

Who We Are

St. Vincent Mission is a community of people in Appalachia dedicated to sharing the expression of Christian Values. We believe that all persons have a God-ordained right to the basic needs of life in order to meet their full potential. This is accomplished through concrete programs that encourage discovery, development and use of our personal gifts.

Our Mission is one of HOPE that leads us toward a vision of continuous growth.

Our priorities are to show our community the Love of Christ by helping them bring themselves out of poverty. We do this by:

- Offering programs that include those we serve as the solution to their current challenges.
- Providing work opportunities and education to those seeking employment.
- Encouraging sustainable living through wise spending, gardening and self-help.

Contact Us

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History

In 1968 the Brothers of Charity from Philadelphia began a social service program in Floyd County, Ky. They joined Father William Poole who had just been appointed pastor. The Brothers moved to Martin, Ky. in June, 1968. They took over a building that had been used by the Sisters of Divine Providence as a grade school.



In 1970 the Brothers found a property for sale in the old coal mining town of David, KY. St. Vincent Mission moved to that property and began serving the residence of that town. The number of volunteers and programs grew rapidly. The

Mission began doing social work county wide including the county's first food pantry, home improvements and a child care center. The Mission also started a sewing and crafts program for women and held weekend youth programs and dancing classes, Bible School and helped revive the Boy Scout program.

The town of David had been purchased from the coal company by a man named Woodrow Branham. The town had deteriorated pretty quickly. The concept of a Community Development Corporation began to be discussed as a way for the town to revive itself. In 1972 the idea began to take a more concrete shape and in 1974 we entered an agreement to buy the town of David. The David Community Development Corporation became a reality. The people of the town were organized into a board of Directors and in 1975 the purchase was made. The loan package was seed money from the Brothers of Charity, a Washington group, and the local bank.

Now the mission continues its service in the town of David. Programs have adapted and changed with the needs of our community. Building on our rich history of faith, volunteerism and service we continue to serve God in our outreach to those in need in our community.

How to Advocate for St. Vincent Mission

Who do I talk to?

- People you already have a relationship with
- Your Parish or Church
- Social Justice groups or Bible Studies
- With your family and friends

How to talk to them?

- Let them know how you came to know St. Vincent Mission
- Share with them what programs you are involved in and why
- Tell them why you believe in St. Vincent Mission & what we do:
 - They use donations for the purpose they were designated for
 - I have seen for myself how their donations are used.
 - Talk about our programs.
 - I see that they "Give a hand up rather than a hand out". Share an experience of this that you heard about, saw or read.
- Find out what they are passionate about and talk to them about our programs that align with their passions.
- Share stories about your "Mission" experience.

Examples of Advocates

Larry & Marge have been part of the mission for 15 years. They come about twice a year to drop off food, items and to make substantial monetary donations. They have seen and experienced firsthand what goes on at St. Vincent Mission. When they return to New Jersey, they share their enthusiasm with their family and friends and because of their passion they have enlisted many of them to be donors.

Pat is a high school friend of Sr. Kathleen's. She began to come and visit at first, then accompanied Sr. Kathleen's on Mission talks around the country. She told her brother and sister-in-law about all that she experienced, who shared it with Peggy. Now they are all donors and Pat and her cousins volunteer in our Christmas program.

Needs

Donors:

- Monthly donations – to support programs and daily operational cost.
- Yearly – to support programs and events.

Donations that we have a consistent need for:

- Shampoo, conditioner, body wash, tooth brush/paste
- Dish soap, toilet paper, laundry detergent
- School and office supplies, food

Thrift Store Needs:

- Clothes (especially men’s jeans, sweat pants, hoodies, T-shirts & flannel shirts or kid’s clothes)
- Shoes (tennis shoes and boots, especially for men)
- Kitchen Items, small appliances & furniture
- Toys, tools & electronics

Christmas:

- Clothes (see Website for specific needs for the current year)
- Men’s items such as: tools, wallets, body wash/ cologne sets, work boots, fishing gear, car wash kits
- Household/ kitchen items such as: small kitchen appliances, bedding, towels and wash cloths, pots and pans
- Teen items: make-up, body wash sets, purses, head phones, video games
- Toys

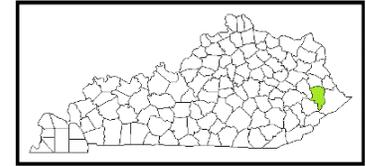
Volunteers:

- Groups to work for a week in Home Repair
- Individual volunteers to serve in all areas of the mission

Pray for:

- Our needs to be met
- Board Members, staff & volunteers
- Our program participants
- Our community
- Others to see the love of Christ & come to know Him as their Savior

Our Service Area



Floyd County-Population 35,589

Floyd County Statistics compared to total U.S	Floyd County	Total U.S
Percent with HS Edu.	73.8 %	87.7 %
Percent with BA Degree	11.25 %	31.5 %
Percent with Disability	22.6 %	8.6 %
Percent in Labor Force	40 %	62.9 %
Median Household Income	\$31,267	\$60,293
Poverty Rate	34.2 %	11.8 %

As you can see from the chart above Floyd County Kentucky has a lower rate of High School graduates, individuals with a BA degree and individuals in the work force. We also have a higher rate of disability and poverty than the national average. Our household income is \$29,026 less than the national median income.

To learn more about Appalachia and Service to those in need read:

- *When Helping Hurts* by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert
- *Helping without Hurting in Short Term Missions* by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert
- *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* by Ronald Eller

How We Serve Well

Our approach to poverty alleviation is holistic. We do not believe that lack of resources is the only thing that leads to poverty. Broken systems, broken regions and broken people all lead to poverty.

Broken Systems: Organizations that endeavor to alleviate poverty by giving handouts without addressing the core issues of poverty.

Social security benefits and food stamps that are cut off the moment someone get a job without a grace period to adjust to the new income stream.

Broken Regions: We have bad roads, isolated areas and people with limited transportation. This leads to fewer job opportunities.

Broken People: People often succumb to patterns of generational poverty, wrong thinking about money and priorities in their spending habits that do not make sense.

We may get a call from someone who needs help with paying an electric bill, but their real need is a job or money management assistance. Both of those we are able to help with, but the real need is not always evident. This is part of the reason for requiring people to volunteer for the assistance we provide. The other reason is that we want people to be empowered to provide for themselves.

Handouts produce dependence. We do not want people to think that the best they can do is beg for help. We empower them with opportunities rather than give them handouts.

Poverty alleviation has to combat all the reasons why someone is living in poverty. It is not merely a lack of material resources. We serve the way that we do because we want to see a long-term change in peoples live. Handouts don't produce long term change. We want to walk with people long term to see them come out of poverty and not need governmental or non-profit assistance. So that they might have the pride of providing for their families themselves.

Christmas Program

What we do:

We provide families with the opportunity to “shop” in our Christmas store. They use points to shop and are able to get items for themselves and their family for Christmas. We have household items, clothes and toys. They also receive hygiene products, a food gift cards and stocking stuffer items.

Who we Help: in 2019 we served 922 people

- We help families who have accessed our services throughout the year such as: Home Repair, Emergency Assistance & Career Readiness.
- Other organizations: Women’s Drug Rehab, a non-profit who serves adults with special needs & chronically homeless people, Fire Departments, Nursing Homes and pre-school classes.

What they do to be a part of the program:

- Year one - no requirements
- Year two - participate in 8 out of 11 classes offered at the mission
- Year three - volunteer at the mission for 12 hours
- Year four - take our 12-lesson Faith and Finances Course

Why we do it this way:

If they are doing things to earn these gifts, then they are the ones providing gifts for their children and they get the joy of giving to their families. This preserves their dignity and helps them to be able to provide.



Community Events

Classes that we Teach:

We offer classes on: healthy, budget and diabetic cooking, crafting, pet care, financial education, work/career skills, maintaining and winterizing you home, seed starting, garden bugs, food preservation, self-defense, advocating for your child and personal health and wellness.



Family Fun Days:

We host several family events such as:

- Easter egg hunt
- Out of School Celebration
- Day Camp
- Back Pack Give Away (In 2019 we gave 185 students backpacks, supplies, clothes and shoes.)
- Fall Festival

Why so many classes and events?



Our area is isolated. Often there are not a lot of free family events. Community events give us the opportunity to connect with our community, share a meal and enjoy each other's company. These events provide relief from isolation, community connections and the opportunity to strengthen family connections.

In 2019 we hosted:

- 10 events with 471 attending
- 36 classes with 187 attending
- 22 garden classes with 74 attending

Emergency Assistance

What we help with:

We assist families with electric, water, insurance, gas cards for medical care, and emergency hotel rooms. Families are able to access assistance once a year. Typically, we pay between \$50 and \$100 on a bill.

Some of the recipients are elderly, disabled, families with several children, individuals coming out of a domestic violence situation and people who have had an unexpected financial burden.

What they do in return:

We ask that when we assist a family with a bill, that a member of the family come volunteer at the mission for 6 hours. Many of the people we serve come with different skills that they are able to use to help us.

Why we do it this way:

Often times someone will come to do their service hours and they will possess a skill that we could really use such as painting, lawn mower repair, lawn care, artistic abilities, computer work, organizational skills, etc. This allows us, as the staff to work with those we serve, so that we are partners, not just an organization giving a hand out. We are both working together and each side is mutually benefited.

Those that we serve are not beggars. They want to earn what they are given. By serving with us to receive the assistance, they have the pride of being able to provide for their families and the joy of knowing that they helped serve their community. Often times, we are able to build a relationship with those that come to work. We are able to talk with them and see that while they came for assistance with a bill, their real need



might be a job. Then we are able to offer them the assistance of our Career Readiness Program. We want to help them find ways to come out of poverty. This is a more holistic approach to poverty alleviation than merely paying a bill for someone.

Career Readiness Internships

What we do

We offer a faith-based course called "Work Life". This course teaches how to write a resume & cover letter, soft skills, conflict resolution, overcoming obstacles to employment and how to navigate the work place to be an effective employee.

While on our program, they work at the mission for 2 days a week at minimum wage. Our program lasts 3 to 4 months and we want them to have a permanent job at the end of their program participation.

We also provide support while they seek a job. Examples of this include letting them know about jobs in the area, helping with applications and practice interviews.

What they do

Interns work in the Home Repair Program, Woodworking, Garden Program, Thrift Store, Food Pantry, Emergency Assistance and Technical Support. This gives them the opportunity to learn a skill that can be used at a job or that they can use themselves to make extra income or provide for their needs (such as gardening, woodworking or repairing their own home to save money). They work alongside employees learning these skills. The employee they work with also teaches them basics principals to being a good employee and works with them on the concepts learned in the work life class.

Why Do We Do This?

Many people we serve through this program have a criminal history, past drug addiction, have never worked a job or they just don't know how to be a good employee. These are all barriers to employment. Our goal is to train people to be good employees, give opportunities to those with past bad behavior and offer an opportunity where there would not otherwise be one.

Getting a positive recommendation from us might breach the barrier of a criminal history. Working with us as a first-time job might lay a positive foundation for future work. Over all we hope to break barriers to employment in the lives of those we serve.

Scholarships

Who we help

- Residents of Floyd County and the surrounding counties
- Low income individuals

What we help with

- We help with up to \$500 per semester
- College/ trade tuition
- Books, uniforms, nursing items, trade items, etc.

How this impacts our community:

In Floyd County Kentucky only 11.25% of the population has a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The national average is 31.5%. The students in our area face a lot of challenges to get an education. Often times students are discouraged by family from gaining a higher education. Sometimes it is due to the shame of being less educated themselves. Sometimes the students are accused of thinking that they are better because they are more educated or seeking more education.

Sometime the thought of a college education can disrupt the family unit. The family might be afraid the student will leave the area, or that it would be too expensive to visit the student. Sometimes adult children help pay the family bills. If the child goes to college they won't be helping the family, and there would be an added expense. Sometimes the family won't be able to send all the children to school so they send none.

Appalachian students also face challenges while in college. College professors might think that the student is less educated due to the way they talk. New surroundings and technology might be difficult to adapt to. Often times people who have grown up in the mountains feel open and exposed in flatter parts of the country. The student also might feel guilty for causing an expense for the family, leaving the family or they might feel that they are prideful for pursuing higher education.

Thrift Store

What we do



Our thrift store is open to the public Monday – Friday 9am to 3pm. We sell clothes, shoes, furniture, household items and toys at a low cost. Often times, when people come to our Food Pantry, they will shop

in the thrift store. This gives people the opportunity to socialize with each other and with staff members. It doesn't seem like much, but when you only leave home a few times a month, having the opportunity to talk and spend time with others can be very important.

Flood, Fire and other Natural Disasters

Sometime people come to the mission who have lost possessions to fire, flood, theft and other situations. People also sometimes need clothes for school, job interviews or specific clothes for work who are unable to purchase them. We provide clothes and household items for free to those who have had some sort of natural disaster. If someone is struggling financially and just needs a little extra help, we ask that they do volunteer work to pay for what they need. Many times people will work for furniture or other household items that they might need.

Home Repair

We help families with room additions, roofs, ramps, decks, foundational issues, floor damage, drywall repair and other repairs.

Volunteers work alongside home owners to help them make the repairs on their own homes. Home owners are fully involved in the process from the beginning. They decide what



repairs are the most important and they pay a part of the materials cost. Often times home owners will prepare

meals for the volunteers as a token of their appreciation. More important than the home repairs are the relationships that are built between home owner & volunteer. Volunteers learn from the home owners and leave Kentucky with a better understanding of our way of life, Appalachian values and our beautiful, wise and creative residents.

Why do we require home owners to help and to pay part of the material cost?

- When you are invested in something you take care of it.
- Many people do not like to ask for help, but when they are a part of the work and pay for part of the material cost they are able to have pride in the work and in their ability to take care of their home.
- When home owners and volunteers work together they learn from each other and build relationships.

Grow Appalachia

Our garden program exists to help people live more sustainable and healthy lives. The Appalachian region has a strong history of farming and self-sustainable living. What we wish to do with this program is to help families get back to those roots. With our high food insecurity rate, it has become necessary for families to grow gardens.



What we do:

Teach courses on: sustainable gardening, organic pest control, organic weed control, canning and other forms of food preservation. We teach a class once a month during the growing season.

What we provide:

Seeds, plants, tools, fertilizer, organic pest control, organic disease control, jars, canners and dehydrators. We till gardens when needed and provide technical support throughout the entire growing season.

We serve about 40 families a year and 5 community gardens. These gardens are located at low income housing communities, a nursing home, local college and the mission itself. These families have formed a community of support and are the back bone of this program.

Food Pantry

What we do:

St. Vincent Mission operates a food pantry that is open on Tuesday and Thursday to our local community. Families are able to come into our food pantry and pick out the food that they would like. They are given a certain number of food items that they are able to get. We let individuals to choose what they want so that they get the items that they actually need for their families.



What we provide:

- Government Commodities- canned food, meat, dairy and frozen food
- Donated and purchased food-boxed and canned items, drinks, meat, prepackaged food from our local grocery store
- Garden produce from our mission garden
- Personal care item such as toilet paper, dish washing liquid, laundry detergent, etc.