

2022

FFC

Christmas  
Catalog



First Federated  
Church of Peoria

3601 N Sheridan Road  
Peoria IL 61604

“...For I was hungry  
And you gave me food,  
I was thirsty  
And you gave me drink,  
I was a stranger  
And you welcomed me,  
I was naked  
And you clothed me,  
I was sick and you visited me,  
I was in prison,  
And you came to me.”

*Matthew 25: 37-39*

First Federated Church of Peoria, Illinois

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A Message from the  
FFC Mission Committee

*Peace On Earth, Good Will To All*

You hold a special catalog that can help you experience the true meaning of Christmas. Almost two hundred years ago Charles Dickens wrote in his classic *A Christmas Carol*, *"A few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat, drink and means of warmth. We choose this time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices"*.

As we look among our friends and family, we must surely feel blessed for God's gifts in our lives. Luke 12:48 tells us *"To whom much is given, much will be required"*.

Unfortunately, even in our community and certainly around the world, others have not been as blessed. We can share some of our good fortunes by assisting others in the Peoria community who need a helping hand, thus rekindling their light and ours.

2 Corinthians 9:7 tells us *"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

## **Additional Information**

First Federated's Christmas Catalog offers one of many ways for our members to "live their faith" by financially supporting agencies serving the less fortunate. Many of you also give of your time, and to you, we offer a heartfelt "thank you".

Mental health issues, especially among children, and food insecurity remain our community's most significant areas of concern. Therefore, your Mission Committee selected ten agencies with specific programs targeting these areas.

### **This is how the Christmas Special Offering works:**

Read through the catalog descriptions, decide which organization(s) you want to support, place your check in the envelope provided, and on the insert of the envelope, check the box for your desired agency(s). You may choose any number of agencies, up to 10. If you don't specify a recipient(s), your donation is equally divided among all 10.

You may also contribute via these options:

- Via the church's website [www.ffcpeoria.com](http://www.ffcpeoria.com), or
- Via the QR code on this page (access the church website from your phone).

If you make your contribution electronically, you must also email Cecelia ([cwalter@ffcpeoria.org](mailto:cwalter@ffcpeoria.org)) with a list of agencies you are supporting. If no email is received, your contribution is allocated (equally) among all 10 agencies.



**QR Code for  
FFC GIVE Page**

The Mission Committee recognizes that a favorite agency of yours may not be one of the 10 agencies listed. In that case, please write the agency name on your contribution form. We will make sure they receive your donation.

### **Instructions for electronic payments**

Go to [www.ffcpeoria.org](http://www.ffcpeoria.org) and select the "Give" button at the top of the page. Then, scroll down near the bottom of the page and select the "Give Online" button. You will be forwarded to FFC's PayPal option.

To access the church's website via the QR code with your iPhone's photo app, frame the QR code and wait a moment. Then, press the link to [ffcpeoria.org](http://ffcpeoria.org).

If you need assistance with making an electronic payment, reach out to Theresa Pfeifer at [theresa.pfeiffer@eyefinity.com](mailto:theresa.pfeiffer@eyefinity.com) or 309.229.7304

# Center for Prevention of Abuse

Focus: Mental Health

The Children's Therapy Program at the Center for Prevention of Abuse (CFPA) provides therapeutic services for children exhibiting mental health and trauma symptoms. These symptoms may be due to either exposure or experiencing domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Between July 2021 and June 2022, CFPA provided therapy to over 300 children who had witnessed or experienced sexual assault or domestic violence. Compared to the previous year, child victims served increased by 14%.

Due to trauma exposure, children often experience issues like aggression, sleep difficulties, anxiety, extreme fear, physical ailments, and poor academic performance. CFPA's master's level therapists provide early intervention and facilitate healing by helping children explore angry and confused feelings through nurturing and non-threatening therapeutic activities.

Children learn coping strategies, emotion management, and non-violent life skills as they begin to heal. Our children's therapists use multiple therapy techniques that are especially helpful for younger children who have difficulty talking about traumatic events or confusing feelings. Children ages infant-17 benefit from our **Safe from the Start and Children's Therapy** programs.

When children feel safe and protected, they can learn new coping mechanisms. In addition, access to regular support from specially trained therapists makes it more likely that they will have healthy relationships, experience fewer physical symptoms, perform better in school and be more successful in the workplace and community as they mature.

We are grateful for your help in building a safe and peaceful community!

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

# Dream Center Peoria

Focus: Food and Housing Insecurity

The Dream Center Peoria has served local families living in poverty with Christ-like love, dignity, compassion, and purpose since 2002. Post-Covid, we are seeing a record number of homeless mothers and children in our shelter. Consider that:

- *Peoria has a 19.4% poverty rate versus a national average of 11.8%.*

First Federated and 30+ other churches are helping us with the following:

**DCP Housing** is the only 24/7 emergency shelter in Peoria. Our capacity is 140, met in August 2022. With your help all shelter guests have a safe place to stay. In addition we have provided over 60,000 meals this year. The average age in our homeless shelter is nine.

**DCP Students** support Peoria youth with academic assistance and life skills. After-school tutoring and hands-on training, such as screen printing, coffee roasting, small engine repair, etc., are all part of our lineup. In addition, each student is provided transportation to and from the Center and a meal before departing.

**DCP Cares** supports over 900 people monthly with supplies from our Hope Store (free clothing and housewares) and Career Center (free work clothes and interview attire).

In July, our **Backpack Peoria** distributed 2,000 packs to area students. Our **Promise of Hope** dress giveaway allowed hundreds of local young women to attend their prom with dignity.

**DCP Mobile** includes a four-vehicle fleet serving those in the 309 Area Code who need help on location. Our newest ministry includes a mobile barbershop, a laundry truck, a shower truck, and a food truck.

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

# FamilyCore

## Family School Liaisons and Single Parents Program

Focus: Mental Health

Student needs are not always identifiable. How do you tell if children come to school hungry or are having trouble at home? FamilyCore **Family School Liaisons** (FSL) are trained to recognize behavioral, social, and emotional stressors. They provide crisis intervention, individual or group life-and-social skills training, home visits, classroom observations, and basic needs (school uniforms, food, school supplies). They help students regulate their feelings and offer a trusted adult to confide in. The goal is to meet children's social and emotional needs, so they are ready to learn. FSLs are in nineteen schools across the Peoria and Tazewell counties and serve over 3,000 students annually.

Parent testimonial: "I've seen a big change in my child, and she has a great bond with her liaison."

Teacher testimonial: "I cannot imagine working without our FSL support. They are an important part of the lives of our at-risk students and in preventing others from falling into the risks that greatly affect academic success."

It is well documented that, as a population, single parents face additional challenges to the stability of their family. For example, single-headed households may be at increased risk for food and housing insecurity, financial difficulties and may have problems accessing resources. In addition, children in these households may be at greater risk for school disruptions.

The **Multi-Services for Single Parents** (MSSP) Program supports single parents. This program helps clients by assisting them in accessing community resources, building a stable home environment, and reinforcing positive parenting.

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

[www.familycore.org/single-parent-program](http://www.familycore.org/single-parent-program)

# Hult Center for Healthy Living

Focus: Mental Health

Hult Center for Healthy Living provides programs and services to improve the community's most significant health concerns. This year, we have seen a steep increase in mental health concerns. Specifically, anxiety, depression, and suicide have worsened, and we have yet to see the full effects that the pandemic has caused.

How has the Hult Center responded to this? While we still provide the traditional classroom and community-based education and training we always have, our team has expanded to incorporate suicide prevention and social-emotional learning at much earlier ages.

Social-emotional learning provides youth as young as pre-kindergarten with coping and resiliency skills. Research continues to demonstrate that these skills are key to managing adversity that will be present later in life. Our classroom-based social-emotional programs serve thousands of students each year.

The Hult Center's team works to equip medical providers, nurses, faith-based groups, counselors, and others who reach a high number of youth and adults to identify mental health warning signs and get at-risk persons to help.

Your contribution will support these ongoing mental health and suicide prevention programs. Thank you for your consideration in helping Hult Center for Healthy Living to "empower people to live healthier lives."

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



# Midwest Food Bank

Focus: Food Insecurity

As a faith-based organization, Midwest Food Bank's (MFB) mission is to share the love of Christ by alleviating hunger and malnutrition locally and throughout the world and providing disaster relief -- all without discrimination.

MFB'S four core programs are:

- **Food for Nonprofit Partners** (food pantries, soup kitchens, residential programs, and child feeding programs),
- **Disaster relief** in concert with The Salvation Army and other partners,
- **Tender Mercies**, MFB's nutritious bagged meal of rice, beans, and soy protein, and
- **Hope Packs**, MFB's student feeding program that provides food-insecure children with supplemental weekend food.

MFB provides industry-leading food relief to those in need while feeding them spiritually. MFB has ten US and two international locations and is committed to supporting the Peoria community despite today's challenges of:

- 25% increase in food demand
- 58% increase in overall food purchasing costs
- 26% increase in fuel and transportation costs

MFB is on track to distribute over \$30 million of food to 330+ nonprofit partner agencies in 2022, but we need your help. With your financial support, the diligence of MFB staff, and collaboration with volunteers, we can continue to do our best and trust that God will do the rest.

[www.midwestfoodbank.org/locations/peoria-il](http://www.midwestfoodbank.org/locations/peoria-il)

# Neighborhood House

Focus: Food Insecurity

Food insecurity dramatically increased during the pandemic and has grown with the skyrocketing cost of living. Neighborhood House is committed to supporting our community through all life stages and is mission-focused on ensuring no one goes hungry. We serve over 1,000 local homebound senior citizens annually in our **Meals on Wheels** program throughout Peoria & Tazewell counties.

When the school day stops, that shouldn't mean meals stop too. During the state-mandated school closures, we quickly shifted our youth programs to a meal delivery service. With schools back in session, Neighborhood House welcomes our youth back to our building and provides children with a safe place while offering a nutritious meal and educational support. In addition, we support children and families year-round with **Summer and After School Programs**

Neighborhood House's **food pantry** saw incredible growth during the pandemic. What used to be one of our smallest programs has quickly become one of our largest. We are proud to host our pantry twice monthly and Sunday Meals each week to support the food insecurity needs of the community.

With your support, Neighborhood House will continue striving to meet the community's growing needs.

## Meals on Wheels

Senior Citizen's Meals for a Month

\$11

Senior Citizen's Meals for Six Months

\$650

## Critters Meals on Wheels

Senior Citizen's Pet for a Month

\$42

Senior Citizen's Pet for Six Months

\$250

## Food Pantry

One Food Pantry Box

\$100

# Paws Giving Independence

Focus: Mental Health

Paws Giving Independence **trains service dogs** for individuals with disabilities, facility dogs (in schools and centers), and support dogs who help law enforcement. Our dogs help children and adults struggling with anxiety, depression, trauma, behavioral disorders, mobility, or medical challenges.

This year, two students that have had seizures received service dogs. Due to their training, the dogs recognize a seizure and hit a button to let the parents know an episode is occurring. In addition, due to the calming impact of the dogs, we have seen the number of seizures reduced. Our two students have been able to resume normal activities (for example: attend prom, take a walk) because they had the support of their dogs. The parents feel more secure giving their children increased independence.

This year we placed our first courthouse dog with the Peoria County State's Attorney. Kiwi works with prosecutors who help child victims and witnesses. Kiwi is brought into the advocacy center while statements are taken and is allowed in the courtroom/witness stand when a child testifies. Kiwi helps to calm children during this process.

PGI is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. Dogs are placed free to recipients. Donations help cover the cost of the dogs in training (veterinarians, medications, collars, harnesses). Our Facebook page has individual stories about our dogs and Kiwi's swearing-in ceremony.

We thank your congregation for supporting us in carrying out our mission.

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

# Peoria Grown

Focus: Food Insecurity

Peoria Grown provides fresh foods to underserved populations. Our long-term goal is to see a decrease in serious health issues in our community in lower-income populations.

We address food insecurity issues in Peoria through improved coordination of resources. We provide access to affordable, healthy food, emphasizing fresh produce. In addition, we provide education on nutrition and making healthy food choices. We believe everyone should have access to affordable, healthy food and that education is the key to self-sufficiency and improved community wellness. Our work focuses on three core programs:

**Market 309** (located at Logan Recreation Center) offers fresh produce at a convenient location. Produce is cheaper than at grocery stores.

**Fruit Stands** are located at local community centers and nonprofit agencies throughout Peoria. Participants receive fresh fruits and healthy snacks throughout the day at no charge.

**Cooking and Wellness** classes led by local dietitians and medical professionals provide our participants with high-level cooking skills. Participants take home a bag of ingredients for the recipes used in the class.

Below is an example of the cost and what your contributions will purchase:

\$ 90 = covers materials to build a fruit stand

\$100 = replenishes the stock of one of our fruit stands

\$150 = allows dietitians to buy supplies/ ingredients for cooking classes

# South Side Mission

Focus: Food Insecurity

*Peoria's 61605 zip code is among the U.S. Census data's 100 poorest ZIP codes in the country.*

South Side Mission is in the heart of 61605, where hope and food are often in short supply. In a Christian setting, South Side Mission assists with both.

The Mission's main building includes a large chapel, two commercial kitchens, and several attached multi-purpose rooms. It employs a full-time chef who oversees the soup kitchen and is open Monday through Friday to serve about 150 free lunch meals per week.

The chef also operates a **Culinary Arts class** four times a year. Upon completing the 12-week course, graduates have better employment opportunities and can share healthy eating strategies with family and friends. The Mission also collaborates with a local program that provides seasonal plots for community gardening.

The Mission added the **Kitchen Connected Life Skills** program with a Youth Culinary segment. Fifty-one students are enrolled in the **Greater Academic Progress** after-school program -- a tremendous increase from five students last year.

South Side Mission receives a small amount of State funding for use in its youth programming but no United Way funding. The well-known Thanksgiving and Christmas meal ministry prepares and delivers over 2,700 meals to those in need. The Mission relies on the generosity of local churches, individuals, and businesses committed to spreading the word of God. The Mission has been serving those in need since 1925.

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

# UnityPlace: Young Minds Project

Focus: Mental Health

UnityPoint Health – UnityPlace is committed to transforming the **delivery of youth mental health and addiction services** in our community. It will be where kids and their families can access life-changing care to support their well-being. With an expected opening in 2023, the former Heddington Oaks facility will become a one-stop location for comprehensive behavioral health care with an expanded number of inpatient beds and additional outpatient services.

The child and adolescent center will house a full continuum of services, including physician offices, counseling, crisis assessment, intensive outpatient therapy, inpatient care, and additional collaborative services. In addition, youth and their families will experience a therapeutic healing environment, with indoor and outdoor recreational and experiential spaces to provide expressive therapies such as music and art therapy. These programs are essential to help kids be kids during their inpatient stay or outpatient visits.

In addition to youth services, the care at UnityPlace extends to a full range of substance use disorder services for adults, including inpatient, residential, outpatient, and medication-assisted recovery and outpatient services for adolescents. The dedicated team comprises more than 600 experts in psychiatry, behavioral health, and addiction medicine, including providers, nurses, counselors, and certified and trained professionals.

Your contributions will support the purchase of supplies for youth therapy and recreation programs, including music and art therapy. These expressive programs are a kid favorite, providing a healthy outlet for youth to share their creativity, emotions, and goals.

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

# Hurricane Ian and Ukrainian Relief

## Extraordinary Events

Community needs are significant. Your Mission Committee encourages you to concentrate your Christmas Catalog giving on the focus areas of food insecurity and mental health.

And yet, given the extraordinary events of 2022, some members may feel a calling to do more for our brothers and sisters in Florida and Ukraine. If you are so inclined, the Mission Committee will forward any contributions received equally to the disaster relief funds of each denomination.

*May the joy and wonder of this  
holiday season be with you,  
your family, and your friends.*

## Your 2022 Missions Committee

Marylee Bales	Cheryl Resnick
Karen Calder	Jim Rosenbaum
Karen Henderson	Linda Sahn
Greg Johnston	Sally Stone
Theresa Pfeiffer	Janet Vaughn

Rob Hackett - Moderator



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Change Service Requested