



# Shepherd's WATCH

GOOD SHEPHERD CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

SPRING 2026

Dear Friends,

As spring returns, we are reminded not simply of new beginnings but of the steady rhythm of seasons of renewal that follow even the longest, coldest winters. Transformation is rarely a fresh start. More often, it is a journey alongside someone through seasons of challenge, resilience, and renewed hope.

On Good Shepherd Sunday (April 26), we reflect on Christ as the Good Shepherd who walks with His flock through every valley and hillside. This is the heart of our work at Good Shepherd Children & Family Services: staying present with mothers, children, and families as they move through difficult seasons toward moments of growth, beauty, and warmth.

Your support makes this journey possible in deeply tangible ways. It allows us to walk with mothers through pregnancy and parenting with guidance and encouragement, to provide children in foster care with safety and stability during times of disruption, and to help create and strengthen adoptive families rooted in lasting connection and belonging. Because of you, families are not navigating these seasons alone. They are met with expertise, compassion, and the opportunity to experience renewal in its truest form.

As we continue to strengthen and expand our programs, your support through time, talent, and treasure remains essential. Gifts of \$1,000 and above may qualify for 70% PRC (Pregnancy Resource Center) and MAT (Maternity Home) tax credits, offering a meaningful way to support our mission while also receiving significant tax benefits.

Thank you for walking alongside us – and especially the families we serve – through every season.



With gratitude,

Kathy Fowler, Executive Director



## Building Families, Building Community

In the first months of 2026, the Adoption program at Good Shepherd has already seen life-changing impact. The program has facilitated two adoption placements, each representing a child welcomed into a loving home. And behind these amazing moments is a growing community that helps to make them possible.



During Catholic Schools Week, Immacolata School (pre-K through grade 8 in Richmond Heights) collected donations to support birth mothers and adoptive families. Donations were used to fill self-care baskets and provide children's books. Notre Dame High School (Lemay, St. Louis County) contributed monetary donations, and St. Simon the Apostle Church (Green Park) hosted a baby shower and offered gift cards and financial support.

"These partnerships are invaluable," said Joy Quante, Director of Adoption. "We are beyond grateful."

This spirit of connection continues to grow. In February, the program hosted an adoptive family craft day, bringing families together for support and fellowship. Beginning this year, additional gatherings will be held quarterly to strengthen relationships among waiting and current families.

Outreach is expanding, too. Staff recently presented to nursing students at Missouri Baptist University, focusing on adoption education and language. The positive response led to an invitation to return annually.

Looking ahead, an adoptive family picnic is planned for May 2 at Tilles Park. This will be yet another opportunity to build connection.

Each placement, partnership, and conversation reflects something deeper: a community coming together to support children, families, and the gift of new beginnings.

For additional information on the Adoption program or the upcoming family picnic, please reach out to Joy at [jquante@gsstl.org](mailto:jquante@gsstl.org).

## MODELING COMPASSION: Karen Belton, Co-Worker of the Quarter

At Good Shepherd's Maternity Shelter, compassion isn't just a value painted on a wall or listed in an employee handbook; it's something lived daily. And few embody that more fully than Karen Belton, recently named Co-Worker of the Quarter.

Karen, a Parenting Specialist, is described by her colleagues as the true definition of a team player. One co-worker shared, "I can't begin to describe how much I've learned from her. The love she has and shows for the clients is beyond comparable." What stands out most is Karen's ability to treat each client like family, something that rubs off on both her colleagues and the young mothers she serves.

Through her example, Karen models kindness, patience, and active listening. She walks alongside young mothers facing complex challenges, offering not only guidance in parenting skills but also something deeper: unconditional love and acceptance. For many clients who carry trauma, especially from the absence of a maternal figure, Karen becomes a steady and healing presence.

Her impact is best seen in stories like Diana's. A year ago, Diana arrived at the shelter pregnant, aging out of foster care, and on the brink of being unhoused. Karen quickly built a trusting, motherly relationship with her, helping her navigate both motherhood and life's challenges. Today, Diana has secured housing, employment, and childcare and recently returned to tell Karen all about it.

Karen's compassion doesn't just support change. It inspires it.



## Pregnancy and Parenting Support From Uncertainty TO NEW BEGINNINGS

At just 18 years old, Colleen\* is preparing to welcome her first child this year. It's a moment filled with anticipation and hope but also real challenges. She and the baby's father, both determined and resilient, graduated high school early in December 2025 and are now working full-time at a fast-food restaurant. With limited family support, they knew one thing for certain: securing stable housing before their baby's arrival was essential.

That goal did not come easily.

With guidance and encouragement from her caseworker, Colleen began navigating the often overwhelming process of applying for income-based housing. At every visit, she was reminded to keep calling, to keep trying, to not give up. And she didn't.

Recently, Colleen achieved a major milestone. She secured a townhouse and moved in, creating a safe and stable space for her growing family.

To celebrate this important development, Good Shepherd provided a collection of donated essentials to help them get started: blankets, pots and pans, towels, and a small food gift card. Simple items, but ones that can transform a space into a home.

Colleen's journey is a clear reminder that stability doesn't happen overnight. It's built through perseverance, support, and the presence of people who walk alongside families in their most vulnerable moments.

Because of supporters like you, young families are not alone. They are given the tools, encouragement, and resources they need to move forward, one step, one milestone, one new life at a time.

For more information about our Pregnancy and Parenting Support (PPS) program, please contact Jessica Harris, Director of PPS, at [jharris@gsstl.org](mailto:jharris@gsstl.org).

*\*Name changed to protect client confidentiality.*

## 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 may be 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+ may get a 70% MO State Tax Credit

SCAN TO DONATE





## GOOD SHEPHERD BOARD SPOTLIGHT

### Teresa Beatty

is a seasoned executive leader currently serving in a senior leadership role with SSM Health, where she oversees systemwide operations, including Case Management, Social Work, Clinical Documentation Integrity, and Utilization Management. She also leads strategic initiatives that unite physician and executive leaders to advance organizational goals and performance outcomes.



Teresa brings a deep commitment to service and a strong sense of calling to her work in healthcare and ministry. She is honored to join the Board of Good Shepherd Children & Family Services and looks forward to serving with dedication and purpose. Teresa has been married for 32 years and has two adult sons, and she enjoys being an active part of their lives.

### Honoring Sarah Miller, and Welcoming Jessica Harris

After nearly 13 years of dedicated service, Sarah Miller, Director of Pregnancy and Parenting Support (PPS), will be leaving Good Shepherd. Beginning as a foster care case manager, Sarah grew into an exceptional leader, guiding the expansion of PPS into new counties and helping the team serve 322 families in 2025 through more than 2,800 home visits. Her compassion and leadership have left a lasting impact on both staff and families.

We are pleased to welcome Jessica Harris as the new Director of PPS. A licensed clinical social worker with a master's in social work, Jessica joined Good Shepherd in 2021 and has played a key role in expanding services, especially in rural communities. Her passion for outreach, strong leadership, and commitment to supporting both families and staff position her well for this next chapter.

## Treatment Foster Care: Our Missing Puzzle Piece

### Ashley and Brett's Journey to Adoption Brought Hope to Many Lives

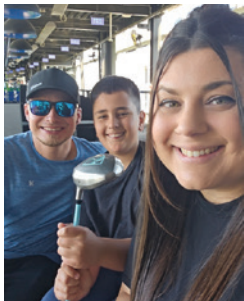
Ashley and Brett like to call their home the "House of Misfits." Every animal in their home has been adopted, so when it came time to grow their family, adoption felt like a natural next step.



"We'd been talking about it for years," Ashley said. "At first, we thought about a baby, but the more we learned, the more we realized how many older kids are out there waiting. We decided we wanted to help a child who needed us."

Through a connection with Good Shepherd, they began the journey, guided by their caseworker and inspired by others who had adopted before them. They were introduced to Jace, an 11-year-old who had experienced significant trauma and needed a higher level of care known as Treatment Foster Care (TFC).

"TFC was a blessing in disguise for our family. We honestly don't know what we would have done without the support and care shown by our TFC Specialist Lisa Govero," said Ashley. "Being able to have someone come to us, answer our million questions, and then give support where needed made this experience so much more special for us. An amazing program with truly amazing people!"



Early meetings with Jace were virtual, and soon his personality began to shine. When they learned they matched, Ashley had one request: "He has to be here by Christmas!" That happened, making the holiday, and their shared late-December birthday, special.

Jace came to them with a strong foundation, thanks to a previous foster parent who provided consistent, loving care. "That foundation made a difference," Brett said. "He came to us headed in the right direction."

"With comprehensive support, Jace found healing and stability. Ashley and Brett exemplified what it means to be appreciative and resilient TFC caregivers. Their partnership with us has been inspiring, and we're honored to celebrate this family as they begin a new chapter," said Lisa.

The adoption was finalized in June. The family continued to bond over shared interests like basketball, camping, and exploring new experiences together. More importantly, they created a home built on honesty and understanding. Drawing from their own life experiences, Ashley and Brett have helped Jace focus not on his past, but on the future he is building.

For Ashley, the transformation has been profound. "Jace was our missing puzzle piece," she said. "Now, I feel complete." Brett agrees: "I didn't realize how much light and joy we needed until he brought it into our lives."

## Do you have a home where hope can grow?

Treatment Foster Care homes provide children with emotional or behavioral challenges a family setting and specialized support conducive to healthy growth and development. If you are interested in becoming a foster parent or know someone who might be, please contact Deva Blackman, Director of Resource Development, at [dblackman@gsstl.org](mailto:dblackman@gsstl.org).



**Save  
THE  
Date**

## 19th Annual GOOD SHEPHERD CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

**TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026 | Norwood Hills Country Club**  
Registration and Lunch: 11:00 a.m. Shotgun Start: 12:00 p.m.

REGISTER NOW: [GOODSHEPHERD26.GIVESMART.COM](http://GOODSHEPHERD26.GIVESMART.COM)

For information about sponsorships or details on the event, contact:  
[KellyWinter@IGHEventswithpurpose.com](mailto:KellyWinter@IGHEventswithpurpose.com) or (636) 368-6274.



### 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.

- Letter from Executive Director Kathy Fowler
- Celebrating Adoption
- Maternity & Transitional Living Support
- Pregnancy and Parenting Support Tax Credits
- Treatment Foster Care
- Good Shepherd Board Spotlight
- Golf Tournament 2026

## What's Inside

