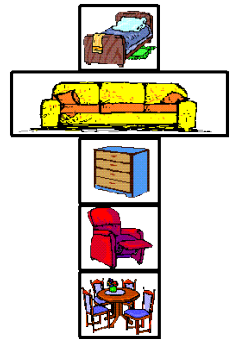


# ***Epworth Furniture Ministry***

*"Being Disciples of Christ by providing quality used furniture and basic household items to individuals in our community who are in need."*

furnitureministry.org



## **Epworth Furniture Ministry**

### **2017 Annual Report**



**February 19, 2018**



Epworth United Methodist Church  
4855 W. Central Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43615-2237

## 2017 Highlights

### Community Service Impact

- 180 families received furniture
- 512 family members served – 240 adults and 272 children
- 1971 pieces of furniture gifted to the families
- 2 truckloads of furniture delivered to Mosaic Ministries
- 12 vanloads of household items delivered to St Paul's UMC Marketplace
- Household items distributed:
  - 512 towel sets
  - 200 dish sets
  - 400 pans and skillets
  - 325 bedding sets
  - 240 flatware sets
  - 300 lamps
  - 100 toasters and coffee makers
  - 50 vacuums
  - 50 microwaves
  - 240 bags of children books

### Community Service Milestone

- Served the 1,000<sup>th</sup> family since 2008

### Community Donations

- 255 donors provided furniture
- 62 pickups made
  - 35 regular Saturday pickups
  - 27 special pickups for donors closing family home or moving
- Over 2,100 phone calls and emails handled
- 2 truckloads of dressers and chairs donated by University of Toledo
- 2 truckloads of mattresses from Hilton Garden Inn Perrysburg
- 1 truckload of sofas and chairs from Lourdes College
- 2 truckloads of sofas and chairs from Epworth United Methodist Church

### Volunteer Stewardship

- About 75 volunteers per month required to operate the ministry, or 900 per year
  - Approximately 30 volunteers per month make furniture pickups
  - About 45 volunteers per month sort, arrange and distribute furniture
- Volunteers donated about 3900 hours

## A Look Back to 2008

The Epworth Furniture Ministry (EFM) began in 2008 to provide quality, used furniture and basic household items to families in our community who are in need. Most of our families are restarting their lives with little to nothing at all. The furniture ministry is an opportunity to offer hope and dignity to those in our community who have felt hopeless and invisible.

In 2008 the ministry served 25 families with the aid of volunteer vehicles and garages. From 2008 to 2017 the furniture ministry served 1,124 families, touching the lives of 3,280 individuals with 9,900 pieces of furniture handled by volunteers who donated over 22,300 hours.

The basic operating model has remained the same: furniture is picked up from donors and brought to a warehouse where once per month recipients come to select their furniture. The partner agencies screen the recipients who then meet with volunteers to review the selection process and match furniture needs with availability. Although the basic operating model has remained the same substantial efficiency improvements have enabled more families to be served each year.

In April the ministry reached a major service milestone – the 1,000<sup>th</sup> family received furniture.



A sweet treat shared with April participants and volunteers

## Who We Serve

*The year had been difficult for Cheryl - no bed, little furniture, one pair of shoes, and very little clothing. She truly felt like giving up. The gift of furniture would make her apartment into her home and she would not be sleeping on the floor. One of her favorite gifts was a shower curtain and matching towels. She felt like a new woman with hope for the future and the firm knowledge God loves her.*

The individuals the ministry serves typically are facing difficult times in their lives. Some have been homeless, some are fighting addictions, and some are just struggling to make ends meet. The 13 partner agencies affiliated with EFM recommend the families to receive furniture based on need and on having a residence with little or no furniture. The people are trying to get their lives back in order and having a bed, dresser, sofa, chair, dinette set and household items helps make an apartment a home.

## The Donors

*The EFM donors strongly feel their furniture still has life and it should go to someone who needs it. Many of the donors are replacing older, but useable furniture, downsizing or moving out of the area. Donors learn about the ministry by word of mouth and seeing the yellow EFM truck in their neighborhoods.*

About 255 donors provided furniture to EFM in 2017. EFM received approximately 2,100 calls and email, from donors, agencies, and individuals requesting help. Throughout the year the increased donation volume has resulted in Saturday pickups being scheduled 6-8 weeks in advance. Special pickups during the week are arranged for donors who have a half truckload of furniture. In 2017 there were 27 special pickups at times convenient to these families.

Local business and agencies donate used furniture items throughout the year. In 2017 EFM received 2 truckloads of dressers and chairs from the University of Toledo, 2 truckloads of mattresses from the Hilton Garden Inn, Perrysburg, 1 truckload of sofas and chairs from Lourdes College and 2 truckloads of sofas and chairs from Epworth United Methodist Church.

## Blessings – Household Items

In addition to furniture EFM provides small household items to the families. The Epworth congregation and furniture donors donate most of these items but volunteers scour garage sales to purchase household and small furniture items that are needed. In 2017 the following blessings were distributed to families:

512 towel sets	325 bedding sets	100 toasters and coffee pots
200 dish sets	240 flatware sets	400 pans and skillets
50 microwaves	300 lamps	240 bags of children books



Alexa's Blessings Corner

## Volunteers

*The EFM volunteers are dedicated individuals who are filled with compassion for helping those in need. Lifting furniture, sorting goods, and loading trucks is hard work but no one ever complains. Most volunteers can't believe the fun they are having doing God's work.*



Volunteers Loading Family's truck



Selection Saturday Volunteers

The EFM is very blessed to have a cadre of very faithful and dedicated volunteers. About 75 volunteer positions per month are required to operate the ministry and the volunteers donated over 3,900 hours in 2017. The furniture acquisition function requires 29 volunteer positions, intake and agency relations 6, warehousing 20, and furniture distribution 20. The ministry's smooth operation is directly attributable to these volunteers and when asked to do a little more, they always do.

## The Warehouse



In addition to storing donated furniture the EFM warehouse is where the furniture is distributed to the families. The furniture is displayed on racks and arranged so the families can make selections easily. Once the family selects an item it is moved to the loading bay and then loaded onto the family's truck.

Based on the recommendation of the fire marshal the EFM warehouse was reorganized. This required emptying one section of the warehouse, moving the storage racks and replacing the furniture. About 20 volunteers showed up on a Saturday morning and completed the reorganization in less than two hours. Many helping hands made the job very easy and quick. Below is a view of the warehouse after the reorganization.



## Partner Agencies

The 13 EFM partner agencies identify who is to receive furniture. Each month EFM allocates about 20-25 recipient slots among these agencies. The families selected to fill the allotted agency slots meet with EFM intake volunteers who match furniture needs with available supply and discuss the Selection Saturday procedure.

In a typical month 15 families are served on Selection Saturday. Weather, time of the year, personal issues and available transportation are some of the factors impacting the number of families served per month. Providing delivery transportation is the recipient's responsibility and is an obstacle for some. About 75% of the families attending intake will come to Selection Saturday, a 25% attrition rate.

The 2017 partner agencies are:

- YWCA Northwest Ohio
- Leading Families Home
- Mercy Children's Hospital - Healthy Connections
- TASC of Northwest Ohio
- Cocoon Shelter
- Friendly Center
- Bethany House
- Harbor Behavioral Health
- Family House
- Zepf Center
- US Together
- Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
- St Paul's Community Center

## 2017 Leadership Team

The volunteers providing leadership to the furniture ministry during 2017 are:

Ed Bardi, Chair	Michelle Richards
Holly Bolenbaugh	Marilyn Town
Martha Chapman	Keith Webb
Peter Machin	

## Wishes/Needs for the Future

A continued supply of dedicated and joyful volunteers is essential to the future of the furniture ministry. For the past 10 years the Epworth family has stepped up and volunteered time and energy to enable the ministry to function. New volunteers will be needed to replace normal attrition and support increased volume.

A larger warehouse of 10,000 square feet is needed to provide storage for the peaks in furniture donations from local businesses, families closing homes, and an increased donor base. There are numerous times when our warehouse is full and donations are refused.

Furniture donations are always needed but the following items are on-going critical needs of the families we serve:

Mattresses, box springs, bed frames	Dinette Sets
Sheets, blankets	Living room chairs
Sofas and loveseats	Towels
Dressers	Dishes, pots and pans

## More Information

For more information please go to the Epworth Furniture Ministry website, [furnitureministry.org](http://furnitureministry.org). If you have gently used furniture you want to donate please call the furniture donation pickup line 567-694-3710 or email the request to [furnitureministry@epworth.com](mailto:furnitureministry@epworth.com).