



# Shepherd's WATCH

GOOD SHEPHERD CHILDREN &amp; FAMILY SERVICES

Dear Friends,

Every day across the Archdiocese, I witness something sacred: the quiet ways hope is born – not through grand gestures but through simple acts of kindness. That's what Catholic Charities does. Whether we are case managers, counselors, administrators or facilities workers, we show up and offer kindness.

This is true in our Treatment Foster Care program where children with deep trauma need the highest level of care. These children often have stories of abandonment, abuse and instability. And yet – when a foster parent opens their door to them, hope begins again.

A foster mother once said to me: *"I can't fix everything. But I can be there when school calls. I can sit with her when she's scared. I can make sure she's not alone."*

Isn't that what Jesus does for us? He didn't promise us an easy road. But He walks it with us, and He sends us to do the same for others.

Do you know someone who can help us in our Treatment Foster Care program? Could it be you? We are making a concerted effort to increase our number of willing and well-trained families to provide care for children who are among the most vulnerable in our region. If someone comes to mind, please encourage them to reach out to [gstfc@gstl.org](mailto:gstfc@gstl.org).



With Gratitude,

*Kathy Fowler*

Kathy Fowler, Executive Director



## HOPE GROWS WHEN SOMEONE STEPS UP A Journey Into Treatment Foster Care

Stephanie is a mother of grown biological children, an IT professional and a rural Missourian. For the girls who've come to her home, some scarred by trauma, Stephanie is much more. A steady presence. A safe place. The woman she herself needed as a child.

Stephanie is a licensed foster parent and has welcomed eight girls into her home. Her calling shifted when one girl began showing signs of deeper needs. Rather than see her transferred to another home, Stephanie became certified as a Treatment Foster Care (TFC) provider.

*"This young woman made progress in my home. I wasn't letting her go. I wanted to be the place where she stayed."*

TFC is a specialized form of foster care for children who've experienced significant trauma, abuse or neglect. It requires a higher level of support and training and a focused, team-based approach.

For Stephanie, every girl who enters her home brings new needs; she meets them with a personalized approach. *"There's no one-size-fits-all,"* she says.

This mindset has deepened since becoming a TFC provider, especially with the support of Good Shepherd. *"My [TFC Specialist] has been with me from the start. I can call her at midnight, and she answers. You don't get that support everywhere, and it makes all the difference."*



## The Power in COMMUNION OF CARE



The ten ministries of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of St. Louis share a vision: to be a leader in community renewal and social outreach by connecting people, parishes and ministries in a communion of care for those in need. Together, we offer a range of services that help families build stability, including maternity and pregnancy support for women facing crisis pregnancies. Our goal is to ensure babies are born healthy and that mothers and families are prepared to begin a new chapter.

The power of this shared mission comes to life in the story of Maria.\* Maria initially came to Catholic Charities Saint Martha's ministry. Pregnant and

seeking safety, she found refuge with the team, who then connected her to our LAMP Interpreters ministry for Spanish-language interpretation. As her situation stabilized, staff referred her to Good Shepherd's Pregnancy and Parenting Support (PPS).

Today, Maria is working and living in our shelter, where she continues to receive education, guidance and encouragement from a pregnancy specialist in PPS. The teams are helping her secure identification documents and providing ongoing interpretation as she navigates a new country and continues to prepare for her newborn.

Maria is eagerly awaiting her baby's arrival. She shares that one of her dreams is to teach her child English, a goal she is pursuing for herself as well.

Soon, she will be connected to Marygrove's Independent Living program, where she can continue building stability and move toward long-term housing and independence.

\*Name changed to protect client confidentiality.

## Meet Erika Rodgers

### Donor Engagement Coordinator

Catholic Charities is excited to welcome Erika Rodgers to the shared Philanthropy Team for Good Shepherd and Marygrove as our new Donor Engagement Coordinator. Erika brings a vibrant mix of creativity, compassion and communications skills to the team.



***"I'm thrilled to be part of a team that's changing lives every day."***

Originally from out of state, Erika moved to St. Louis in March 2024 and quickly found herself drawn to the community's heart for service and connection.

With a background in marketing, design and storytelling, she's passionate about building authentic relationships and finding creative ways to connect donors with the mission that drives our work.

"I'm thrilled to be part of a team that's changing lives every day," Erika shares. "The work happening here is so meaningful, and I'm excited to help others see the impact their generosity makes."

Outside of work, Erika enjoys planning events, exploring local coffee shops and tending to her growing collection of houseplants. She's also a huge hockey fan and loved attending her very first St. Louis Blues game in December.

Erika is eager to meet our supporters, learn their stories and find new ways to bring people closer to the mission of Good Shepherd and Marygrove.



## Safe4ANight Success

Thank you for making this year's #Safe4ANight campaign a success! Because of your generosity, we raised more than \$273,000 to help provide safe shelter, meals and care to moms and babies. Your support makes hope possible, and we couldn't do it without you!

## Maximize YOUR Impact with a Missouri Tax Credit

Did you know your support for Catholic Charities ministry Good Shepherd Children and Family Services can also benefit you at tax time? Financial gifts of \$1,000 or more are eligible for a 70% Missouri State Tax Credit, which is a direct, dollar-for-dollar reduction of the state income tax you owe. Combined with federal and state charitable deductions, your net out-of-pocket cost can be significantly reduced, sometimes to less than 20% of your original gift. Your generosity will continue to directly impact mothers, children and families across the Archdiocese and it can lower your tax burden as well.

For more information, please contact Courtney Noto, Senior Director of Philanthropy at [cnoto@gsstl.org](mailto:cnoto@gsstl.org).

**Eligible donations of  
\$1,000+ get a 70%  
MO State Tax Credit**

**SCAN TO DONATE**





# The COURAGE & GRACE of Adoption

Adoption, while often misunderstood, is true sacrificial love and hope born out of loss. And this past year, that grace has been on full display at Good Shepherd. The Adoption Team has increased placements from three in 2023 to 16 (!) in 2025. The response the team continues to receive only affirms that consistent outreach to pregnancy resource centers, hospital social work services, clinics, schools and children's division partners is making a real impact.

In 2025, the team began partnering with Lutheran Family & Children in providing a monthly birth parent group. Adoption is not a single event, and it certainly is not rejection. It's a birth mother's unconditional love that inspires her to put her child's needs above her own. This group honors that strength and creates a safe, supportive space where these brave women gain community and are truly seen and heard.

Good Shepherd is blessed to witness the beauty and complexity of adoption every day; from sacred hospital moments to post-placement updates filled with gratitude, each story reminds us that adoption is not an ending but a beginning of a lifelong connection.

For more information on adoption services, please contact Joy Quante, Director of Adoption, at [jquante@gsstl.org](mailto:jquante@gsstl.org).



## How Pregnancy & Parenting Support helped one mother rewrite her family's story

When Katie\* first connected with Pregnancy and Parenting Support (PPS), she was overwhelmed. Pregnant, unable to work because of medical complications, and caring for her 10-year-old, she had fallen behind on rent and was facing eviction. Our team immediately stepped in, connecting her with community partners who provided crucial rental assistance and stabilized her housing.

Since her baby's birth eight months ago, Katie has shown extraordinary resilience. She returned to work, at times juggling two jobs, while faithfully attending PPS meetings in person and remotely. She has remained committed to every parent-training session and continues to balance the demands of work, parenting and running a household.



Her youngest child requires ongoing medical care, and Katie has never missed an appointment. Even when depression and relationship challenges pop up, she leans on healthy coping strategies, self-care and the support she receives through PPS.

Today, Katie is thriving and giving back. She actively shares resources and referrals with our team so other families can benefit. She says she appreciates the emotional support, education, diapers, wipes and community connections that PPS provides. And we're honored to walk with Katie through her baby's first year and beyond.

For more information on PPS services, please email Sarah Miller, Director of PPS, at [smiller@gsstl.org](mailto:smiller@gsstl.org).

\*Name changed to protect client confidentiality.

## GOOD SHEPHERD BOARD SPOTLIGHT

### Mike Burns



A lifelong St. Louisan and proud Kirkwood graduate, Mike has built his life around family, creativity and service. He and his wife, Maureen, have been married 34 years and are the parents of four grown children — Michael, Christian, Taylor and Elizabeth — and grandparents to Hattie, Tripp and two little ones on the way. After a long career in advertising, culminating in his role as President of Wunderman Thompson Health, he is now a founding partner at Covington Place Partners, an AI advisory firm.

Drawn to Good Shepherd's mission and the real, measurable difference it makes in the lives of vulnerable families, he is honored to serve his second term on the Board. He brings a creative mindset, including a pitch for the popular dodgeball fundraiser. He hopes to continue helping the organization grow its reach and impact.

When he's not working or volunteering, he enjoys golf, pickleball, traveling and time with his family and remains inspired by the life-changing hope Good Shepherd provides.

***"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."***

— Psalm 147:3



## #KeeleyCares

### DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT

February 27 | 6-10 p.m. | Bud Dome Sports Complex



- It's dodgeball night! Think gym class but with beer and no high school drama.
- Proceeds benefit Catholic Charities Good Shepherd Children & Family Services.
- Hosted by #KeeleyCares, the philanthropic foundation of Keeley Construction.
- Tickets include draft beer, food and entertainment!
- Must be 21 or older to play or attend.

Visit the Events section of [goodshepherdstl.org](http://goodshepherdstl.org) to register teams, sign up to volunteer or to become a sponsor.



#### MISSION

To bring the healing, help, and hope of Jesus Christ to those in need with a compassionate, caring presence.

#### VISION

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of St. Louis will be a premier leader in community renewal and a visible catalyst for social outreach by connecting with people, parishes, and ministries committed to a meaningful communion of care to those in need across every square mile of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

#### GOOD SHEPHERD PURPOSE STATEMENT

Connecting children with families and keeping families connected by providing pregnancy and parenting support, foster care programs, and adoption services.

- Dodgeball Fundraiser
- Pregnancy & Parenting Support
- The Courage & Grace of Adoption
- Meet Erika Rodgers
- Our Community of Care
- Foster Care
- A Journey to Treatment
- Executive Director's Message

What's Inside

