



2023 UNION MILLS COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

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We ran the 2023 Union Mills Community Christmas Free Store very similarly to the way we did in 2022. After shopping all year and collecting donations from the community, we set up the shop and opened for business on Sunday December 10th and ran the store via private shopping appointments for the next twelve days. The store was set up in the gym at Union Mills Church, with gift items lining tables for babies up to teenagers. We were able to include some amazing finds thanks to shopping the sales all year and really had some terrific gifts to offer! In addition to the gifts, we also gave away stocking stuffers, socks, underwear, and pajamas to those who needed them! Those who chose could wrap their gifts and take them home ready to go under the tree and others chose to take them home to show their spouses before wrapping! We had moms, dads, grandparents, social workers, and foster families all come out to shop for the kids in their care this year and it was so nice to see the excitement as they carefully chose gifts that would mean the most for their kiddos! All appointments were kept private and were met by members of the small board of Union Mills Community Closet.

Last years program helped 122 children and we are so pleased to announce that this year the Community Christmas Program was able to serve an amazing 275 children from 88 different families from our community. Some of those families are local to New Sharon specially and some live in the surrounding small areas who don't have support programs in place to help them. We experienced so much kindness and generosity from those visiting us; people brought in toys, car seats and baby gear to pass along to someone who could use it and even a batch of homemade cookies to share.

The 2023 Christmas season is wrapped up, all the gifts have been given and the Christmas paper is packed away. We are so blessed to be able to facilitate this program thanks to the generosity that is provided by our community and cannot wait for what is to come next! Please consider joining us on at our next public town hall meeting as we take ideas from our community and speak about what we hope is to come for our organization.

Sincerely,

Heather Martin Jess Sanders Marsha Hanorth Kelli Steil Marcy Grandia

Board of Directors, Union Mills Community Closet

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