

Offering Dignity and Hope ... a Second Chance at Life

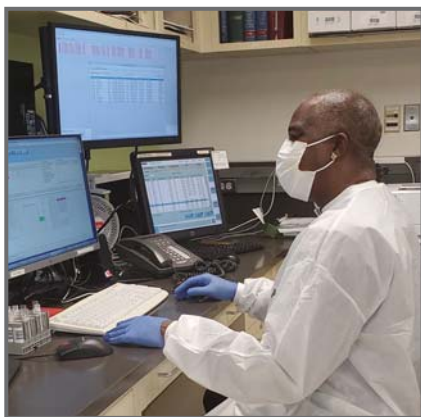


Even in the midst of the decay in our city's north side, Sunshine Ministries' Men's Center stands strong as a beacon of dignity and hope for a brighter future for this devastated part of town.

But the building is just a symbol of what goes on inside . . . offering dignity and hope to men whose lives are in decay and devastation. Men who want to turn their lives around. Men who want a second chance at life.

Meet Vance Ivory! Vance is a great example of how God can change a life. Twenty years ago, Vance came to Sunshine Ministries after being released from jail. He had immense potential, but his poor choice of abusing drugs derailed his life's ambition to have a career in medicine. He wanted to get back on track, but knew he needed help. He turned to Sunshine to renew his dream and equip him to succeed in life.

After a year of hard work learning and applying healthy life skills, Vance was ready for his second chance. As he left Sunshine to begin his new career at a St. Louis hospital, he was given some appropriate work clothes. Vance still has those clothes today . . .



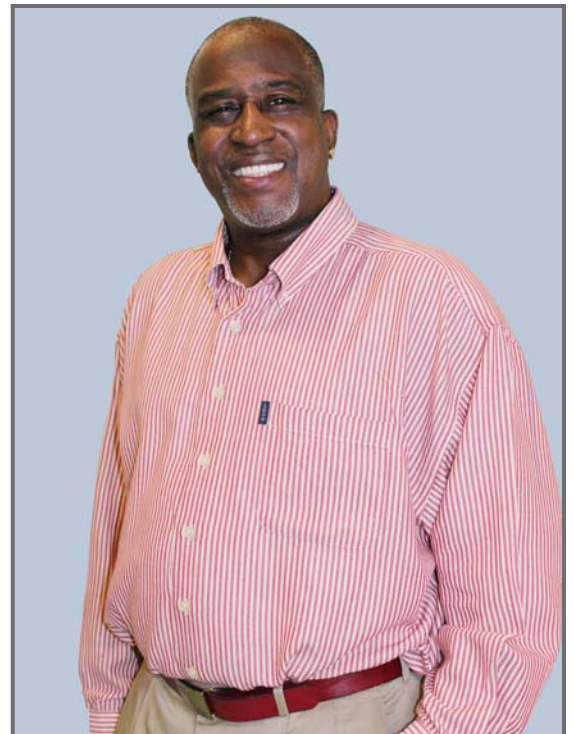
Vance is now an essential worker in the lab at Barnes-Jewish and St. Louis Children's Hospital as he devotes his new life helping others during this COVID-19 pandemic.

including a belt that was given to him by a caring staff member. The belt reminds him of his days at Sunshine and a favorite Bible verse, "Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist."

The truth is... God can change lives ... He changed Vance Ivory!

"Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist."

Ephesians 6: 10, 14



"These are the exact clothes that I was wearing when I left Sunshine Ministries," Vance shared at a recent visit. As he recalled his experiences at Sunshine Ministries' Men's Program he said, "Everyone was so supportive and encouraging. I know that I would never be where I am today without Sunshine . . . I may not even be alive!"



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MISSION

Sunshine Ministries is committed to providing high quality Christian social services to the poor and needy of St. Louis by offering healing from the past, help for the present, and hope for the future.



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of St. Louis

A Note from the Director

Dear Friends,

Sunshine Ministries has been in “Pandemic Mode” for more than a year now. Like many people, I keep wondering if we will ever use the word, “normal,” again!! I hate wearing a mask that hides a smile. I despise staying 6 feet away from someone who needs a hug. It irritates me that curbside service only feeds the stomach - not the soul.

But in the midst of my personal pity party, I’m reminded of one of my favorite Bible verses,

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

Since we’re fully convinced that God has called Sunshine Ministries according to His purposes, I asked myself, “How could this pandemic possibly work for the good of Sunshine?” After prayerful consideration, here are some of my thoughts . . .

- It gives us the opportunity to MODEL . . . not just teach . . . the men in the Resident Program that God gives us the strength to overcome adversity and that the joy of the Lord is our strength. (Nehemiah 8:10)

- It is an indelible reminder of the importance of a simple smile, hug or an encouraging word that could make a significant difference in someone’s life. (I Thessalonians 5:11)

- It makes me appreciate even more the faithful donors that allow us to continue to supply our families and men with their physical needs. God promises that providing these needs will open the door to spiritual growth. (Matthew 5:16)

Maybe “normal” isn’t all it’s cracked up to be! I hope someday . . . someday SOON . . . I will be able to look back and remember this pandemic as a time of personal and spiritual growth for me and my Sunshine co-workers as well as those we serve!

Thank you for your continued partnership in changing hearts and changing lives!

Sincerely,

Carol Clarkson

CURBSIDE SERVICE CONTINUES WITH AN EXTRA TOUCH OF VALENTINE’S DAY



Due to the large groups of ladies that we serve through our CARE Program every week, we are still offering grocery deliveries in the parking lot of our Family Center.



To add a **HEART**-felt surprise to the February curbside giveaway, along with their bags of groceries each lady received a bag of Valentine candy and a cuddly heart-shaped ladybug with an encouraging message of God’s love for them.

Welcome to Sunshine Preschool's TEDDY BEAR VALENTINE VILLAGE!



Oops! Looks like somebody got caught sneaking a cookie from Mama Bear!

After being separated into two smaller groups for almost a year, our Sunshine Preschool kids were very excited to get back together with all their friends starting Valentine's week.

The early childhood years are a critical time for building solid foundations for success. By playing and learning together in a nurturing environment, children are able to develop strong character traits as well as social and life skills that will prepare them to reach their full potential in life.

With their own teddy bear masks in place, all of the kiddos had a "beary" good time learning about loving others and celebrating Valentine's Day with their classmates and furry friends in our Teddy Bear Valentine Village.

Congratulations, Kaliste!



Swimming and Fiesta Fun Day are two of Kaliste's favorite memories of Summer Camp at Eagle Lodge.



Kaliste was a shy little girl when she joined our Kid's Club in 2013. But today she has blossomed into a beautiful and successful young lady.

After graduating in January from North Tech High School, Kaliste is hoping to start job training at Boeing to prepare for a career in engineering.

"Sunshine changed my life," she shares. "I was so shy as a kid I was afraid to do anything. But my big buddies at camp and the leaders at Sunshine helped me to believe in myself and follow my dreams."

Kaliste's mom, a member of our CARE Program since 2004, is very grateful for all that Sunshine has done to support her family.





PREPARING FOR EASTER

This Winter's extreme cold makes us wonder if spring will ever arrive, but Easter is just around the corner. We hope that we will be able to do our annual Easter Dinner Giveaway inside this year. That's always a festive and fun family event with yummy treats and pictures with the Easter bunny. If we're not able to be inside with a large group yet, I guess Mr. Bunny will have to hop out to the parking lot to deliver his sweet treats. Either way, we wouldn't think of missing our opportunity to celebrate Christ with those we serve!

You can help us make this a happy Easter for everyone by helping us collect the ingredients for a special dinner and treats for our families and men.

EASTER DINNER INGREDIENTS

- Boxed Macaroni and Cheese
- Boxed potatoes (any variety)
- Canned vegetables
- Canned sliced pineapple
- Boxed cornbread mix
- Brownie mix
- Bagged easter candy
- Grocery store gift cards to buy fresh hams

FOOD PANTRY & SERVICE NEEDS

- Cereal
- Canned fruit
- Soup and chili
- Canned meals like ravioli and spaghetti
- Boxed cake and muffin mixes
- Snacks for kids
- Cookies and crackers

COMMUNITY CLOSET NEEDS

- Men's underwear and undershirts (new)
- Children's underwear (new)
- Hand sanitizer
- Skin lotion and body wash
- Kleenex
- Dish soap
- Spray cleaners
- Washcloths

FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Please consider a financial donation to support our continuing efforts to serve every man, woman and child who comes to our door seeking healing, help and hope during this uncertain time. Your generosity will help us meet the increased need as well as the added costs of reconfiguring our programs to ensure the safety of each person. Thank You!!!

I would like to give a financial gift to support Sunshine Ministries as they continue to serve our St. Louis neighbors in need during these difficult times.

I want to support Sunshine Ministries with a gift of \$15 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____

I want to partner with Sunshine with a new monthly gift of \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____

My gift by check is enclosed.

Please charge my credit card Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

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To charge your gift by phone, call us at (314)231-8209.

