

# Protestant Family Service

A faith-based NONPROFIT & PANTRY serving the community for 79 years!

VISION: PFS seeks to provide in a Christian manner the necessary care to the individual that gives hope for a better life.

**WEBSITE:** protestantfamilyservice.com

**EMAIL:** pfsnonprofit@gmail.com

**PHONE:** 330 746-4600 (fax: 330 746-2600)

**FIRST NEWSLETTER OF 2023!**

(Due to the death of our director's husband)

**VOLUME 79 – ISSUE 1**

To all the friends of Protestant Family Service, the “Light of Christ” continues to show through you and your support!



We are always looking for Board Members!

## 2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### BOARD OFFICERS:

Azell Burley, President  
Vacant, Vice President  
Donna Hageman, Secretary  
Harold Blackann, Treasurer

### BOARD MEMBERS:

Willie B. Baker  
Jeannine Baker  
Rev. Walter Hale  
Rev. Gwen Johnson  
Apostle Maralana Martin  
David Moore  
Tayana Smith  
April Terrell

### 2023 STAFF:

#### Executive Director

Cathy Pokrivnak

#### Caseworker/Accountant

Donna James

#### Vantage Employees:

Heather & Mary

#### YSU Interns:

Jolessa (started 5/22/23)

**Webmaster:** Brian West

**Editor:** Cathy Pokrivnak



**NEED A SPEAKER?** PFS is available to speak to any groups. Learn about PFS and our growing programs. We are also available to present a “missions’ moment” during church services. We welcome the opportunity to share our ministry. Our goal is to keep you informed on changes in our community and what our agency is doing to respond to those needs. Contact our office for more information at (330) 746-4600 or pfsclp@gmail.com

*I personally called Bethel but must begin this newsletter with an overdue “public” thank you for **SAVING** our 2022 Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program!*

## NEW BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH God Bless This Beacon in Our Community!

**“They are truly Called & Committed to Fulfill God’s Will.”**

(Quote from their website).

Please support their efforts in creating a community center in their old sanctuary.

The “light of Christ” was shown through the blessing New Bethel Baptist Church bestowed on PFS at Christmas. The use of their old sanctuary **SAVED** our annual Christmas giveaway program. We distributed gifts to the parents of 350 children at our Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program.

**Please join me in thanking our amazing hosts again** at New Bethel Baptist Church at 1507 Hillman Avenue, Youngstown Ohio! A special thank you to Mary Ann Mitchell, church administrator, and church member Ina Madison for organizing this blessing. Thank you also to Rev. Kenneth Simon, Minister Ted Brown, the Deacons and ALL the staff for all their support. Everyone at New Bethel was so welcoming, helpful, awesome in every way and a true example of being servants for the Lord.

*We pray for continued partnership with New Bethel for future PFS Christmas Adopt-A-Family Programs.*

*Blessings, Cathy Pokrivnak*

**“Whoever is kind to the needy honors God”. Proverbs 14:31**

# Message from Cathy Pokrivnak, Executive Director



## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM:

Recently I read that “grief” is the ultimate elephant in the room, so I will bring it up. Yes, January 13, 2023, was one of the hardest day of my life. I have no idea what my future will look like, but I do know I would never have come this far without all of you. The outpouring of love, prayers, concern, caring, cards, gifts, calls, and support is still overwhelming. THANK YOU IS JUST NOT ENOUGH! I still need patience, support, prayers, and God’s guidance as I navigate life without my husband John (Pokey). \*I do know God walks with all of us in our darkness.

THIS YEAR 2023: Our journey to fill the void left by the late Jackie Burley is in its third year. She was not only our former Executive Director but a beloved friend. Your prayers and incredible support have been essential in helping us move forward.

## 2022 ADOPT-A-FAMILY CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:

† First, here is a quote by Hamilton Wright Mabie. I not only love this quote, but this describes all of you coming together to make our Christmas program a success once again! **“Blessed is the season which engages the world in a conspiracy of love.”**

♥ Thank you AGAIN to all of you who helped in any way with our Christmas Program where we assisted over 350 children/105 families.

† I feel so blessed by our cherished Christmas Elves who stepped up volunteering, donating toys, provided knitted hats/gloves/scarfs, gift cards, food, monetary gifts and food cards!

♥ A special thank you to those who helped us while we were in crisis aversion mode. All of you that volunteered or took a “returned” child at the last-minute!

♥ Thank you, Vera and the group Quilts From The Heart! We are so appreciative of the time and love you put in to making the 80 beautiful quilts for the children.

## OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE:

During the five years I volunteered as Jackie’s helper I was very comfortable staying “behind the scenes”. As executive director I have had to jump out of my comfort zone to fulfill several TV interview obligations and invitations to speak at churches and groups about the PFS ministry.

## COMING FULL CIRCLE (what a small world):

One of our dedicated volunteers, Donna Hageman also volunteers for Reading Radio at Youngstown Goodwill. Donna asked me to speak at one of their future meetings and I agreed. I began my talk about the PFS ministry. I was surrounded a friendly attentive audience (in person and many that called in). I spoke about one of my dearest friends, the “late” Sue Brinkman-Drewette as she had taught the visually impaired, the blind, specialized in teaching mobility and so much more. To my surprise some of Sue’s students were in my listening audience. They shared what a gift Sue was to them, adding they would not have achieved the success they have today without her. What a heart-warming moment remembering this special person who died in 2014 of Leukemia. THEN ... some retired Goodwill employees who now volunteer remembered my father, Gerald E. (Jerry) Rushton who died in 1993. My dad was instrumental in helping Goodwill with early investments and was on their Board!

## THANK YOU:

Your continued partnership, support, and prayers are genuinely appreciated. You are true examples of being servants for the Lord. Through your generous help and dedication this allows PFS to respond to the needs of families who have emergency hardships in the community. I thank God, that He placed in your hearts to be a part of our PFS ministry!

*May you be blessed by the deeds you do! In His name, Cathy*



As each one has received a special gift,  
employ it in serving one another as  
good stewards of the  
manifold grace  
of God.

## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, high inflation, and decrease of SNAP benefits we have seen an **unparalleled** increased need for assistants with food and utility help.

A new 71-year-old client came to us for assistance with his electric bill. He is now one of our pantry regulars who lives on the other side of town so drives a fair way to reach us. He is very grateful for the help during his rough time, and the kindness he receives from everyone here at PFS.

A second senior male client contacted PFS requesting help with his water bill. In the past he had reached out to us for help with medications. He lived with his elderly father who was the primary income provider. Unfortunately, his father died due to Covid-19 complications. Dealing with his father's burial expenses and loss of the household's primary income, he got behind in his water bill. We were able to assist him using our **Elderly Stability Fund Program**. He was very thankful for this emergency assistance.

Protestant Family Service has seen an increased number of households with seniors and households without children coming in for food. I believe this is due to the reasons above and higher cost for food and gas. Without the help of individuals, foundations, businesses, and churches donating food and money we could not meet this increased need in our community. We thank all our donors and all our volunteers.

God Bless You All,  
Donna James, MBA, MS  
Caseworker/Accountant



Recently, PFS set a record servicing the needs of **23** clients in one day, on the **23<sup>rd</sup>** day of the of the month in the year **2023!** My heart breaks knowing there is so much hardship in our community, but the fact that PFS has such an amazing Caseworker who conquers every challenge with organization, planning, kindness, compassion and has the best smile was God's plan. You, our staff, and volunteers are so appreciated! Thank you, Cathy Pokrivnak

# MESSAGE FROM THE PFS BOARD PRESIDENT



I PRAY THAT FROM HIS GLORIOUS,  
UNLIMITED RESOURCES HE WILL  
**EMPOWER YOU WITH  
INNER STRENGTH**  
THROUGH HIS SPIRIT.

EPHESIANS 3:16

*Hello to everyone,*

As we hit mid-summer it is hard to believe PFS already sponsored the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Jackie Burley Memorial Charity Golf Tournament on June 16<sup>th</sup>! We sure miss her! A big thank you to everyone who help make this fundraiser successful!

PFS is extremely busy and before they get overlooked, I want to thank all our volunteers as they are amazing every day! We honored them in the spring with a wonderful Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at A LA CART CATERING in Canfield!

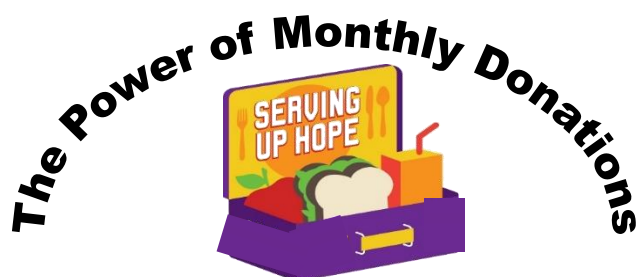
A big thank you to our Executive Director, Cathy Pokrivnak and Caseworker/Accountant, Donna James as they both work tirelessly all year.



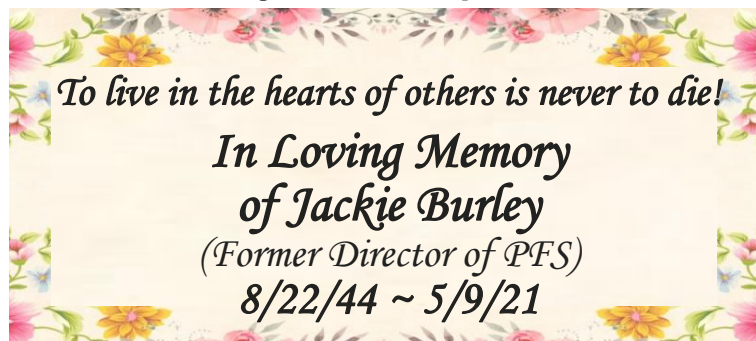
**This duo both retired from Youngstown State University (Cathy in 2015 after 31 years and Donna in 2019 after 30 years).** These dynamic women are making a mark at the Glenwood Plaza our new location and taking the Southside/Ildora area by storm! Please continue to pray for and support them in any way you can!

*In His Service, Azell Burley  
PFS Board President*

If you would like me to email you a copy of this newsletter so you can "share" it, please email me at [pfscpl@gmail.com](mailto:pfscpl@gmail.com) Thanks, Cathy



**Remember us in your Will. Help our work live on ---**





# **I GET IT - YOU THINK IT IS TOO EARLY!**

## **I promise it is not! Here is why:**

If we do not know how many children you, your group, business, foundation, organization, or church will adopt and provide gifts – then we will not know how many children we can help at Christmas. We need this information earlier to gauge how many applications we can accept from families with Christmas need. We begin accepting applications for clients in need starting mid-September. Yes, it is earlier, but this is to avoid the end-of-season panic we had in 2022.

## **PFS NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

### **PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW & READ CHANGES.**

### **We really depend on YOU to make this program successful!**

Please help us provide gifts for these children in need. The gifts are literally put under the tree for Christmas morning by their parents whom we provided wrapping paper, ribbon, and tape.

#### ➤ **AGAIN, IF POSSIBLE, WE NEED YOUR INFORMATION EARLIER:**

We need to know at least an estimate of how many children you, your group, business, organization, foundation or church will adopt **EARLIER** so we can gauge how many applications we can accept from families in need.

#### ➤ **ON DATE 9/11/23** we will begin taking applications for families with Christmas need EARLIER by appointment (inform anyone in need). *\*Many families tried signing up at the last minute in 2022, it was heart breaking.*

#### ➤ **ON DATE 11/6/23** we will **STOP** accepting applications for Christmas help or earlier if resources deplete. Consider putting cards on your Angel Tree EARLIER this year if you use one.

### **ATTENTION: Churches and other's having board meetings:**

**\*Please put PFS on your agenda\***

#### ➤ **PLEA:** Please only take the number of children you able to help.

*\*Last year 50 children were returned last minute which was overwhelming!*

#### ➤ **NEW IMPORTANT PLEA:** Please appoint a designated person(s) to bring all the UNWRAPPED gifts to us no later than Monday, December 11, 2023!

*\*Last year I had so many **unexpected** requests to pick-up gifts, That I had to rent a U-Haul van and hire a driver.*

**QUESTIONS/INFO:** Contact Cathy at pfsclp@gmail.com or 330 718-4733.

### **IMPORTANT DATES VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (Est. 10am - 2pm):**

**12/11/23** All gifts will to be turned in to PFS and we start organizing.

**12/12/23** Last day to organize and make sure all kids have gifts.

**12/13/23** Parents come to pick up gifts.

**\*We also need drinks, cookies, snacks for the volunteers\***



# About Protestant Family Service

## OUR CURRENT PROJECT: BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM

- ♥ We are accepting monetary donations.
- ♥ We provide vouchers for school clothing and shoes.
- ♥ We have 80 children now (more on waiting list) and have donations for 60!

**PFS is not government funded:** We are funded through the generosity of individuals, groups, foundations, businesses, organizations, and churches. In recent years, grants, government surplus food and funding for the purchase of additional food has increased our ability to serve the disadvantaged in our community. **PFS provides assistance** for Back-to-School clothing/shoe, "More Month Than Money" a budgeting class and matching savings program, Crop Walk for Hunger (October), Christmas Assistance (in 2022 we helped 105 families/350 children), emergency food (our pantry usage increased 400% in 2022), utility assistance, family & personal emergencies, Senior Stability Program and so much more.

**Our services are available by APPOINTMENT ONLY!** Monday – Thursday 9 am -- 2 pm / Closed Friday and all holidays / Call: 330-746-4600.

**Utility assistance given to those with provable need:** DOCUMENTS REQUIRED are Proper Photo ID / Proof of income / Other proof as requested. **Food is always available:** Other emergency aid is available as funds permit / PFS works in conjunction with other local social service agencies and offers a wide variety of referral and informational services / Protestant Family Service does not discriminate against anyone based on religion, national origin, race, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical disability in the administration of our programs. **The assistance PFS provides is only made possible by donations from:** Individuals, churches (all denominations), other groups, businesses, grants, families, church groups, foundations, organizations, food programs/drives, youth groups.



**PRE-COVID:** We were blessed with numerous churches & organizations who were signed up for a month to help stock our pantry.

**POST-COVID:** We are blessed SLOWLY getting churches & organizations back on our monthly schedule. We need more help and PFS is having to buy cereal, pasta, and soap almost weekly. So, if your group would like to sign up for a month contact Cathy Pokrivnak.

**I am astounded at the current state of the economy.** This is a reminder of how crucial our ministry is to the overwhelming needs of the clients we serve. Our pantry usage went up 400% in 2022 and still climbing. **Jesus is always showing His love for us through people like you!** This is a critical time for many families! The PFS ministry has been hit hard by an **unprecedented** increase in requests for stability resources. Cathy

PANTRY IMMEDIATE NEEDS	PANTRY WISHES
Cereal	Feminine pad products
Soap	Dish washing detergent
Pasta (we have pasta sauce)	Clothes washing powder
Canned Tuna or Salmon	Deodorant/toothbrush (we have toothpaste)

- ♥ We welcome any type of help or donations for our Pantry (any brands and from any stores). In the event you are interested in some money saving tips we have found – then read below.
- ♥ Cathy goes every weekend to ALDI's to buy 50+ boxes of cereal / Family Dollar to buy five 10-pack bars of soap.
- ♥ Prices of cereal at **ALDI's** is the best in town! For example, a huge family size 29oz box of Corn Flakes is only \$1.50 and a huge family size 29oz box of Frosted Flakes is around \$3.00.
- ♥ We have found **Dollar Tree** has a 3 pack of individually wrapped soap for \$1.25 and **Family Dollar** to have 10 packs of individually wrapped soaps for about \$5.00!

Protestant Family Service Nonprofit & Pantry  
Cathy Pokrivnak, Executive Director  
NEW ADDRESS (**forward order expiring**)  
2915 Glenwood Avenue, #6, Youngstown OH 44511  
**2023 NEWSLETTER Volume 79, Issue 1**

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CONGRATULATIONS GOLF TOURNAMENT WINNERS

The Jackie Burley 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial  
Was held on Friday, June 16, 2023



**1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE**

Team: Gary Trybus, Rick Ulery,  
Kenny Pavlik, Vince Gentile

**2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE**

Team: Tim Meehan, Pat DeVito,  
Mike Drozda, Bill O'horo

**3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE**

Team: Jeff Grdic, Matt Connelly,  
Frank Constantino, Jim Sebastian

**ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR!**

**Thank you** to our golfers, all who donated and put an Ad in our Booklet. Also to our 10 golf hole sponsors, volunteers, and golf committee! A special thank you to our five \$600 GOLD SPONSORS: Harold Blackann CPA, Boak & Sons, Braydich Dental, Home Carpet and Poland Medical Center!

**SAVE THE DATE: Friday, June 21, 2024**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Jackie Burley Memorial Charity Golf Tournament

**DO YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS?  
A MONTH? A YEAR?  
TO VOLUNTEER?**



*A note from Cathy Pokrivnak,*

*When Jackie was Executive Director, I volunteered for her since I retired in 2015 from YSU. I did all the extras like newsletter, booklets, reports, fundraisers and so on. Since I do not have a “Cathy” like Jackie did I could really use some help!*



- + Need help with answering phones always.*
- + Need people to help Donna in the pantry most Tuesday mornings early to stock food.*
- + Need help creating/updating the newsletter.*
- + Need help with the mailing list (in Excel).*
- + Need help with sending announcements to the media, thank you letters and emails.*
- + Need help with all the organization connected with our Christmas Program.*
- + Need help with all the paperwork and organization connected with the Golf Fundraiser.*

***Every Volunteer is a winner!***



**We could never implement our services without our benevolent army of volunteers.**

- **Every hour worked multiplies our impact**, enabling us to do more with every dollar.
- **It is impossible to put a price on volunteer time** because you cannot put a dollar value on what it means to bring a smile to a struggling family. Nor can you calculate the “ripple effect” of one good deed!

**PFS has an immediate need for volunteers of all ages!**

Please consider donating a few hours.

**INTERESTED?** We are open Monday-Thursday 9am–2pm. Please email our volunteer supervisor April at [aprilshowers@zoominternet.net](mailto:aprilshowers@zoominternet.net) *Blessing, Cathy.*