



Monroe County United Ministries



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Dear Friends of United Ministries:

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Another holiday season is soon approaching. To prepare and coordinate all the projects we will undertake during the next two months, United Ministries is contacting all known friends of United Ministries. On the reverse side of this letter, you will find a "Holiday Commitment Sheet." This form lists many of the areas to which you and your family, school, organization, or business can contribute during the holiday season. We ask that you complete all sections that interest you, and **try to return the form to United Ministries by November 4** if possible. For holiday donors who want to sponsor families, the earlier we have these forms, the faster we can match you to a family and the longer you have to do your shopping. Also, all families might already be sponsored if you wait too long. We count on these forms to help organize and coordinate all the activities that will be taking place between now and the end of the holiday season. So, PLEASE return the form as soon as possible.

Throughout the year, United Ministries provides food, clothing, and rent/utilities to families in need of emergency assistance. What we have to give depends directly on the contributions from the community. Most of those donations come during the November/December holiday season. If you have any questions regarding our needs, or the services we provide, feel free to call me at ext 11 or Rebecca Stanze at ext 15.

In addition to our regular programs, United Ministries provides special food baskets for families in need and coordinates a "Sponsor a family for Christmas" project. We do not have a public "sign up" period to receive these services; rather, recipients of this project are families of the children in our childcare program. These families have had an ongoing relationship with United Ministries in the past year. This is our way to support and encourage these families during the holiday season.

Christmas gift sponsors will receive the first name only of each member of the household, and a wish list to give ideas for gifts. **No donor is expected to obtain all the items on a family's wish list. This is only to give you a wide choice to suit your giving tastes and budgets.** We suggest that each family member receive between 3-5 gifts, but we do not restrict you if you choose to do more. We ask that the sponsor family give only NEW clothes, toys, etc. Other donors will be providing these families with food baskets unless you indicate that you wish to do this as well. If you choose to sponsor a family, you will receive information in the mail regarding the family and when to deliver to United Ministries. **Both sponsor and recipient families must remain anonymous to each other, so please do not include any identifying information inside or outside your packages.**

Santa Bags are a bag of goodies that Santa gives to each child in our center when he comes to visit in December. These are small, relatively inexpensive items that are fun or healthy. The big problem is that we need 80 of each item so that we have one for each child. In some cases, the number needed is less because it is only suitable for certain age groups. Anyone interested in this can call me or go visit www.mcum.org for a list of items still needed.

Also, you may have heard that we have unprecedented numbers of people asking for help with food. We collect a large portion of our food at the holiday season. Could you help us spread the word that we need food for our pantry now and throughout the year? Please see the other letter included with this mailing regarding our annual Winter Food Drive for details.

Do not hesitate to make copies and pass the "Holiday Commitment Sheet" (and this letter!) on to others that may be interested. **THANK YOU** for helping United Ministries to help our neighbors in need.

Best regards,

Meri Reinhold
Executive Director