

The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer Upscale Resale Event Brings Community Together

By Connie Karpinsky

It's not just a donation but a story, a story with several chapters. It is the story of that donation's journey, from one home to another, with a few stops in between. The final destination remains to be seen, for sometimes the donation returns as another, to be sold again another year. As the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer's third Upscale Resale event comes to a close, these countless donations of gently used handbags and jewelry allowed us to double our sales, and now we are able to share \$12,000 equally between the Greene and Putnam Food Pantries.

Our story began in 2018. The goal was to host an event that would bring our community together, with 100 percent of all sales going to the two food pantries. In the first chapter, we introduced the concept, an event intended to bring joy to the giver, fun and rewards for the bargain hunter and the opportunity for every woman to shop. We asked local women for donations of that special handbag that had been replaced by another, that piece of jewelry purchased for a special outfit no longer in the closet. We gradually saw one donation turn into an overwhelming collection of handbags and jewelry. The community's generosity was astounding!

The second chapter brought us together. As our fellow parishioners gathered around the table to price each piece, we shared stories, laughter, tears and love. It was a time to bond and to share in the joy of putting an event together that transformed handbags and jewelry into food on the table.

In the third chapter, we learned that it took more than our little red church to sponsor this event. We needed a convenient location for the sale and someone to donate the space. Without hesitation, for our first two sales, Weinberger's stepped up to the plate and helped us raise \$4000 the first year and \$6000 the second. We skipped the third year due to the pandemic, but once back in action in 2021, we had accumulated so many donations that an even larger space was needed. It did not take long before the Lake Oconee Community Church graciously answered our call.

Chapter four brought us to the present and a successful conclusion of our third Upscale Resale event. Throughout this chapter the generosity of men and women in our community continued. Area businesses allowed us to display promotional advertising. We continued to meet new friends, many of who came forward to offer to help us collect donations, set up and work the sale. Local newspapers, radio stations, magazines and social media all helped us spread the word. In addition, all promotional materials, supplies and time were offered free of charge throughout the Lake Oconee area. And last but not least, we had the relentless support of friends and neighbors sharing emails and texts. Thank you to all who embraced our efforts!

Our story ends and begins again in Chapter five. On the day of our sale, people were waiting in line even before we arrived. The room quickly filled as women came together from all over to enjoy a

common purpose...SHOPPING! Our shelves are now empty, so we begin again. We are ready to start collecting handbags and jewelry again for next year's sale. Don't miss out on the fun! If you wish to donate or help in any way, please contact the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer at littlechurch2018@gmail.com.