



This year, West Side will partner with Bethel Church in our Christmas outreach.

### **How do we find families?**

They are referred to West Side from Marcus Whitman Elementary, our Benevolence ministry, and Prison Fellowship. We do not accept “walk-ins” for our Christmas outreach. We are hoping to help approximately 20-25 children.

### **How will we partner with Bethel Church?**

We have been invited by Bethel to bring those in need to their Christmas Shop. Both churches will participate in providing gifts and other items for families in need (see “Ways to Participate”).

### **What happens on Dec. 16 when parents come to shop?**

Parents will be assigned a specific time and will be greeted by a Family Host volunteer who will escort them through various stations. Parents or caregivers of our Prison Fellowship children will move through the stations at their own pace. Stations will include toys, coats, mittens and hats, gift wrapping, gift cards, family fun night boxes, with breakfast/lunch provided. Each gift will cost 25 cents each, with families allowed to purchase 2-3 gifts per child (depending on total gifts donated).

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### **Why are we making this change in our Christmas giving?**

We want to shift the focus of our program from the givers to the receivers. It’s honoring and empowering for a parent to tell a child on Christmas morning, “I purchased and wrapped these gifts for you!” Many of us have never been in a position where we couldn’t afford gifts for our families. Helping a parent purchase gifts allows him/her to be the main giver and strengthens the parent-child relationship. They are a hero in their child’s eyes.

### **Ways to participate: Toy Store Gifts/Christmas for Everyone:**

- Donate **gifts for boys & girls**, ages infant – 17 yrs old (suggested price of \$20-25 for each gift) – please leave gifts unwrapped
- Donate **money for gifts** (write “Toy Store” on the memo line)
- Donate **miscellaneous items**: \$25 WinCo gift card, 100-150 oz Liquid laundry soap, Wrapping paper/bows, Scotch tape
- Donate **items for Family Fun Night** boxes: DVD movies, Puzzles, Board games, Popcorn, Movie-size boxed candy, Hot chocolate packets, Sugar cookie mix and sprinkles, Muffin mix and disposable pan
- Donate **gently-used coats, new mittens or gloves, knit hats**
- Sign up to **volunteer on Dec. 16** at Bethel Church as either a guide for families or station helpers

**\*All donations need to be at West Side no later than Dec. 10.**

### **Guiding principles for giving:**

- All giving should carefully consider the dignity and self-worth of those receiving support.
- Giving to those in need feels good to those giving, but it is equally import to feel good to those receiving.
- There is great value in hard work and independence. Purchasing gifts for loved ones affirms a sense of dignity and personal responsibility that has redeeming value.
- Parents/guardians deserve the opportunity to personally purchase gifts for their children. We view this as a hand-up in place of a hand-out.

*Questions? Want to help on Dec. 16? Contact Wendy Thomson (509.438.1193 or medwendy@aol.com) or Renee Root (509.735.7948 or renee919@msn.com).*