http://www.ChristianServiceCenter.org/who_we_are.php)

### PARTNERS



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
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## When you give to the Christian Service Center, WHO are you helping?

We wanted to provide you with just a couple snapshots of God's beloved children who come to the Christian Service Center for help and Hope.



### Wanda

A devoted housewife and mother, Wanda serves as a caretaker for her husband of 30 years and her six children (ages 10, 12, 16, 17, 18 and 20). Wanda's husband used to work in construction and has been looking for work for several years now. Wanda doesn't have that option, as she explained, "When you have a house full of children to take care of and medical issues, you just don't have any time for work."

A few weeks ago, Wanda discovered that her body is battling cancer in her kidney and her skull. A strong and determined woman, Wanda copes as well as she can given her circumstances. Sometimes, however, she needs to reach out for help. And that is where the Christian Service Center comes in.

The Christian Service Center provides Wanda with groceries and hot meals for her family when she can't afford to cook. She has been coming here for over 15 years. "I know when I come here, I will be treated really nice. They care about me here – like family. They do everything they can to help people who need it. I think God uses the Christian Service Center to provide an escape from all those hard things in life."



### Elene

Having grown up and lived in Winter Garden for 67 years, Elene has enjoyed a full and stable life here, filled with special memories and relationships. She worked hard for years at Disney and as a daycare provider. She was able to purchase her home, her car and provide for her disabled grandson, who lives with her.

As Elene enters retirement, however, finances have become tight. Social security provides her with \$700 a month that hardly covers her bills. "I can just barely pay my water, light, insurance, phone, medical and taxes in order to live and that doesn't even consider gas, clothing and food. There is nothing left!"

Elene began coming to the Christian Service Center last November for help with food, clothing and a couple hot meals each week. "I appreciate this place because without it, I truly don't know how I would make it." Elene extends the ministry of the Christian Service Center to those in her neighborhood who might need help. As the driver of "the neighborhood car," Elene selflessly drives her neighbors to the Christian Service Center so they can all share the same blessings that she receives.



### Chrissy

Chrissy labored as a maid for ten years before acquiring a disability that prevented her from working any longer. During the same time she was dismissed from the workforce, Chrissy's husband unexpectedly lost his job of 18 years. The couple was evicted from their home and forced into homelessness.

"We had to live in the woods for several months. It's not fun living outside, especially when it rains. It's scary when the lightning strikes and you can't go anywhere to get away from it. And at night, there is no light. You cannot see anything and you just have to pray the crazy people leave you alone."

After months of perseverance, Chrissy's husband was offered a job through a contact he made panhandling. They were recently able to move into a trailer. "A home is great but we couldn't survive day to day if it weren't for the Christian Service Center. They help out with food, blankets and a lot of prayer. They opened their arms to me when no one else would. They know I have low blood sugar and they look out for the foods I need. If it weren't for them I wouldn't eat every day."

## Volunteer Spotlight: Kathleen Bean

By Anne Walding



Kathleen Bean joined her friends Anna and Edith for a trip to the Christian Service Center so that Edith could show off her beautiful new hat. This chance trip turned into 16 years of volunteer service, after it was suggested that the women come back and help. The Christian Service Center's message of hope touched the heart of Kathleen, who has been a guardian angel ever since.

Born in Abbeville, Georgia, Kathleen moved to Florida in 1928. She has lived in West Orange for 72 years and has been volunteering with the Christian Service Center since 1994. Kathleen worked for United Telephone Co. for twenty-five years and was married for fifty-two years to her late husband, Bud. She has two sons, Bill and Jimmy.

A devoted volunteer, Kathleen comes in early three days every week to prepare a gourmet meal, not knowing how many guests she will be serving each day. She prepares each plate with love and care and ensures that there is always enough food for everyone who is hungry. Her ability to do this is truly a gift.

When asked why she continues to help, Kathleen attributes her selfless service to the love she has for her Lord; for He has blessed her with a young heart and good health.

Kathleen's genuine compassion is made apparent through her interactions with both Christian Service Center clients and fellow volunteers. She knows almost everyone in the area by name and if she doesn't know you, she knows your parents or grandparents. You are always made to feel special in the eyes of Kathleen. There are not words to show our love and appreciation for all that she has done and continues to do for this place.

*We thank you Kathleen for your dedication, kind heart, and numerous meals packed with love.*



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[www.ChristianServiceCenter.org](http://www.ChristianServiceCenter.org)



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