

# MORNINGSTAR MISSION MINISTRIES CHRONICLE

Good News About Changing Lives

WINTER 2021

## "Good to Know Somebody Cares"

*How you brightened this family's  
Christmas through Stars of Hope.*

Christmas was coming, and Tanicka was worried that when her kids woke up on that special day, they wouldn't find much of anything under the tree.

A single mother of three young boys, Tanicka had recently divorced and lost her job, going from a relatively comfortable life to one of uncertainty.

"I was worried I wouldn't be able to provide my kids with much of a Christmas," Tanicka says. "I was worried they would be disappointed."

But that's where you came to the rescue.

Tanicka and her boys had landed at MorningStar Mission, where our annual Stars of Hope program brings joy — and gifts — to struggling families.

Qualified families submit wish lists for every member of the family. MorningStar supporters shop to fulfill those lists. (*Learn more on page 3.*)

*"I told my boys that other  
people thought of us and  
wanted to bless our family"*

Tanicka wasn't sure what to expect when her family turned in their wish lists. "I reminded my boys that they might not get this or that just because they asked for it."

But all three boys — and Tanicka herself — received everything they asked for. Tanicka was overwhelmed.



**Tanicka and her boys with  
some of the gifts they received  
through Stars of Hope.**

"People don't have to be that generous," she says. "They could buy whatever they want, but they provided everything on the wish list."

Her youngest son asked for — and received — PAW Patrol toys. Her middle one got the Avengers action figures he requested. Her oldest got a portable gaming system that he'd hoped for. They also received clothes and shoes.

And Tanicka got the winter coat she wished for, plus a few other items.

## No "Santa Thing"

Though young, Tanicka's sons knew there were financial struggles, and they asked where the presents had come from.

"I didn't do the Santa thing," Tanicka says. "I told my boys that other people thought of us and wanted to

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## A Note from Sandi

***"A thrill of HOPE, the weary world rejoices ..."***

At MorningStar Mission, we're all about delivering hope to a weary world, as that line from "O Night Divine," the beloved Christmas hymn, promises.

**All of our work is centered on the gospel, the best good news of all time.**

During the Christmas season, a big part of our ministry turns to Stars of Hope, our program for providing gifts and meeting needs for struggling families. You'll read more about it in this edition of the *Chronicle* — starting with Tanicka's story on the cover page. *I hope that after reading, you'll consider helping a family this year too.*

I pray that you and your loved ones will know the thrill of hope this season:

***"For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn ..."***

***Fall on your knees!  
Oh, hear the angel voices!***

***O night divine, the night when  
Christ was born."***

Sincerely,

Sandi Perzee  
Executive Director

## "It's Very Fulfilling"

*Why this retiree spends her time volunteering at MorningStar.*

**N**ancy was looking for something rewarding to do in her retirement.

She made a few calls, exploring several opportunities. When MorningStar called her back and said they could use her help, she said yes right away.

That was seven years ago, and she's been volunteering regularly with us since.

"It's a worthwhile cause," says Nancy, who volunteers twice a week in our warehouse, and more often as Christmas nears. "It's very fulfilling. I know I'm helping people who really need help, especially during the holidays."

At the warehouse, the Mission stores almost anything you could think of that a family would need — clothes for adults and children, toys, school supplies, toiletries and other essentials.

Nancy and several other volunteers keep it all organized, and they package items as needed for events — like Stars of Hope. (See story on page 3.)

Her favorite part of the job? Interacting with families who receive the Mission's services.

"Meeting families is really nice," Nancy says, "especially seeing the kids get excited around Christmastime."

"MorningStar serves a lot of people who would not normally be able to afford what we're giving them. Parents are often just trying to give their kids a nice Christmas."

Nancy encourages others in the community to join her as a volunteer.

"We can always use help, especially during the holidays," she says. "The families we serve are so appreciative, and it makes you feel really good about what you're doing."

***Interested in volunteering? Go to [MorningStarMission.org/volunteer](http://MorningStarMission.org/volunteer)***



**Like you, Nancy loves helping families in need, especially during the holidays.**

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## "Good to Know Somebody Cares"

buy these gifts for us, that people worked hard and decided to bless our family."

Tanicka says it made for a teachable moment — that someday, when they've risen above their current circumstances, they can do something similar ... and bless other families for the holidays.

She's on her way already. They've moved out of the shelter and are now renting a house from MorningStar as the next step toward independent living. She's pursuing a nursing degree, and hopes to land a good job after that.

In the meantime, her family is grateful for your Christmas kindness.

"When people land on hard times, it's good to know somebody cares, even though they don't even know us," Tanicka says.

"When I get back on my feet, I will remember where I've been, and I want to do this for somebody else. Thank you!"

***Thank YOU for brightening up Christmas for families like Tanicka's.***





**The Stars of Hope program ensures that kids will find gifts under the tree on Christmas Day.**

## **"An Awesome Program"**

*Stars of Hope brightens the holidays for struggling families.*

**O**n Christmas morning, children deserve to wake up and find some gifts under the tree. But not all families can afford it.

That's why the Mission's Stars of Hope program exists — to ensure that children from low-income families receive Christmas presents. Qualified families can register at MorningStar to receive food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas, and to participate in Stars of Hope. Over 200 children and 78 families will benefit this year.

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***"You want your kids to have a nice Christmas, and Stars of Hope does that."***

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"Stars of Hope is an awesome program," says Tanicka, a single mother whose family has benefited from the program. "You want your kids to have a nice Christmas, and Stars of Hope does that. We are so grateful."

Everyone who registers for the program gets to make a "wish" list and a "needs" list. Parents or guardians can fill out a form for their children 17 and younger. Parents can also turn in their own lists.

Each list then becomes a star that donors can adopt — red stars for needs and green stars for wishes. Donors purchase items from the star and drop them off at the Mission, where families then pick up the gifts in plenty of time for Christmas.

Tanicka says she and her three young boys have been overwhelmed at the generosity of those who purchase items for Stars of Hope . . . and she makes sure her sons know that it's all made possible by the kindness of strangers.

*Stars of Hope can only happen with the generous support of friends like you. Please consider participating this year. See instructions below.*

**To participate, please contact the Mission at 815.722.5780. You'll receive complete instructions when you pick up your star or stars.**

**You'll bring the joy of Christmas to local children and families.  
Thank you!**





# 'Tis the Season

Your support and local partners bring glad tidings to families in need.

There's always a lot happening around the Mission during the holiday season. Here are just a couple of yearly highlights happening in your community:

- **New Lenox Cares**, sponsored by the New Lenox Police Department, is an event to help children purchase gifts for their families during the holiday season, as well as to have a positive experience with a local police officer. *Tentatively scheduled for Saturday, December 4.*
- **Shop with a Sheriff** is an event with the sheriff's office to help at-risk youth have a positive experience with a Will County sheriff's officer and help them afford gifts for their families during the holiday season. *Tentatively scheduled for Saturday, December 11.*

For more information about our holiday events and how you can help, please visit our calendar of events page at [MorningStarMission.org/events](http://MorningStarMission.org/events). Thank you!

## Christmas Dinner Supplies Needed

For our annual Christmas Dinner for our guests and community, we rely on donors like you for the following items:

- |                                 |                         |                           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| • <b>TURKEYS</b><br>(17-18 LB.) | • <b>SALAD DRESSING</b> | • <b>FLOUR</b>            |
| • <b>HAMS (8-10 LBS.)</b>       | • <b>CANNED SOUP</b>    | • <b>CAKE MIXES</b>       |
| • <b>BAG OF POTATOES</b>        | • <b>PASTA</b>          | • <b>ICING MIXES</b>      |
| • <b>CANNED VEGETABLES</b>      | • <b>PASTA SAUCE</b>    | • <b>BAGS OF CANDY</b>    |
| • <b>CANNED FRUITS</b>          | • <b>COFFEE</b>         | • <b>PACKAGED COOKIES</b> |
| • <b>CANNED CRANBERRIES</b>     | • <b>TEA</b>            | • <b>COOKING OIL</b>      |
| • <b>BREAD</b>                  | • <b>JUICE</b>          | • <b>KETCHUP</b>          |
| • <b>PEANUT BUTTER</b>          | • <b>MILK</b>           | • <b>MUSTARD</b>          |
| • <b>JELLY</b>                  | • <b>EGGS</b>           | • <b>SALT</b>             |
| • <b>CEREAL</b>                 | • <b>STUFFING MIX</b>   | • <b>SEASONED SALT</b>    |
| • <b>OATMEAL</b>                | • <b>PANCAKE MIX</b>    | • <b>PEPPER</b>           |
|                                 | • <b>CRACKERS</b>       | • <b>GARLIC POWDER</b>    |
|                                 | • <b>SYRUP</b>          | • <b>CHILI POWDER</b>     |
|                                 | • <b>SUGAR</b>          |                           |

Please check our website [MorningStarMission.org](http://MorningStarMission.org) for the latest updates on our holiday needs for donations and volunteers.

## IN HONOR OF

Mother — William Lockie

## IN MEMORY OF

Richard Augustine — Carol Roman

Kaden Bolton — Marilyn Merrell

Dorothy Burda — Catherine Foley

Theresa Chipain — Cyd Hines

Bernadine Cryer — Charlotte Lenz

John Hoerner — Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hoerner

Dave Kenealy — Marge Kenealy

Lawrence Mauzer — Mrs. L. Mauzer

Brendon Phillips — Michael & Deborah Phillips

Brendon Phillips — Heidi Phillips

Brendon Phillips — Mr. & Mrs. G. Donald Dyer

Brendon Phillips — Mr. & Mrs. Joseph J. O'Connor

Brendon Phillips — Mr. & Mrs. Thomas D. Tyrell

Brendon Phillips — Pamela Hochhalter

Brendon Phillips — John Stofko

Brendon Phillips — Lorraine Phillips

Matthew J. Pollock — James Pollock

Joseph Sterioti — Stephen & Anna Marie Keller

Amy Szczepaniak — Susan Kordis

Richard Tantillo — Lisa Wrobel

Homer Warren — Susan Munguia

## PLEASE REMEMBER MORNINGSTAR THIS CHRISTMAS!

- **Donate on GivingTuesday, Nov. 30**
- **Give any time at [give.MorningStarMission.org](http://give.MorningStarMission.org)**

Thank you, and Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones!



350 East Washington St. • Joliet, IL 60433-1150  
815-722-5780 • [MorningStarMission.org](http://MorningStarMission.org)