

November

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR NEWS

UNITED MINISTRIES

Celebrating Success in This Fall Season



The heart and soul of United Ministries is assisting families in financial crisis. These crises can vary from job loss to unexpected medical bills. United Ministries stands in the gap so that one monetary emergency does not start a spiral that ends in homelessness.

This season, we have come alongside a single mother who had to step away from work due to a complicated pregnancy. United Ministries was able to pay a past due electric bill and return power to their residence in time to welcome a brand new baby home.

We also had the honor of being able to alleviate part of the financial burden for a grieving family adjusting to the strain of being a one-income household after losing their beloved spouse/parent.



A Letter From Pastor Ashley

Executive Director

Dear friends,

What a joy it is to greet you in this special time of year! For people of faith, this past month has been one of deep reflection, gratitude, grace and hope.



The first Sunday of November was All Saints Day - a high and holy time in the life of God's church. As we thanked God for the many saints who have gone before us, guiding us, encouraging us, and challenging us to be all God has created and called us to be, I thought of the many saints (many of whom are still with us), who helped to form United Ministries more than 30 years ago.

These saints gave (and many continue to give) their hearts, time, resources, prayers and lives to this vision that loving our neighbors is something we can do better *together*. It is something we can do with great *joy* and *determination*, with *hope* and with *faith*, as we surround families who are in crisis with support, encouragement, care and empowerment.

The last Sunday of November was actually the FIRST Sunday of Advent - a time when we are filled with expectation and hope for all that God has done and for all that God *will do* to reach out in love once more to God's world. Many of us lit the candle of hope on the Advent wreath - in our churches and in our homes - and we began a new season of claiming that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness will never overcome it.

Friends, what a hopeful, vital, and life-giving season this is! As we rapidly approach the coldest and darkest days of the year, for so many in our community, life too, is cold, dark and difficult. Yet we share in the opportunity of claiming the light and love of Christ - of *being* and *belonging* to the light and love of Christ as well! We get the opportunity in these days to follow the lead of all those saints who have gone on before, and to share God's light and love with families in our community who need help, hope, homes and power.

So dear ones, in this month of gratitude for those saints who have shown us all that God can do when we are open to God's love, light and leading... for this month that begins the season of Advent - anticipating all that God *will continue to do* when we are open to God's love, light and leading ... in these days, I offer deep thanks and praise to God to belong to the hopeful, expectant, long and faithful work we have for God's kingdom through United Ministries.

We have the hope and the joy of walking alongside *any and all* families in our community who may be going through a dark and difficult time. We have the hope and the joy to choose each day to love our neighbors in tangible ways through United Ministries. And in this season of expectation and waiting, I am grateful to work and to wait alongside each of you.

Thank you dear friends for your prayers, support, love and dedication to a ministry built by faithful saints - *united together* - to live out God's love for families in our community. Thank you for being light in the midst of darkness, and may all the hope, peace, joy and love of the Advent season be ours to share with those who need it most, in these holy days.

Peace and grace,
Pastor Ashley



#GivingTuesday



What is #GivingTuesday?

Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Over the past ten years, this idea has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

Here at United Ministries we would love to be the organization you bless for #GivingTuesday. We have a BIG GOAL of 30 people donating \$30 a month by November 30th. You can donate here <https://campaigns.tithely.com/14798-united-ministries-of-pensacola/30-for-the-30th>

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Thank you to our United Ministries Board - Meet our New President!

We are grateful to God for our faithful Board members at United Ministries! These faith-filled movers and shakers are giving their all for the mission and vision of United Ministries, as we support, encourage and empower families in crisis in our community. We recently held our first Board meeting of the new Fiscal Year, and we are excited for all this Board is hoping to accomplish in the coming year!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022

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President - Dr. Sorna Khakzad Knight, Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Vice President - Rev. Ashlee Brown, Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church

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John Johnson, Opening Doors NWFL

Tom McElhany, Liberty Church

Don McShan, Christ Episcopal Church

Leslie Yandle, First Presbyterian Church



Introducing our new Board President Dr. Sorna Khakzad Knight

1. How long have you been serving with us, and how did you hear about United Ministries?

I joined UM in 2019, when I heard about it through my church, Cokesbury United Methodist Church.

2. What is your inspiration for serving your community?

I have had many heroes and mentors in my life who inspired me to serve my community, no matter where I have lived. I have worked and lived in several places throughout the world, from the Middle-East to Europe to the United States. In all places, I have encountered those who have a heart to help others. From small acts of kindness such as offering me transportation, or allowing me to share their spare rooms, to much grander acts of those who put their lives on hold to travel to far away countries to support earthquake recovery efforts. From each of these inspirational souls I have learned a lot along the way and felt the joy of serving. Most importantly I've personally experienced the joy of doing the work of God.

3. What do you love about United Ministries and why do you give your time to serve God at UM?

United Ministries is just what the title suggests. It is multiple ministries in the Pensacola community uniting together for a common purpose, which is helping families with financial and spiritual needs to prevent homelessness. I love the fact that multiple congregations join together to share in this ministry and I am honored to play a small part.

4. What is your favorite thing about our Gulf Coast Community?

We are blessed to have an outstanding natural environment in which to live. From the pine forests of Milton to the white sands of Pensacola Beach, there is something to love for any outdoor enthusiast. I am grateful to God for creating such a beautiful landscape.

5. Where do you see God at work in our community?

God's spirit is most evident to me during crisis - such as during hurricane recovery, when the community comes together to restore, rebuild and recover. During these times, I see neighbors putting differences aside to help put lives back together. In my daily life, I see God's work in every act of kindness, such as delivering food to the elderly, staffing food banks, or collecting school supplies for children. The point is, each of us can do at least one small thing to help others, and when all these small efforts are combined, big results will become evident.



October 2021

**HOUSEHOLDS
ASSISTED: 17**

**RENT: 4
UTILITIES: 13**

United Ministries assisted 17 households in the month of October, with \$2,575 on rent and \$5,625.12 on utilities.



COVID Related Assistance Requests

October brings
the first drop
in COVID-related
assistance requests
since April

Jan: 29% Jun: 19%
Feb: 39% Jul: 20%
Mar: 24% Aug: 34%
Apr: 16% Sep: 34%
May: 18% Oct: 25%

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

United Ministries
partnered with local
agencies 4 times this
month for \$1,243.86 in
assistance in both Santa
Rosa and Escambia
counties.

4 Partnership Assists



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