

King's Closet.....King of King's

"For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink...I was naked, and you gave me clothing...and the King will tell them, I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these...you were doing it to me..." (*Matthew 25:35-40*).

The King's Closet has a rich heritage not only in what they have given to the community, but also a heritage of those who participate. The members that dutifully and consistently do the work of the King turn our personal closet castaways into treasures for those who are in need. Every Tuesday morning from 9:00—11:00 a.m., the King's Closet team arrives for a workday of sorting and organizing items for the sale. The ministry sells small household items, clothes, shoes, toys, baby items, etc. Generally speaking, the items donated are sold at inexpensive prices to all regardless of ability to pay. As Cle Betts puts it, "there is a dignity in paying." However, in crisis situations, like a Southern Illinois family who had lost a child and everything in their home to fire, the closet would be open at no cost. The money raised is placed in a "Special Fund," with 90 percent of that money is donated to the Community Care Coalition for assistance with utility bills, groceries, prescriptions, etc. The sale has raised over \$7000 in the last 11 sales, and averages approximately \$650 each month.

Nothing donated is wasted. The items that do not sell within three months are picked up by an outlet in St. Louis that distributes the goods literally throughout the world in crisis situations. Some of the goods have gone as far away as Brazil for relief efforts. One of these pick-ups was made the week before Hurricane Katrina. One must wonder if our goods were some of the first to aid the disaster victims?

The King's Closet has an 88 year origin and a rich heritage of dedicated workers. Originally known as the Rummage Room, it was sponsored by the Lebanon Women's Societies as an annual event in the church basement for over 60 years. For many years, Mrs. Bess Nichols chaired the Rummage Room. Later came Helen King, and currently Cle Betts (Helen's daughter) chairs what we now call King's Closet. The King's Closet is no longer a rummage room. Quite the contrary. It is now a well organized store. The King's Closet is organized into sections for proper merchandising and management of sale articles. The door is significant because it replaced the old door that appeared forbidding. The new door, with its window, enables the church to see into the store, even after hours. The window brought the goods out of the closet into welcoming view.

In a 1977 church history article, Helen King states "...We've always operated as a community service. The dollars may indicate volume, but in no way show the scope of the activity...". The full impact of the blessings the King's Closet has made in individual lives will not fully be known here on earth. The number of children who were able to have a coat or a pair of shoes, the elderly person who needed their utility bill paid, or the person who was laid off and had mouths to feed and received grocery money. People right here in our community, maybe your neighbor, maybe yourself.

The church would like to thank Cle Betts, Sherry Farris, Kay Dunn, Doris Snead, Bette Nicholson, Vernon Snead, Loraine Etling, Amy Shake, Margaret Mondt, Ellen Schilling, Marjory Norris, and many others past and present, for their unselfish dedication for advancing the Lord's Kingdom. Please continue to donate your items to the King's Closet. The ministry could not continue without you! Opportunity

Sales are the first Friday of the month after the 3rd. Sale hours are from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. Workdays are every Tuesday from 9:00—11:00 a.m. All are invited to participate, even if you can not work regularly. Please contact Cle Betts (537-2849) for further information .

Kim Vunesky, Outreach Committee Chair