

Clothes Line / 2023 Reflections & Updates

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The Clothes Line | Vol. 1 2024

Reflections on 2023

This past year challenged the Luke's Closet team and confirmed the need for what we do more than ever. We balanced record growth alongside leadership transitions; it stretched us but also filled our hearts as we continued to see and hear the importance Luke's Closet plays in supporting families with children on the front-lines of trauma.

In 2023, we nearly doubled the number of kiddos we served with a jump from 350 in 2022 to 688 in



2023. Our August and November Shop & Eat events each had over 110 kiddos. St. Luke's was buzzing with energy from kiddos, families, and volunteers on those days. In the shadows of those busy days, are the invisible moments where volunteers quietly, but impactfully, continue to serve foster/kinship kiddos.



The sorting team diligently looks through every item of clothing donated to Luke's Closet to ensure it meets the quality, style, and appropriateness needs of our kiddos. The laundry team provides a fresh wash for clothes most needing it. Inventory Clerks hang clothing and keep the closets organized making the most of space and the ever-changing inventory. A fulfillment volunteer is on call for one week at a time responding to emergency needs and fulfilling online requests. They thoughtfully pack bags for kiddos and pass them to a delivery volunteer who ensures the kiddos receive the clothing as quickly as possible.

And there are so many others who make Luke's Closet function. If you are interested in new or additional ways to support foster/kinship/adoptive families, we are looking for a: Social Media Coordinator, Event Coordinator, Tech Support and Clothing Drive Coordinator. Volunteering at our Shop & Eat events is another way to help our families. Please contact [our communications coordinator](#) for more information about each role.

>>> Next Shop & Eat: April 13, 2024 / 9am - 1pm

The volunteer sign up will be published in early March. If you're not already on our Shop & Eat volunteer list and would like to receive this sign-up, please email lukesclosetsignup@gmail.com.

New Faces to the Luke's Closet Leadership Team

At the end of 2023, Susan Sweitzer (left), a founding mother of Luke's Closet, stepped down from her leadership role. Susan's contributions cannot be



overstated. She strove to ensure we understood the unique needs of foster and kinship families and kept us connected to our many community partners as Outreach Coordinator. We will greatly miss her wise and generous insights but send her off with grateful hearts for her time with us. Faye Reber steps in for Susan. In addition to being a foster parent, Faye has a wealth of experience with event planning and non-for-profit leadership which will be invaluable. We

thank Susan for connecting us with Faye and ensuring Luke's Closet can continue to best serve our area foster/kinship families.

Also joining our leadership team is Lisa Carey, a long-time Luke's Closet volunteer. Lisa has helped at Shop & Eat events and is a dedicated fulfillment volunteer. Recently, she's taken on the role of Shopper, scouring clearance sales and using coupons and promos to help fill the gaps in our inventory ensuring every dollar donated to Luke's Closet is used wisely. Lisa joins our team after Betsy Bush, communications coordinator, stepped down earlier in 2023 to pursue a professional path. Betsy's heart-filled voice of Luke's Closet was a beautiful gift to us all.

Key Needs -> Boys & Men's Athletic Pants

Why does Luke's Closet always need athletic pants?

- **PREFERRED:** Athletic-style clothing is, by far, the most requested type of clothing for boys.
- **FIT:** Athletic pants are more forgiving for all body shapes. It is difficult to pack jeans for another person.
- **DONATIONS:** We don't receive enough donations of gently-used boys and men's pants to meet the demand. For those of us with boys, we know pants often end up with holes in the knees! We especially need men's medium to XXL athletic pants which are sizes teens typically don't grow out of, so our donations are limited, again.



We always welcome new or nearly new clothing, infant through teenage-styled adult 3XL. [Shop our Amazon Wish List.](#)

Clothing Drives

To help keep our closet stocked, Luke's Closet loves to partner with organizations willing to host clothing drives. We supply the boxes, flyers and social media graphics. You place the boxes and share the information with your team/group/school/workplace. If you're part of an organization interested in giving back to the community in this way, please contact us at drives4lukescloset@gmail.com.



Special Thank You

CLOTHING DRIVES:

- Madtown Juniors Volleyball Club hosted their second clothing drive for Luke's Closet and it was another huge success with three large carloads of donations.
- Burn Boot Camp Middleton helped kiddos have warm fingers and toes with their collection of socks and mittens.
- Spine & Wellness Madison held a December clothing drive which provided new socks and gently-used clothing.
- Greg and Sandy O'Dell who donated hundreds of new pajamas, for the 4th year in a row, with help of family, friends, neighbors and their church community.

GRANTS:

- Ironman Foundation
- Madison Investment Advisors
- RW Baird Foundation
- Widen Foundation

We're incredibly thankful for these community partnerships! If you are part of a grant-giving organization, please consider contacting Kirsten Pedersen, Luke's Closet co-chair at kirstenpedersen_30@msn.com.

**LEARN MORE
ABOUT LUKE'S
CLOSET**

- [Donating](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [2023 Annual Report](#)
- [Luke's Closet In the News](#)

Mission Statement: To serve and support foster, kinship and adoptive families residing in Dane County by providing free, high-quality clothing. Clothing is made available quickly and is easily accessible.

Welcome Statement: Luke's Closet welcomes all children (0-18 years old) and their caregivers in foster, kinship and adoptive care in Dane County, Wisconsin regardless of race, cultural heritage, national origin, marital status, religion, political beliefs, abilities/disabilities, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Our thanks to [St. Luke's Lutheran Church](#) for housing and supporting Luke's Closet.



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