

February 2, 2024

MIDWEST

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MISSION

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SENDING HOPE AND EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD AND AROUND THE CORNER

JOY through Trials

Getting through the "Winter Blahs"



For many of us, the new year is a fresh start; a clean slate; a chance to really make our lives better for the coming year. We have high expectations for what the new year will bring, with resolutions, and goals, and planning, and excitement.

But if you're anything like many of us at Midwest Mission, 2024 has not been the fresh start you hoped for. Expectations were crushed, goals were set aside, and planning came to a halt. The "winter blahs" have set in.

We planned to jump into 2024 on fire for what God would be doing with this ministry. The staff had a few weeks off to rejuvenate and refresh, and as the new year neared, we were ready to get back on the wagon, full speed ahead.

But then, the new year hit, and the wagon just *would. not. go.*

We had several cases of Covid among the staff, several teams had to cancel due to sickness, and the bitter cold weather and icy storms closed our doors for a few days. Then a few staff members were dealing with health issues, the water heater broke in the dorm, and just about every vehicle on our campus wouldn't start after the cold weather hit.

Was the wagon was stuck in reverse?

Maybe you're feeling similar. You were ready and gearing up to hit the ground running, but it seems that some obstacle is in your way every step you take.

It reminds me of James 1:2-4 — "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Consider it *pure joy*. Pure joy is cultivated beyond our human capabilities, beyond our happiness, success, and wishes coming true. Pure joy is *holy*, set apart from what is normal because it deeply contradicts our society's depiction of joy. It comes from a heavenly perspective, shifted by the Spirit, that brings light to the world in good and bad situations.

So many of the people we serve are constantly going through heavy trials. Yet, according to the feedback and reports and pictures we receive, they seem to hold onto joy that comes from Jesus.

So consider it pure joy, the trials you faced in January, and trials to come. Because we have a heavenly Father we can rely on through the good, the bad, and the ugly. Let Him use you, as you hold onto the hope we have in Jesus — may that bring all the joy you need to persevere through the hardest times.

So what do you do when you're in the *winter blahs* and you are in need of JOY?

1. **Get in the Word!** Pour over His words, and let Him speak to you through the pages of Scripture. Spend time with Him, share your trials and burdens, and ask Him for heavenly help to persevere.
2. **Unite with one another.** One of the best ways to combat the *winter blahs* is to be with your community. We are made for community, yet it can be so easy to be apart (especially when it's so cold outside!). But make an effort to join together - and be on the lookout for those who might not be able to go to you.
3. **Serve.** Sometimes to get through the trials of our own life, we have to focus on the good we can do for others. Helping others, especially alongside our community, is a great cure for the *winter blahs*. Serving together brings an *unexplainable, abundant JOY* that brightens the darkest day. Focusing on someone else, serving the least of these (Matthew 25:40), will further the Kingdom of God, and bring *pure JOY* for the one who is serving.

So how can you serve right where you are?

- Make Kits at home - buy or collect supplies and put them together with a group of friends. (midwestmission.org/kits)
- Call around for medical supply donations - call local friends, hospitals, nursing homes, VFWs, American Legions, and other medical facilities to see if they have medical equipment they would donate to Midwest Mission. Collect it, and bring it to us or a Permanent Collection Site near you. (midwestmission.org/collect-donate)
- Collect other items we need - bikes, sewing machines, kit items, you name it! We are always in need of supplies to send to make a difference around the world and around the corner.

- Make handmade items. We have a plethora of patterns and instructions for handmade items we send internationally. (midwestmission.org/patterns)

As we enter into February, we are holding onto the hope that comes from Jesus to help us persevere through any trials ahead, because we know He has great things in store for His Kingdom. We pray for peace and *pure JOY* through whatever comes your way, as well.

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.” James 1:17-18



GOD IS ON THE MOVE

MIDWEST MISSION
Sowing Hope & Empowerment



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February Church Bulletin Insert

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CURRENT *Needs*

You can purchase these items at your local store and take them to Midwest Mission or a Collection Site near you. You can also buy items online and have them shipped right to Midwest Mission.

Lotion

8-10 oz. bottles

[click here to purchase online](#)

Diaper Ointment

2 oz. (we do not accept A+D brand)

[click here to purchase online](#)

Adult Bikes

In good, working condition.

2024 KIT AND PROJECT CHANGES

- 1. BIRTHING KIT HAS BEEN REMOVED**
- 2. PERSONAL DIGNITY KIT CHANGES**
ADD 8-10 OZ LOTION, REMOVE RAZOR
- 3. COVER THEM WITH LOVE QUILT SIZE CHANGE**
42" X 72"



We will continue to accept other sizes of quilts, but our priority is 42"x72" to meet our partners' needs.

Prayers to Lift Up

This week, pray for anyone who is feeling the "winter blahs." Pray that God will give all of us

peace and comfort, and also that we will have unexplainable joy through our trials.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

James 1:2-4

Midwest Mission Weekly Projects Work of the Mission Volunteers

Work Done

- Bike Shop
- Sewing Machine Repair Shop
- Desk Shop
- 870 Personal Dignity Kits
- 140 UMCOR Menstrual Hygiene Kits
- 60 Layette Kits
- Rice Meal Prep
- Counting Items in Inventory
- Cleaning

Disbursements

- **St. Martin de Porres, Springfield, IL : Coffee Filters, Cleaning Supplies, Hygiene Supplies, Value: \$1,778.00**
- **Heartland House, Springfield, IL: UMCOR Hygiene Kits, UMCOR Toothpaste, Value: \$993.60**
- **District Lions Club, Reed City, MI: UMCOR Hygiene Kits, UMCOR Menstrual Kits, UMCOR Toothpaste, Value: \$3,921.76**
- **CICIM, Decatur, IL: Furniture, Assorted Towels, Cloths, Sheets, Pillows, Pillowcases, Value: \$5,520.00**
- **Urban Bicycle Food Ministries, Des Moines, IA: Woven sleeping mats, Value; \$1,500.00**

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Thank you!

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[Link to Share the Midwest Mission Newsletter](#)

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Need a Saturday option for team volunteering or assistance in booking? Contact **Pat Wright** at pat@midwestmission.org or 217-697-4063

Click below to check calendar openings and to reserve your spots.

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2025 Volunteer Calendar is open for dorm reservations!

Go to our [Reservation Calendar](#), log in, reserve your rooms, and submit payment for your Non-refundable Reservation Fee via credit card or electronic check. We will email you the Access Code to reserve Volunteer Shifts for your team. You must complete this step for your team to volunteer at Midwest Mission.

For local teams and individuals: Volunteer Shifts will only be available 3 months ahead of time. For example, December 1, 2023 you will be able to reserve Volunteer Shifts for March of 2024.

Thank you for your patience as we try to improve the reservation experience for both local teams and those staying in the dorm.

Volunteers at Work

January 29 - February 2, 2024

Volunteer Leaders



Ron and Sharon Monroe
Glen Carbon, IL

Volunteer Teams



First UMC
Baraboo, WI



Grace UMC
Jacksonville, IL



UMC
Avon, IN





We are so grateful for all our local and regular volunteers, and the time they give towards volunteering at Midwest Mission. We appreciate their passion and dedication to the ministry!

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[Visit our website](#)

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February 9, 2024

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SENDING HOPE AND EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD AND AROUND THE CORNER

What's Your "Why"?



We all have a reason for why we are drawn to service, to mission, to action.

Over the years, volunteers have walked through the doors of Midwest Mission with all kinds of “whys” — why they chose to walk in, why they serve, why they have a smile on their face. When we are blessed to hear their stories, we are overcome with gratitude that God can use all of us, in all walks of life, in everything we’ve gone through, and turn it for His good.

We all have a reason why we started serving.

Maybe we are moved by the good work we see being done in the world and want to join in, or maybe our hearts break for what breaks God’s heart and want to help be the solution. For some of us, we ourselves have received help in desperate times, and want to return the favor. For others of us, we have experienced the pain and

trauma of loss or hardship, and want to prevent it for others.

This was the case for Carolyn (pictured left).

Carolyn comes to Midwest Mission with Monticello UMC in Monticello, Illinois. They are a regular group, serving with us almost every month. Beyond that, Carolyn is always knitting sweaters and other handmade items for Midwest Mission. Intrigued by the close proximity to her home, and the lack of a need to mail the items herself, she began serving with Midwest Mission — “No more postage expense. More money for yarn,” she noted with a bright smile and an excitement in her voice.

When Carolyn comes in, she is always dressed in handmade clothes she’s knitted or sewn herself. Her love for making creations was evident, and her love for serving people around the world is brightly shown in her smile and heart. But, we didn’t know the reason “why” she started it all, until she sent us a letter.

The following is an excerpt (with her permission):

“My son was going on a tour to Kenya. I begged him to take me with him. Much to my delight, he let me join the tour. It was a wonderful trip. I saw elephants, giraffes, water buffalo, lions, leopards, and a village for women who had been abused. The women were there with their children. All were making a new life for themselves. They were very proud! They had a school! It was the only school in the area.

“We got to visit the school. Even though the school was a simple structure with few resources, the students were happy and glad to see us. Their voices were music to our ears as they joyfully sang for us. I was especially drawn to an elementary boy whose eyes sparkled as he sang...

“Even though Kenya is on the equator it gets cold there. When I was in Kenya, early in the morning, I would put on two pairs of pants, a long sleeved shirt, and a jacket. During the day, I would peel off layers. Because of my experience, I could see some of the children were suffering with the extra stress of being cold.

“So, I knit sweaters for children, I always knit size 8 sweaters. That was the size my son was when he died.

“I know the heartbreak of having your child die. If knitting a sweater for a child will reduce the stress in a child's life so he lives and his mother doesn't experience this traumatic event, I will knit size 8 sweaters.”

This is Carolyn’s “why.”

What's yours?

**PERMANENT
COLLECTION SITE**

News

Midwest Mission has been blessed with volunteers across the Midwest who give of their time, energy and resources to assist us in carrying out God’s mission to help those in need. Some of these volunteers use the facilities God has blessed them with to provide a donation collection point for needed supplies. These are our

Permanent Collection Sites!

You can find their contact information at midwestmission.org/permanent-collection-sites.

What's Happening @ Permanent Collection Sites?

Carbondale Grace UMC, Carbondale, IL – Delivered In-Kind donations of: 57 Layette Kits plus six extra baby sweaters, four Student Kits, seven Personal Dignity Kits plus 48 extra hand towels and 50 extra washcloths, one Home Care Kit, 1,000 medical-exam gloves for Birthing Kits, five sets of sheets for Bed Packs, and a check for diaper cream and other needs. We appreciate your efforts in getting us these needed items.

Bethany UMC, Green Bay, WI – Has introduced multiple Looms to their congregation. On February 17th they will be having a Plarn-A-Palooza event! They are also looking into other ways to use the loom to help juveniles in their community. Great way to think outside the box!

Gay Street UMC, Mount Vernon, OH – Will be receiving Fire Equipment from a local Fire House. They are planning to donate needed supplies to Midwest Mission. They also have a congregant who is using our online pattern to build a loom for their church. Keep up the good work!

Emmanuel UMC Noblesville, IN – Their congregation has been making sleeping mats using the loom and also pillows using a smaller loom and leftover scraps. While Midwest Mission is not collecting the pillows for international shipments, if your local shelter is interested, you can reach out to Pat Baumer for details on making a small loom — pase.baumer@gmail.com.

Forrest Hill UMC Peoria, IL – Deb Nuske and her church are continuing to develop their Hygiene and Cleaning Supply Pantry. This will be a great way to satisfy a need in their community. Deb will also be making a volunteer mission trip to the Philippines with 14 others. They will be taking 8+ sewing machines and material to teach a group how to sew using our Midwest Mission diaper pattern. At the end of the two weeks, the sewing machines will be donated to the individuals. God bless you!

If your congregation is interested in becoming a New Permanent Collection Site in 2024, please contact teresa@midwestmission.org for more information.

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Prayers to Lift Up

This week, pray for anyone who is looking for their "why" to serve. Pray that in the midst of the chaos of the world, there will be more people who choose to show God's love in a practical way.

"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. Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:35-40

Midwest Mission Weekly Projects Work of the Mission Volunteers

Work Done

- Bike Shop
- Desk Shop

- Sewing Machine Shop
- Rice Meal Prep
- 460 Personal Dignity Kits
- Counted Items Into Inventory
- Boxed Gloves
- Ingathering Mailer
- Impact Report

Disbursements

- **Little Galilee Church Camp**, Clinton, IL, 96 Twin Hospital Bed Mattresses, **Value; \$9,600.00**
- **St. Martin de Porres**, Springfield, IL, 400 Cleaning Supplies That Does Not Qualify for Kits, **Value; \$1,849.90**

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Volunteers at Work

February 5-9, 2024

Volunteer Leaders



Sue Loeffler
Mercer, WI

Volunteer Teams

Illinois



St. Luke
Newton, IA



Athens UMC
Athens, IL



Douglas Avenue UMC
Springfield, IL



Monticello UMC
Monticello, IL



Simpson Group
Springfield, IL

Iowa



Panora UMC
Panora, IA



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SENDING HOPE AND EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD AND AROUND THE CORNER

Fourth International Shipment of the Year Goes to Jamaica



On Thursday, February 15, the Midwest Mission operations team revved the engines of the forklifts, and prepared to load our fourth international shipment of the year.

We recently received a donation of bed frames and mattresses from Illinois State University in Bloomington, Illinois. After processing the donation, Brad Walton, Operations Manager, contacted Food For The Poor to tell them about the donation, and to find out where they might be needed.

Food For The Poor quickly replied that their partners in **Jamaica** were in need of the beds. Within a few weeks, we were ready for the shipment.

It didn't come as a surprise that the team in Jamaica jumped at the opportunity to have beds they could distribute to their partners. In March 2023, a few Midwest Mission staff members visited Food For The Poor in Jamaica, and saw the **overwhelming need for beds**. Whether at the hospital, in children's homes, or the homeless shelter, it was evident that beds and more specifically, mattresses, would always be needed.

Having a solid, clean, and comfortable place to sleep helps not only a person's physical health, but mental health as well. The people we get the opportunity to serve are already in the midst of a crisis. If we can help meet even one of their needs, our prayer is that they will have the hope to move forward, and the empowerment to take the next step in their journey.

Can you imagine needing to be in the emergency room, but you have to sleep in a chair? Or in a children's home because you don't have any family left, but you only have a thin, dirty mattress to sleep on? We send these items, and many others, so more people may have health, hope, empowerment, and dignity.

On this shipment, we sent 53 bunk bed frames, 75 mattresses, and **9,600 Rice Meal Bags** — this is enough to make 57,600 individual servings of a nutrition-packed meal.

The items on this shipment were valued at \$64,012.00.

You can play a part in sending hope and empowerment around the world and around the corner — visit midwestmission.org/get-involved to see how you can join our mission.

Linda Priest Receives Midwest Mission's Lay Speaker of the Year Award

Congratulations to Midwest Mission's Board Member, Linda Priest (pictured left), on earning the 2023 Midwest Mission Lay Speaker of the Year Award. Over the years, the mission of Midwest Mission has spread the fastest and furthest through word-of-mouth. Our ambassadors keep our mission alive and active, as they bring new people into serving, and remind experienced volunteers of the opportunities they have to serve. Without these key ambassadors, we would not be able to do what we are able to do together.



The 2023 award is being awarded to Linda in recognition of her diligence in attending multiple conferences and churches, and setting up the Midwest Mission display to share the opportunities and good news of the ministry with others. Linda joined Lisa Rigoni, Development Manager, at a few conferences and interacted with folks at the display beautifully. She also represented Midwest Mission at other events and churches. Thank you, Linda, for your years of dedication to this ministry,

and your passion for sharing the mission with others. You are bringing hope and empowerment to people around the world and around the corner!

Bishop Frank Beard earned the Clergy Speaker of the Year award. He was instrumental in keeping us in front of people in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, brought his team for his staff's annual Mission event, and invited us to share the Midwest Mission Experience with the College of Bishops, which garnered additional opportunities from different conferences and also the invitation to run the Midwest Mission Experience at at least four conferences in 2024.



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Lotion

8-10 oz. bottles

[click here to purchase online](#)

Household Cleaner

56-80 oz. total (no spray bottles)

Adult Bikes

In good, working condition.

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Prayers to Lift Up

This week, please pray that God will continue helping us reach more people around the world and around the corner. Pray we will know the needs we can and should meet, and the right resources will come at the right time.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Midwest Mission Weekly Projects

Work of the Mission Volunteers

Work Done

- Bike Shop
- Desk Shop
- Sewing Machine Shop
- Rice Meal Prep
- 460 Personal Dignity Kits
- Counted Items Into Inventory
- Boxed Gloves
- Ingathering Mailer
- Impact Report

Disbursements

- **Red Bird Mission Inc.**, Beverly, KY, 865 Cleaning Supplies That does not Qualify for Kits, 152 Hygiene Supplies that does not Qualify for Kits, 1,217 Clothing Items, **Value; \$9,849.00**

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February 12-16, 2024

Volunteer Leaders



Sue Loeffler
Mercer, WI



Sharon and Tim Sherrow
Old Mission, MI

Volunteer Teams

Illinois



New Lenox UMC
New Lenox, IL



Union Reunion
St. Louis, MO



Darlene Powell
Springfield, IL



McAlister Group
Champaign, IL

Iowa



Mt. Ayr UMC
Mt. Ayr, IA





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The War in Ukraine Rages On — Disaster Relief Still Needed



Tomorrow (February 24), marks the **two-year anniversary of Russia invading Ukraine**. Since the invasion, millions have been displaced from their homes, many moving out of the country. Even though the events are out of the news, the war is still

relentless, and people are still in desperate need of supplies.

Since the invasion in 2022, **Midwest Mission has sent over 275,000 Rice Meal Bags, feeding over 1.6 million people** in and around Ukraine. Over the past two years, we have sent **1.8 million dollars worth of humanitarian aid** to the area, including medical supplies, Personal Dignity Kits and other hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and Rice Meals.



On Tuesday, February 20, we sent our **15th shipment to Ukraine**. This shipment was sent alongside our partners **Ukraine Missions** and the **World of Connections Program**. We worked with Ukraine Missions back in 2022 when the war first began again.

This shipment contained:

- 2,240 Personal Dignity Kits made by our volunteers and donors
- 1,232,000 rubber gloves for cleaning
- Seven “Rays of Life” — a solar powered light source that provides up to 18 hours of light, and also the ability to charge phones. Donated from New Horizons Foundation, Duluth, Minnesota.
- 18,000 Rice Meal Bags made by churches around the midwest
- 76 Coolers donated by Dometic (see article here)

This shipment is a wonderful example of how we can all work together to send needed aid to people in crisis.

Thank you for doing *your* part so more hope and empowerment can be sent around the world and around the corner.

Midwest Mission Needs Bikes

As part of our Micro Business area, we take used bicycles in working condition, repair and clean them, then send them out to people in need.

The refurbished bikes have gone to places like Honduras, where a couple can now quickly get to and from the market to open their cafe earlier, and therefore make more money during the day. They’ve also gone locally to men and women who might be able to get a job, but don’t have reliable transportation.

When transportation is limited, people can get stuck in the cycle of poverty. Access to transportation opens doors, and removes obstacles that keep people from taking the next step in life.

The problem is, we are almost out of bikes at Midwest Mission! The first picture is what our garage of bikes-to-be-fixed looked like a couple of months ago. The second picture is what that garage looks like now... **we need bikes.**



You can donate your used bikes by dropping them off at Midwest Mission or a [Permanent Collection Site](#) near you.

Your bike that sits unused in the garage, gathering dust and taking up space, could *change the life of someone in need.*

Donate your bike today!

Visit midwestmission.org/collect-donate for more information



Our 2023 Impact Report is available for download! Using the button below, you can download the report and share with someone you know!

Download

February Church Bulletin Insert

We offer monthly church bulletin inserts that you can slide in your church's bulletin. These inserts keep your congregation up-to-date on our current needs and upcoming events!

Download February Bulletin PDF

CURRENT *Needs*

You can purchase these items at your local store and take them to Midwest Mission or a Collection Site near you. You can also buy items online and have them shipped right to Midwest Mission.

Lotion

8-10 oz. bottles

[click here to purchase online](#)

Household Cleaner

56-80 oz. total (no spray bottles)

Adult Bikes

In good, working condition.

2024 KIT AND PROJECT CHANGES

1. BIRTHING KIT HAS BEEN REMOVED
2. PERSONAL DIGNITY KIT CHANGES
ADD 8-10 OZ LOTION, REMOVE RAZOR
3. COVER THEM WITH LOVE QUILT SIZE CHANGE
42" X 72"



We will continue to accept other sizes of quilts, but our priority is 42"x72" to meet our partners' needs.

Prayers to Lift Up

This week, please pray for the people of Ukraine. Pray that there is an end to the war, and that people will no longer suffer. Pray that needed resources will reach the people who need them, and that they will find hope in Jesus.

*"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."
Matthew 6:34*

Midwest Mission Weekly Projects Work of the Mission Volunteers

Work Done

- Bike Shop
- Desk Shop
- Poly Shop
- Sewing Machine Shop

- Boxed Gloves
- Counted into Inventory
- 60 Home Care Kits
- Off-Site Pack Prep
- Impact Reports
- Off Site Pack Prep

Disbursements

- Ukraine Missions, Ukraine: See story above

Midwest Mission is able to do this work because of your generous donations and willingness to volunteer.
Thank you!

Share some GOD news with those you love!

Do you have family or friends that need some GOOD News - GOD News - to uplift them? If so please click on the button below and share the link provided. The more we can spread the word about the work God is doing here, the more we can make the world a happier place.

[Link to Share the Midwest Mission Newsletter](#)

Ready to Get Involved?



Volunteer at Midwest Mission
Dates are available in 2024 and 2025.

Need a Saturday option for team volunteering or assistance in booking? Contact **Pat Wright** at pat@midwestmission.org or 217-697-4063

Click below to check calendar openings and to reserve your spots.

[Volunteer Reservation Calendar](#)

2025 Volunteer Calendar is open for dorm reservations!

Go to our [Reservation Calendar](#), log in, reserve your rooms, and submit payment for your Non-refundable Reservation Fee via credit card or electronic check. We will email you the Access Code to reserve Volunteer Shifts for your team. You must complete this step for your team to volunteer at Midwest Mission.

For local teams and individuals: Volunteer Shifts will only be available 3 months ahead of time. For example, December 1, 2023 you will be able to reserve Volunteer Shifts for March of 2024.

Thank you for your patience as we try to improve the reservation experience for both local teams and those staying in the dorm.

Volunteers at Work

February 19-23, 2024

Volunteer Leaders



Sharon and Tim Sherrow
Old Mission, MI

Volunteer Teams

Illinois



Grace UMC
Jacksonville, IL



Taylorville UMC
Taylorville, IL



Donald and Diana Harness
Eldon, IA

Iowa



Algona Youth
Algona, IA



We are so grateful for all our local and regular volunteers, and the time they give towards volunteering at Midwest Mission. We appreciate their passion and dedication to the ministry!

[Click Here for the UMVIM
NCJ Newsletter](#)



[Visit our website](#)

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