

Ministry provides help to those in Southwest Missouri, Northwest Arkansas

July 24, 2014

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Branson West, MO--People who are struggling to meet their basic needs often spend hours, days or even weeks trying to navigate through the maze of agencies and programs. It can be especially difficult to find one that can help with a specific need when that need goes beyond food or housing.

One family needed emergency car repairs but couldn't find any resources. Then they were put in touch with Words of Red Ministry. Unlike many agencies, the organization offers all kinds of assistance, depending on people's needs. "We've helped with laundry, gas, haircuts, you name it," said Mary Warren.

The ministry is also different in that it does not require people to provide proof of need. "We see people who are so worn out from having to run around from one place to another, filling out paperwork all the time, telling their story over and over. We don't require that. If they say they have an immediate need, we do what we can to help," said Warren. "It isn't for us to question their circumstances or to judge them."

One of the more common requests they get is for baby items. "We see a lot of families with babies and young children. Diapers are a major expense," said Warren.

Another need for many people is personal hygiene items. Warren noted that people who receive food assistance are restricted from buying non-food items with their benefit cards, so things like deodorant and shampoo are often difficult to come by. "No one thinks about how important those are until they have to go without them," she said. "We get requests for toilet paper, toothpaste, combs and brushes, and other small self-care items."

All of the ministry's items and services are provided without cost. Food, clothing and other items are donated. "We rely on the generosity of others who also want to help," said Warren. "We provide assistance in accordance with the words of Jesus, who instructed us to help our fellow man. He said, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' We live by those words."

The ministry welcomes donations to help with its efforts. Nonperishable food and usable clothing and blankets are always needed, as well as personal hygiene items and baby items such as formula, diapers and wipes.

They also welcome cash donations, which are used for emergency car repairs, purchasing gas, and paying for haircuts and other services the ministry cannot provide directly. "Anything helps," said Warren. "There are just so many people who need help right now. The only way we can provide for them is by working together as a community."

About Words in Red Ministry

Words in Red is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization located in Stone County, Missouri. It provides help and support to people in need who live in Southwest Missouri or Northwest Arkansas. Learn more at www.wordsinredministry.org.

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