



Lake
Christian
Ministries

Heart&Hope

Lake Christian Ministries Breaks Ground on New Facility

Lake Christian Ministries held a groundbreaking ceremony on October 18 to kick off construction on its new, 5,000-square-foot building at 13105 South Old Moneta Road in Moneta. This new building will be constructed adjacent to the existing facility. The event was attended by a variety of community members including donors, LCM board members, media, volunteers, and members of the construction and design team.

The new building will feature a learning center with classrooms, a large clothing area, a warehouse for furniture and appliances, a loading dock for receiving donations, and additional parking. Construction is expected to take seven to nine months, with a grand opening planned for May 2024. This new facility will work in conjunction with LCM's existing facility to provide a comprehensive center that will offer food assistance, crisis financial aid, clothing, furniture, and New Tomorrows services, which include job readiness, educational classes and connections to community services.

"Constructing this additional building enables LCM to connect to coordinated community services, forge business partnerships for job assistance and stabilize families in crisis more effectively," explains Jane Winters, Executive Director of Lake Christian Ministries. "The need for the new facility is due to a significant increase in the number of low-income families who have been impacted by the prolonged pandemic and high inflation, and the need for space to support our New Tomorrows program. It became apparent that just providing food, clothing and crisis financial aid doesn't always bring the change needed to transition out of poverty. LCM's vision is to help clients move out of poverty toward lives of self-sufficiency and stability.

"For 32 years, Lake Christian Ministries has served vulnerable families in our lake community without expanding our facilities," Winters added. "When completed, the expanded facilities and new campus will serve Lake Christian Ministries and the growing number of local families in need well into the future."

The new facility's construction is funded by LCM's "Build Hope for Tomorrow Capital Campaign," which was launched in 2022 as part of its 30th anniversary. The honorary chairs of the capital campaign are Dave and Cindy Cappellari, owners of Capps Home Building Center. To date, a very generous group of community donors have joined the Cappellari family to provide more than \$950,000 to help build the new building that will facilitate pathways out of poverty.

The new facility is being built on the site of the Old Moneta Country Store. The design team – led by architects from Balzer & Associates and Seven Oaks Landscape and Hardscape owner Dave Bower – worked to create a warm and welcoming design for the new facility and the existing LCM campus. While restoration of the existing building wasn't feasible due to a variety of structural issues, parts of it were preserved. To pay homage to the old store and its place in the community's history, porch columns and some original wood flooring were saved and will be incorporated into the new building. A stepped parapet, which was popular in the 1940's and 50's, will also be added to the new building to honor the design of the old store.

Numerous community members and local businesses – in addition to the Cappellari's and Dave Bower – rallied around the project, including Craig Balzer and Robert Pilkington of Balzer & Associates, Matt Peters of Covenant Engineering, and Jordan Cruise of Price Buildings, Inc.



Dave Bower, Seven Oaks Landscape & Hardscape; Bruce Shelton, Capps Home Building Center; Jordan Cruise & Thomas Barrett, Price Buildings; Jane Winters, Jon Atchue, Jim Bennett, Ron Willard, II, Jim Caskie & Jim Gilbert from Lake Christian Ministries; and Robert Pilkington & James Ruhland, Balzer & Associates.

SML Community Embraces “A Child’s Christmas”

Over the past 27 years, Lake Christian Ministries’ “A Child’s Christmas” has been made possible by support from churches, businesses, civic groups, and individuals who find bringing joy to local children of financially-strained families a meaningful part of their holidays. One example of this support is the annual toy drive conducted by Sea Tow SML. The group has conducted an annual toy drive since the boater-assistance franchise was established here in 2009.

For the past 14 years, Sea Tow SML co-owner Captain Nancy Ellett has spent Saturdays and Sundays from Thanksgiving to mid-December greeting customers who arrive to shop at one of the four area Dollar General stores. Dressed in a kid-friendly “Olaf” or Grinch costume, she stands near a small boat trailer with a yellow Sea Tow dinghy that serves as a toy depository. She encourages shoppers to pick up toys for children in families who can’t afford gifts and drop them in the dinghy when they leave.

“Sometimes it’s cold out there, but the warmth exhibited by so many of Dollar General’s customers makes it all worthwhile,” Nancy says. “It’s very evident that the Christmas spirit is alive and well at Smith Mountain Lake.”

The boatloads of toys are taken to a storage unit that Nancy and her franchise co-owner husband, Captain Rick Ellett, maintain for just this purpose. Then, on the day that “A Child’s Christmas” volunteers sort the toys for children registered with the program, the Elletts and other Sea Tow captains load the collection of toys into a U-Haul box truck and deliver them to the sorting site.

Last year, 1,667 toys were collected – but that was hardly a record. Some years, Dollar General holds its regional store managers’ meeting at the nearby W.E. Skelton 4-H Center. Prior to that meeting, many of the 250 attendees set-up toy donation boxes in their stores and bring collected toys to the meeting. Nancy, Rick and several Sea Tow captains bring trucks and trailers to the 4-H Center parking lot on meeting day and load up the donations from the attending store managers.

“Collections from the Dollar General annual meetings boosted toy donations to a total of 2,700 in 2019 and this year gave our toy drive an incredible start with a collection of 3,300 toys!” Nancy said.

“We are thankful for support and generosity of everyone who helps with A Child’s Christmas,” says program leader Diana Wiener. “The amount of toys collected through Sea Tow SML’s partnership with Dollar General is nothing short of spectacular.”

“This year, with inflation causing even more financial strain on low-income families, many more will have to choose between paying bills and buying Christmas gifts for their children. Most are unable to afford both,” explains Jane Winters, executive director of Lake Christian Ministries. “A Child’s Christmas’ is a true blessing for hundreds of vulnerable children. This year we anticipate over 600 children will receive gifts and warm clothes through this special holiday program.”

There are many ways the Lake community can support “A Child’s Christmas.” Several Lake-area businesses provide collection bins for new toys. Churches, businesses, civic organizations and individuals purchase personalized gifts for children with direction from Angel Cards or provide cash donations that are utilized to purchase gifts. Libraries collect new books for children. LCM volunteers organize the children’s sign-up; assign Angel Cards to those who want to purchase gifts; and organize the distribution to families on the Saturday before Christmas. “The continued success of this program is possible because of the generous support that our SML community traditionally provides,” Winters added.

Continued inside.



Dollar General and Sea Tow Toy Collection for A Child’s Christmas



Olaf (Nancy Ellett, Sea Tow) collecting toys at Dollar General

Parents and guardians can register children ages 16 years and younger for a Child's Christmas at Lake Christian Ministries on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon through November 23. Last year, this program brought holiday joy to 476 local children.

Program Director Dianna Weiner added, "Many dedicated volunteers help each year to shop, sort and distribute gifts to ensure that every child experiences the joy of Christmas. We welcome new volunteers who want to experience the spirit of Christmas at work in our community."

HOW CAN YOU HELP MAKE CHRISTMAS MERRY FOR CHILDREN IN NEED? Purchase a new toy and drop it off at one of the toy collection locations listed in this newsletter, or stop by one of Lake Christian Ministries' Angel Card partners, also shown, and pick up an Angel Card to purchase and donate a personalized gift listed for the child. For an ever-growing list of "A Child's Christmas" toy and book collection sites and Angel Card Partners, visit LakeChristianMinistries.org.

To learn how you can help, contact program coordinators Dianna Weiner, diannaelaine57@yahoo.com, or Lynda Imirie, fredlynda@aol.com. Cash donations to support A Child's Christmas can also be sent to Lake Christian Ministries, P.O. Box 695, Moneta, VA, 24121 with a memo designating Children's Programs.

Wish List for Donations

Thank you for your continued donations of food, clothing, housewares, and appliances. During the cold months, our neighbors need items listed below. Unfortunately, LCM is not able to pick up donations. Donations may be dropped off at the LCM warehouse from 9 a.m. to noon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Canned Soup and Fruit	Appliances in good working order	Sheets – all sizes
Shampoo and Deodorant	Towels	Adult and Children's Coats
Clean gently used mattresses – all sizes	Blankets – all sizes	

Welcome

Welcome to the new volunteers who recently joined LCM. The following volunteers are now part of the warm and generous LCM family!

Fran Wright	Rich Johnson	Bob Rayman
Mike Wright	Noah Penman	

Service Impact January – Sept 2023

During the first three quarters of 2023, Lake Christian Ministries volunteers and staff responded to a growing number of service requests. Many of the families seeking services this year were new to LCM. This year, families experienced a reduction in SNAP benefits and the Department of Social Services Child-care assistance program. This was in addition to extended inflation that increased food costs, rent and utility rates. During 2023, LCM saw a 42% increase in the number of families receiving food assistance and an 18% increase in the number of families receiving crisis financial aid to prevent evictions and keep the utilities working in homes where resources are stretched to capacity. An increasing number of individuals are turning to New Tomorrows Program services for assistance with overcoming barriers to long-term stability.

From January - September 2023,
LCM Fulfilled:

**8,584 Food Assistance
Requests**

42% increase over this time in 2022

Financial Aid in the amount of
**\$217,383 to assist
495 families**

18% increase over this time in 2022

New Tomorrows Program Services
**Helped 198 Individuals Build
More Secure Lives**

**120 of these individuals are new to the
New Tomorrows Program**

\$15,000 Year-End Challenge Offered by LCM Volunteers

Local demand for Lake Christian Ministries' food assistance, crisis financial assistance, A Child's Christmas and holiday food distribution has grown dramatically this year. Extended inflation and a significant reduction in government relief efforts have had a devastating impact on low-income families. Going into the cold weather season ahead, LCM is operating over budget for food assistance and children's holiday programs. Two dedicated LCM volunteers have stepped forward to encourage year-end giving. They are issuing a generous year-end challenge.

YEAR-END CHALLENGE: Two LCM volunteers have generously offered a \$1 for \$1 year-end challenge up to \$15,000 for all donations that are made to Lake Christian Ministries in November and December. Donations may be earmarked for general services or facility expansion. If we work together, this challenge can provide \$30,000 for LCM's efforts to assist vulnerable families during these challenging times.

"As volunteers, we see firsthand the great needs of so many of our SML neighbors during this year of high costs for food, rent and utilities. We are excited to have this opportunity to support LCM at a time when vulnerable families need LCM's services more than ever before. It is the season of giving. We hope you will join us in year-end support for our neighbors in need," commented one of the anonymous LCM volunteers.

How Can I Help Meet the Year-End Challenge? To help us make the most of this generous challenge, donate online through the LCM website at lakechristianministries.org by clicking on the Donate icon at the top of the home page and checking Year-End Challenge on the donor form. There is an option to designate your donation for general services or facilities expansion. If you prefer to make a donation by check, mail the check to **Lake Christian Ministries, P.O. Box 695, Moneta, VA 24121** with a memo that states Year-End Challenge, and a designation for either facilities or services. Donations may also be dropped off in the LCM office. The deadline for the challenge is December 31, 2023. Thank you in advance for your support!

Holiday Potluck Luncheon for LCM Volunteers

All volunteers are invited to bring their favorite dishes or desserts and join us for the annual Holiday Potluck Luncheon. Lake Christian Ministries will provide ham and turkey. Join us at **12:15 p.m. on Friday, December 15**, in Lake Christian Ministries' front lobby. To confirm your attendance, email lcmevdr@gmail.com or add your name and identify the dish you are bringing on the Holiday Luncheon Sign-Up List located at the Volunteer Check-In desk. We hope to see you there!

A Child's Christmas Community Toy & Book Collection Sites and Angel Tree Partners

(as of 11/2/23)

Books and toys will be collected at the following locations and the Angel Card Partners listed below will have Angel Cards available with personalized gifts and clothing wishes through December 5. We are grateful for the generosity of these special Christmas elves!

Book Collection Sites

Moneta Library

Westlake Library

Toy Collection Sites

Antique Mall & Mayberry Furniture

Body Shoppe Fitness

Evie's SML Coffeehouse

Hot Shots Family Fun Center

Keller Williams SML Office

Rehab Associates

SML Coffeehouse

Westlake Auto

Dollar General Stores - Westlake, Bluewater Drive, Union Hall and Moneta in partnership with Sea Tow SML

Angel Card Partners

Epworth United Methodist Church

Patmos United Methodist Church

Bethlehem United Methodist Church

Cilantros

Crosswhite Fitness Center

Hot Shots Family Fun Center

Mariners Landing

Resurrection Catholic Church

Trinity Ecumenical Parish

Westlake Library

2023 SML Walk to End Poverty Raises Nearly \$90K

Proceeds earmarked for new facilities and programs that assist families in need

The 2023 SML Walk to End Poverty was held at the SML State Park on September 16 - a beautiful fall morning. The event was a huge success and generated nearly \$90,000 for Lake Christian Ministries' new facility expansion, programs, and services that benefit area families in need.

"The prolonged pandemic followed by high inflation have had a devastating impact on families at the bottom of the economic ladder, with food banks and charities across the country seeing a dramatic increase in the number of food-insecure families," explains Jane Winters, Executive Director of LCM. "The lake community is no exception. In the first nine months of 2023, Lake Christian Ministries had a 42 percent increase in the number of people seeking food assistance and an 18 percent increase in the number of families requesting crisis financial aid to avoid eviction and keep utilities operating in homes with children and seniors.

"We are deeply grateful to all the school, church, civic groups and neighborhood teams who participated; and to the sponsors and volunteers who helped make the 2023 SML Walk to End Poverty a great success," Winters adds. "Event sponsors Capps Home Building Center along with three anonymous donors were joined by supporting sponsors Jo & Co Jewelers, Gilbert Law, Body Shoppe Fitness, Centra, American National Bank, Southside Electric Cooperative, and the SML Fraternal Order of Eagles #4344. We thank our sponsors and all the Walk participants and volunteers for their outstanding support."



Holiday Donations Needed

Lake Christian Ministries' volunteers are working to make this holiday a joy-filled time of year for vulnerable children and families. A Child's Christmas provides warm clothing, toys and gifts for infants through age 16. These children live in homes where income often doesn't cover basic living expenses, and there is rarely anything left for Christmas gifts.

LCM also provides holiday food items that families can use to prepare Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas breakfast. Each year, LCM distributes special holiday food to approximately 450 food-insecure families. LCM's discounted cost to provide a holiday meal for a family of four is approximately \$25.



This year, we are going into the fourth quarter over-budget for Food Assistance and Children's Programs due to high demand and high inflation. If you would like to make a donation to support these programs, we would deeply appreciate your support. Please send donations to: **Lake Christian Ministries, P.O. Box 695, Moneta, VA 24121** and note whether the donation is for children's programs or holiday meals.

Thank you for brightening the holidays for our neighbors and children who are struggling during this difficult time of sustained inflation!

Thankful for Our Generous Donors

During this time of Thanksgiving, we want to give special thanks for all who donate to Lake Christian Ministries to support our programs and services that impact poverty in the lake community. We could not operate without your continued support. A special thank you goes to the following grantors and donors who provided generous targeted support during 2023.

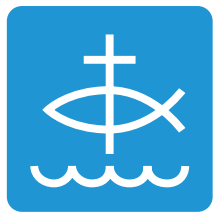
Anonymous Donors who provided **generous leadership gifts** for the Building Hope for Tomorrow Capital Campaign, SML Walk to End Poverty and Volunteer Challenges, and for our increased service costs to meet growing neighbor needs.

Bedford Community Health Foundation provided **\$10,000** for health-care assistance for New Tomorrows Program participants who reside in Bedford County.

The Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation provided **\$13,000** for food assistance, crisis financial aid and New Tomorrows Program support for Bedford County individuals in need.

United Way of Central Virginia provided **\$11,000** for food assistance and financial aid for Bedford County families in need.

Thank you to all the generous individual donors, churches, business partners and civic groups who made monetary donations and donations of food, clothing and other items to support our efforts to assist families in need during a very difficult year.



**Lake
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Roanoke, VA

13157 Old Moneta Road

PO Box 695

Moneta, VA 24121

Return Service Requested

Special Note: If you are away for a time and are planning a "Temporary Hold" on your USPS mail, please send your email address to lcmdonblanchard@gmail.com so we can send our newsletters to you electronically.

Simple Gestures Help Families in Need & Reduce Costs at LCM

This year, donations from A Simple Gesture SML have made a tremendous impact for our neighbors in need and helped reduce LCM expenses during a time when food costs remain high. This neighborhood donation pick-up program provides thousands of pounds of food, cleaning supplies and personal care items each year.

September's A Simple Gesture emergency collection provided 2,764 pounds of peanut butter and canned soup from 210 donor households. Donations of laundry detergent and dishwashing liquid are still being received from the fourth quarter collection day which was held on November 3.

Those who wish to join the "A Simple Gesture" program can do so by contacting Linda Strup at asimplegesturesml@gmail.com or by visiting asimplegesturesml.org and letting us know that you want to donate and/or serve as a neighborhood pick-up driver. Donations from A Simple Gesture help LCM address the high demand for food assistance and reduce costs for food supplies. We appreciate the generous support from our A Simple Gesture SML supporters!

