



## HOPE CHEST THRIFT STORE

### Q3 BOARD REPORT – 10/15/24

When I prayed about taking the position as Director of Hope Chest Thrift Store, the Lord gave me a vision of a bridge that connects His people to Him over the water of adversity. He said that a foundation was laid but additional structure and clarity would be essential in order to further establish a space of peace, empowerment, and healing, where the purpose of the store was obvious in the community and to the workers as support for New Hope Ministry and its mission. This quarter, we have filtered every decision through the lens of this vision with prayer, strategy, and trust-building and this report is the detailed accounting.

Jennifer Alexander

---

#### Report Contents:

- I. Standard Work
  - A. Monthly Team Meetings – July through October, 2024
  - B. Charities and Benevolence
  - C. Events – Recent and Upcoming
  
- II. God's Strategies
  - A. Defining "Who We Are"
  - B. Digital Ministry
  - C. Marketing and Design
  - D. 15% Revenue Increase
  
- III. Pouring In to Pour Out
  - A. Developing Staff
  
- IV. Perspectives – A Shared Testimony
- V. Appendices

**I. Standard Work:**

**A. Monthly Team Meetings** – see below for monthly objectives that were discussed with the retail and warehouse teams.

<b>JULY 2024</b>	
<b>PRAYER</b>	Thank you, Lord, that we get to serve You in this place together!
<b>WHO WE ARE AND WHAT GOD IS DOING</b>	Introductions. Getting to know each other and where God is taking us (Bridge). Love Languages: Words, Touch, Gifts, Quality Time, Acts of Service. Bridge: Vision, Mission and Who We Are. (policies in review below)
<b>MEETINGS</b>	Monthly Hope Chest Meetings – now LAST Mondays of each month beginning July 29th.
<b>DONATIONS</b>	Incoming Donations Guideline: <b>Attachment: Review current brochure and offer changes.</b>
<b>TAGS</b>	Orange = regular price. Put white tags on new July items. Half-price tags are green. Begin pulling grey tags.
<b>DECOR</b>	Start decorating for Back-to-School the first week of August. Areas have shifted to make room for the Vintage Vault (higher-end Marketplace items).
<b>EVENTS</b>	July Birthdays: Kaye (15); JoAnn (22); Jen (27) Rummage Mania 8/5-8/9 – Marketing for donations this week. Back-to-School Bash 8/5-8/9. Team Planning Meeting 7/2 at 1pm.
<b>ADVERTISING</b>	Back-to-School Bash – Peggy will send out media blast next week.
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>	Reminder to change the filters.
<b>SCHEDULES</b>	Please write on calendar in store break room. All volunteers sign in.
<b>ONLINE PRESENCE</b>	Updating website, Instagram and Facebook presence. If anyone would like to share something God has done, let Jen know. Jen will post to website: <a href="http://newhopeministrycc.org">newhopeministrycc.org</a>
<b>BUSINESS OPERATIONS UPDATES</b>	Picking Up Large Items – Start logging contact info at register. Policies and Procedures are being updated. 1:1's and Evaluations – coming soon Budget Overview. Expenses need to be approved. <b>Attachment: Review policy and offer changes.</b>
<b>IDEAS TO PONDER</b>	Hope Chest Thrift Store Entrance – Who We Are / Bridge Team Things
<b>BLESSING &amp; CLOSING PRAYER</b>	<b>Attachment: Phil 4:9 – Focus on “whatevers”</b>

**July Highlights:**

We started correcting our furniture pick-up process to include a tracking system, a two-part form with our policy and director phone call to enforce and remind people to pick up their purchases within 7 days.

We were bustling with preparations for the Back to School Bash and Rummage Mania!

**August Highlights:**

God had begun giving specific verses and vision to the question “Who Are We?”.

Staffing gaps, scheduling issues and policies that needed clarification became evident.

We incorporated praying over the 7 Mountains of Influence, one per month, into our monthly meeting prayer time.

<b>AUGUST 2024</b>	
<b>PRAYER</b>	Thank you, Lord, that we get to serve You in this place together!
<b>WHO WE ARE AND WHAT GOD IS DOING</b>	Hope Chest Thrift Store Entrance: Numbers 6:24-26 <i>24 “The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; 26 the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.”</i>
<b>MEETINGS</b>	<b>Christmas Creative Team:</b> Today after this meeting for 30 minutes. <b>Next Team Meeting:</b> August 26 <sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am (last Mondays of the month)
<b>DONATION</b>	Donations Guideline Brochure is in progress
<b>TAGS</b>	<b>New tags:</b> August is yellow tags. <b>Continued at regular price from last month:</b> White tags <b>Half-price for August:</b> Orange tags. <b>Pull from store:</b> Green tags.
<b>DECOR</b>	Start setting up for Back-to-School
<b>EVENTS &amp; ADVERTISING</b>	<b>August Birthdays:</b> Mary Clark 22 <sup>nd</sup> , Pam W. 26 <sup>th</sup> , Melody 28 <sup>th</sup> <b>Rummage Mania:</b> Donations accepted 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> , 8a-5p, Event is 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> . Mention and handout detail fliers in sacks at checkout. <b>Back-to-School Bash:</b> Mention at checkout. August 5 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> – Registration taking place at New Hope. Direct folks to Door #1. We will lead them to store after registration. <b>Labor Day:</b> September 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Preparing for one day sale, everything in store except Vintage Vault and furniture is 50% off! Jen and Shirley to get marketing to Peggy by week of 8/12.
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>	Project Updates. Are there any needs?
<b>SCHEDULES &amp; STAFFING UPDATES</b>	In an effort to ensure staffing is proactively covered, please keep warehouse schedule updated. If there are changes, let Melody/Jen know ahead of time so we can make arrangements. Melody and Jen are trained on Warehouse by Teresa so we can fill in and find staffing as needed.
<b>ONLINE PRESENCE</b>	Updating website, Instagram and Facebook presence. If anyone would like to share something God has done, let Jen know. Jen will post to website: <a href="http://newhopeministrycc.org">newhopeministrycc.org</a>
<b>BUSINESS OPERATIONS UPDATES</b>	<b>Policies and Procedures:</b> Under review. We hope to have a new full version at the beginning of the new year. <b>Job Descriptions:</b> under review to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities. This will include every area and position of the store and warehouse.
<b>IDEAS TO PONDER</b>	We need a Christ focused name for our Kid's Christmas shopping event.
<b>BLESSING &amp; CLOSING PRAYER</b>	Staking Ceremony – taking back ground for Jesus Christ in this Region. Join us on Wednesday, 7/31 at noon after the Prayer Center. 7 Mountains (handout): Pray for #1 - Business Mountain

<b>SEPTEMBER 2024</b>	
Date: August 26 <sup>th</sup>	Thank you, Lord, that we get to serve You in this place together. You are on the throne, even now, and only You are in control!
<b>PRAYER</b>	
<b>WHO WE ARE AND WHAT GOD IS DOING</b>	Hope Chest Thrift Store Entrance: Numbers 6:24-26, design updates. (A place of praise, blessing, empowerment, encouragement, God's provision, community connection and healing)
<b>MEETINGS</b>	<b>Christmas Creative Team:</b> Announce "Christmas Hope for Families". Today after this meeting we will have a brief check in. <b>Next Team Meeting:</b> September 30 <sup>th</sup> , at 8:30 am (last Mondays of the month)
<b>DONATIONS</b>	UPDATED FLIER: Please handout new Donation Guidelines.
<b>TAGS</b>	<b>New tags:</b> Purple <b>Continued at regular price from last month:</b> Yellow <b>Half-price for August:</b> White <b>Pull from store:</b> Orange <b>Furniture Tags Test:</b> lavender as standard color moving forward.
<b>DECOR</b>	<b>Kids Coat Giveaway:</b> Start setting up. We have 40 girls, 23 boys coats. <b>FALL DÉCOR:</b> Please follow policy for "new age" items. No witches /SPIRITISM.
<b>EVENTS &amp; ADVERTISING</b>	<b>Birthdays:</b> Pat 9/4, Sheila W 9/11 August Events Dashboard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rummage Mania</li> <li>Back to School Bash</li> </ul> Staking Ceremony – August 28 <sup>th</sup> after Prayer Center Kids Coat Giveaway: October 7 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup> . Team meeting on 9/4 at 1pm. Labor Day, Sept 2: We are open. Will have regular monthly promotions. Vintage Vault Grand Opening: Sept 16 <sup>th</sup> Junk Journey – tentatively Friday Only, October 18 <sup>th</sup> . Begin ads in Sept.
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>	Project Updates. Are there any needs?
<b>SCHEDULES &amp; STAFFING UPDATES</b>	Please keep us updated regarding scheduling changes. Staffing: working on three positions
<b>ONLINE PRESENCE</b>	Updating website, Instagram and Facebook presence. If anyone would like to share something God has done, let Jen know. Jen will post to website: <a href="http://newhopeministrycc.org">newhopeministrycc.org</a>
<b>BUSINESS OPERATIONS UPDATES</b>	<b>Policies and Procedures:</b> Under review. We hope to have a new full version at the beginning of the new year. <b>MINISTRY UPDATES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HAPI – "They MUST CALL to make an appointment.</li> <li>LOAN CLOSET – Give info. And instruct them to door #6</li> <li>COUNSELING – they must call and make an appointment</li> </ul>
<b>IDEAS TO PONDER</b>	Budget under construction for next year. Any thoughts on improvements?
<b>BLESSING &amp; CLOSING PRAYER</b>	7 Mountains (handout): Pray for #2 - Government Mountain

**September Highlights:**

We shared what God did at the Back to School and Rummage Mania events with detailed dashboards and testimonies of encounters with the community! We had incredible serving outcomes and most importantly, life-changing interactions and prayer opportunities with families!

**October Highlights:**

In an effort to be less task oriented and more connected with one another's stories, we began our most recent in October meeting with the question, "What have you seen God doing?". It was the liveliest, most encouraging group discussion we have had at a monthly meeting thus far this quarter. Even people who don't normally share offered incredible personal stories, prayer requests and recommendations on projects.

**Moving forward, we will begin our monthly meetings using this discussion format and look for additional ways to share what God is doing in our lives and ministry!**

<b>OCTOBER 2024</b>	
Date: September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Thank you, Lord, for how you provide and what you are doing in and through us in this place! Thank you for the opportunity to share your love with others.
<b>PRAYER</b>	
<b>WHO WE ARE AND WHAT GOD IS DOING</b>	Share your stories! UPDATES: Entryway is 50% completed! Brain map attachment.
<b>MEETINGS</b>	NEXT TEAM MEETING: October 28 <sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am (last Mondays of the month)
<b>DONATIONS &amp; WAREHOUSE - Teresa</b>	UPDATES: Do we have needs? Please handout new Donation Guidelines.
<b>TAGS - Melody</b>	<b>New tags:</b> Orange <b>Continued at regular price from last month:</b> Purple <b>Half-price for September:</b> Yellow <b>Pull from store:</b> White
<b>EVENTS &amp; ADVERTISING</b>	<b>BIRTHDAYS:</b> Ken Snyder 10/30 <b>KID'S COATS GIVEAWAY:</b> SEPT 30-OCT 2ND <b>HOME COMING DRESSES</b> <b>JUNK JOURNEY</b> – update <b>STORE CLOSURES:</b> Oct 3, 17 and 24 <sup>th</sup> for Feast of the Tabernacles
<b>DÉCOR &amp; DESIGN - Judy &amp; Sheila</b>	<b>NEW:</b> "Design Strategy" – update <b>KIDS COAT GIVEAWAY:</b> Kids coats on z-racks, with star tag. <b>HOME COMING DRESS SUITE:</b> Dresses, shoes, jewelry – 9/30 to 10/7 <b>REFRESHING:</b> Changing Juniors to "Tots to Teens". Moving 2T-5T in October to make room for abundance of baby clothes week of 10/7. Naming the baby room the "Nursery" with additional focus on the mother. <b>NEXT:</b> Begin filling Christmas area with Holiday Décor and start incorporating Holiday Décor into the rest of the store beginning 11/1. "Walk with Jesus" décor to begin soon. Many projects available – many hands needed to help! <b>2025 - YOUNG ADULT SECTION!</b> Starting in January. More info to come.
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>	Project Updates. Are there any needs?
<b>SCHEDULES &amp; STAFFING UPDATES - Melody</b>	<b>STAFFING:</b> Bill and Kelly are HERE! Still need one more volunteer. <b>NEW HOURS:</b> Praying about Sundays 1-5p. (not accepting donations)
<b>DIGITAL MINISTRY</b>	Now on TikTok! Researching YouTube Channel for training and event videos. Jen will post to website: <a href="http://newhopeministrycc.org">newhopeministrycc.org</a>
<b>BUSINESS OPERATIONS UPDATES</b>	<b>POLICIES:</b> Under review. New version coming in 2025. <b>WALMART GRANT:</b> praying about a proposal that God's wants us to move forward with that would benefit our community this year.
<b>IDEAS TO PONDER</b>	HOPE GALA? – Summer 2025
<b>BLESSING AND CLOSING PRAYER</b>	7 Mountains (handout): Pray for #3 – The Family Mountain

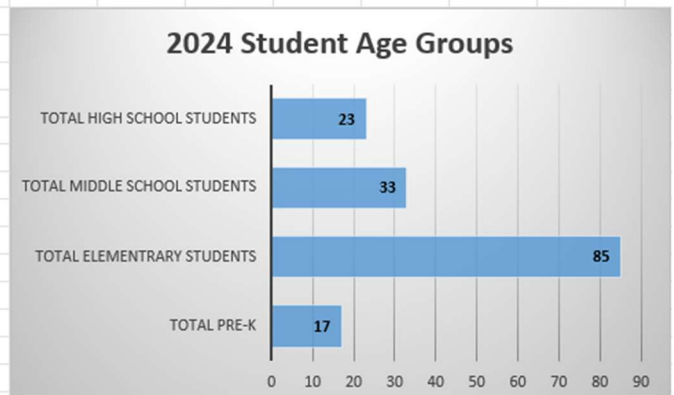
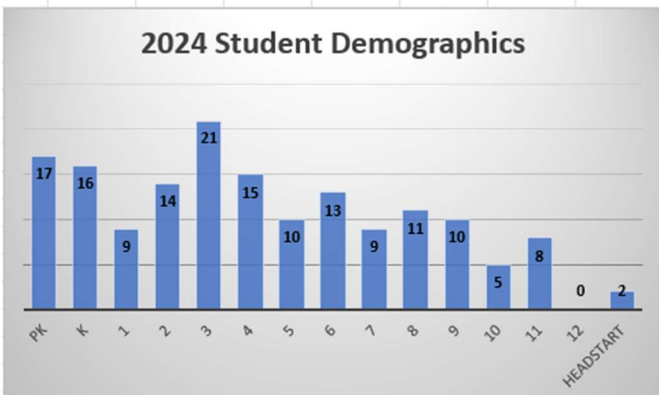
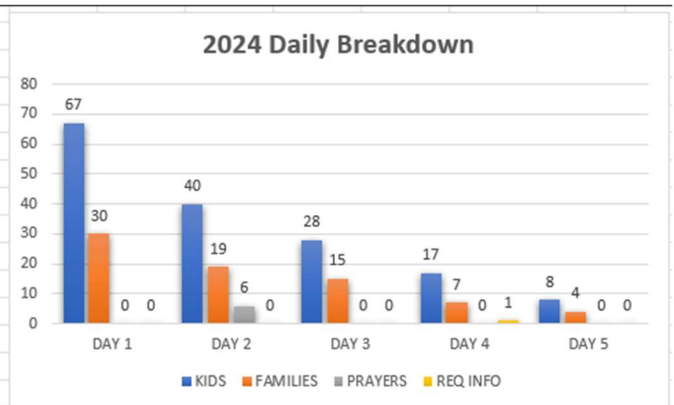
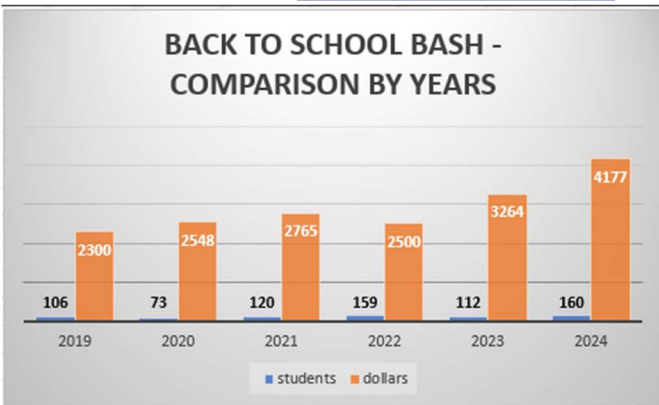
**B. Charities and Benevolence:**

**Hurricane Helene Relief Efforts** – On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Hope Chest Thrift Store donated over \$230 worth of blankets, wipes, adult and baby clothing and home goods to three church organizations who delivered to those directly effected in North Carolina, Tennessee and Florida due to the destruction left by Hurricane Helene.

**C. Events and Activities**

**Recent:**

**BACK TO SCHOOL BASH!**



- Back to School Bash** – In August, we were blessed to be able to use the New Hope entryway space for our Back to School Bash because this event overlaps the same week as the Rummage Mania. We were able to transform the New Hope into an efficient, enjoyable shopping experience for families to get their Back-to-School needs met. From registration, to school supplies and backpacks, a prayer station, clothing shopping and then a designated check, families were greeted and guided with kindness all along the way. Many single parents were juggling multiple children with individual grade-specific requirements, so our team helped them find the items on their list, provided carts and looked for ways to bless them. We served a record breaking 160 children during this five-day event, with loaded backpacks of school supplies and over \$4k worth of FREE clothing. Each family paid \$1 per child to register for a bag full of clothing, though in some rare cases some families were not able to even pay the \$1. The deep level of poverty was evident. We had the opportunity to pray with families and hear of their devastating financial situations. We were burdened by two families in particular, one with three children and one with four, who had both experienced loss of jobs, cars and homes with a continued inability to pay for food and utilities. They were digging themselves out of a hole, financially. At the end of the event, we had a small amount of cash from registrations to determine what to do with. We prayerfully considered how we could reinvest it either to the store, as has been done in years past or somehow back into the community. The leadership team, through guidance from the Holy Spirit determined to take that money, add to it accumulated money from the blessing jar to total \$400, then split that evenly between the two families. When I called the families to let them know we had prayed God brought their families to mind to share His generosity with, they were SO surprised and so grateful! When the moms came in to pick up their family’s money (with a note of encouragement), we shared tears and long hugs in the exchange.
- Labor Day / Memorial Day** – There was a question as to whether it’s worth staying open and staff working these holidays for the amount of business we receive. See below for sales outcomes for the last two years which we are using to make an informed decision. **We concluded to stay open for these holidays for another year with intentional marketing and monitor the outcomes; there isn’t a convincing reason at this time to close the store on these holidays as long as we have staff willing to work and customers willing to shop.**

Holiday	2023 Gross Sales	2024 Gross Sales	Notes
Labor Day	\$47.50	\$165.50	Low sales in 2023 were due to the fact that there was no marketing done in the community to let people know we were open on Labor Day.
Memorial Day	\$4,249.50	\$ 820.25	A 50% off for Veterans was held on Memorial Day in 2023, which reflects the increase in sales. The actual revenue was 2137.24.

- Kids Coat Giveaway – NEW this year:** In this three-day event we gave away 108 coats as well as gloves, hats, scarves and socks! A few families indicated they had trouble getting to our store for this event due to our limiting store hours. Incidentally, several families mentioned that our 5 pm closing time four out of five open days out of the week is not late enough for working families, particularly those living in areas outside of Centerville. **We are prayerfully considering whether or not and how best to adjust our store hours to accommodate working families, extend our ministry and community support while also honoring the Lord with our time and staff.**

**Upcoming** - We will include pictures and a summary in the Q4 Board Report for these upcoming events.

- **“Walk with Jesus” Immersive Experience** – all month during December: Peggy has written a poem called, “And so I came” that is biblically centered and approachable to the average person whether they are a Christian or not. She has a vision of how to build engaging stations throughout the store for customers and staff to experience the poem visually and “walk as Jesus did” from His birth to His resurrection. Rather, install a large Christmas tree in the entry of the store as we have done in years past, we decided to install these stations throughout the store and allow God to do a new thing through this activity. Everyone is joining in on the projects, painting, hanging décor, building installations, printing signage, and cutting out footprints that will be a guide along the floor for people to walk on. We are excited to see how people interact, ask questions, have opportunities to pray, read scripture and learn more about Jesus and His love for them through this experience. The full poem will be available at the end of the walk for customers to take home.
- **Christmas Hope for Families** – Previously known by other names, we have established a new identity for our kids shopping event in December, geared toward blessing the whole family! **New this year**, due to the success of the Back-to-School event in the New Hope entryway space, we are organizing and decorating the same space as the kids shopping and gift-wrapping area rather than using a small, cold donation space in the warehouse. This also means we do not have to disrupt the daily functions of the warehouse during the event and in the weeks of preparation! **Also, new**, since we have this space for the children to shop, we will be sending the parents into the store with a family gift certificate for the parents to also get what they need either for themselves or other members of their family.



- **Vintage Vault** – Unfortunately, we were not able to participate with the Southern Iowa Junk Journey because to get on the list they require every participant vendor to be open on Saturday. However, we are still planning a soft Grand Opening that week in our Vintage Vault to take advantage of the fact that Junk Journey shoppers will be in town looking for treasures. We continue to actively curate high end items for this space and have daily interest by our customers in the space. I am working on a big, beautiful sign to hang on the wall above the Vintage Vault space to identify it as a feature, separate from our other retail areas. We are blessed daily with high value collectables and unusual pieces in our donations so are able to offer fair prices for these items, still well below what is seen online. The community has embraced this feature of our store with great intrigue.

## II. God’s Strategies:

### A. Defining “Who we are” – (See appendix #1)

God is bringing structure and clarity to our identity as a ministry. The store’s mission is no longer separate from New Hope Ministries mission. In addition, He has provided a detailed outline explaining “who we are” in specific terms such as God’s Children, God’s Provision in the Community, and God’s Peace. This identity along with the following scriptures will be posted in our entryway for all to see and used as the foundation from which we serve The Lord and unify our ministry purpose:

***“The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.” Numbers 6:24-27***

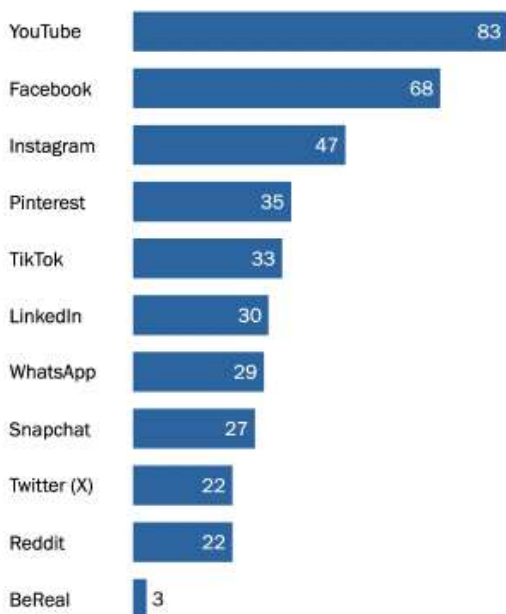
***“Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. Deuteronomy 28:6***

**B. Digital Ministry** – At the beginning of 2024, God directed Hope Chest Thrift Store leadership to expand our digital ministry to reach additional people in the community and across the region with His love.

**Research** – Studies show that YouTube, Facebook and Instagram are the most used social media outlets in America. Statistics indicate that the vast majority of young people (aged 30 and below) are on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat. Roughly 80% of our current demographic on Facebook is older than 35 and up until July 2024 we were ONLY marketing on Facebook. **CONCLUSION: In order to extend our reach to an additional younger demographic we need to develop our social media methodology and increase our social media outlets.** See nationwide data below for media breakdowns by demographic.

**Most U.S. adults use YouTube and Facebook; about half use Instagram**

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use ...

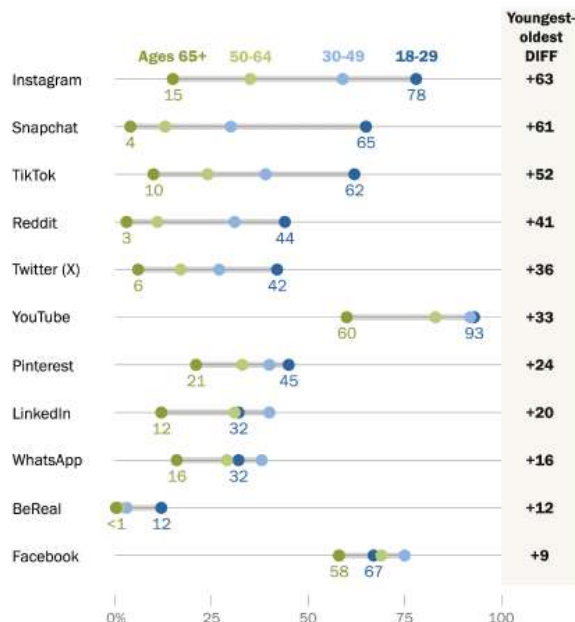


Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 19-Sept. 5, 2023. "Americans' Social Media Use"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

**The youngest U.S. adults are far more likely to use Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok; age differences are less pronounced for Facebook**

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use ...

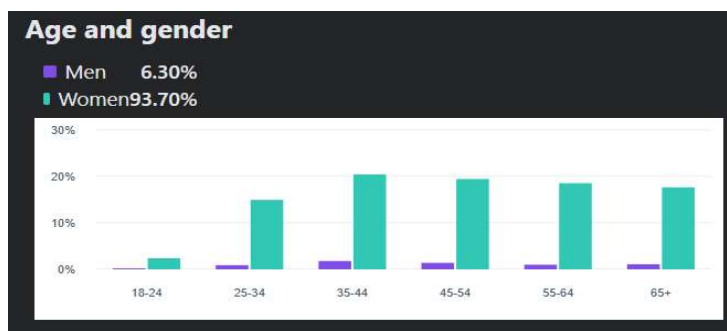


Note: All differences shown in DIFF column are statistically significant. The DIFF values shown are based on subtracting the rounded values in the chart. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 19-Sept. 5, 2023. "Americans' Social Media Use"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

**Action Steps:**

- **Continue Utilizing Facebook, Use Metrics to Understand Effectiveness** - We are continuing our presence on Facebook with our current customer base of 1921 followers. The age and gender demographic is as follows from our Facebook professional dashboard, which confirms the nationwide demographic research previously mentioned.

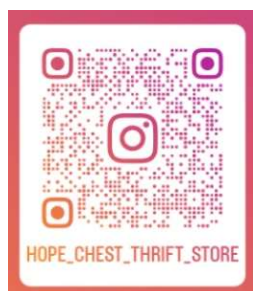




- NEW: Develop Methodology for Facebook Usage** - We are increasing the frequency of posts, customer engagement, reels, “go-live” videos and adding Shout Outs to encourage our community businesses and partners. We recognize that we have the ability to “Boost Post” for a [small fee](#), but we are reserving that ability in our marketing strategy for future posts or announcements which we determine the cost to be a value-add necessity. Below is a snippet of our professional Facebook dashboard which illustrates how the community is currently being reached and how they are engaging with recent posts the Hope Chest Thrift Store shares.

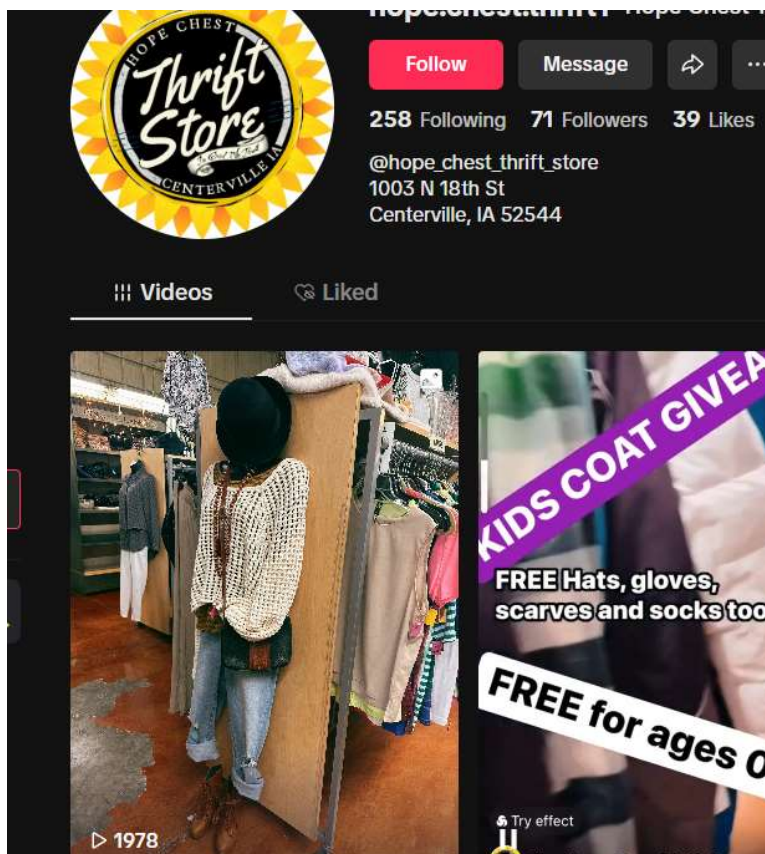
Post Content	Post reach	Engagement	Action
Your Video Wed, Oct 2	76	--	Boost unavailable
Last day for the FREE KIDS COAT GIVEAWAY!! We are CLOSED tomorrow, Thursday. Wed, Oct 2	322	12	Boost post
KIDS COAT GIVEAWAY! TODAY THRU WEDNESDAY WHILE SUPPLIES LAST! Mon, Sep 30	192	--	Boost unavailable
STARTING TODAY THRU WED WHILE SUPPLIES LAST! 10a-5p! Mon, Sep 30	423	32	Create ad
NEW ARRIVALS!!! HOCO dresses, hot on the shelf! Come get 'em while they last! Hope Chest Thrift Store hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10a-5p and Thursdays, 10a-7p. Thu, Sep 26	197	--	Boost unavailable
-- Mon, Sep 23	288	24	Boost a post
KIDS COAT GIVEAWAY!! **Ages infant to 14 years old.** Come get outfitted with a FREE COAT for the coming colder weather, while supplies last! September 30th to October 2nd. Hats, gloves, socks al... Mon, Sep 23	4,469	431	Boost post

Our highest ever recorded post reached 4,469 people and 431 people engaged with it (i.e. shared post, left a comment, etc.). Our average post reach is in the low 100's with little to no engagement, which demonstrates Facebook's relatively low impact in digital marketing influence.



- NEW: We are now on Instagram:** In July we opened up an Instagram account and as of this report we have 106 followers. We use this platform to share upcoming events, store closures, and share new features and products we have in inventory. We would love it if you would follow our new Instagram and share it with your friends and family. Scan the QR code or go to [Hope Chest Thrift Store \(@hope\\_chest\\_thrift\\_store\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)
- NEW: We are now on TikTok:** In September, we opened up a TikTok specifically to connect with the young adult demographic. As of this report we have 80 followers. We use this platform to share upcoming events, live videos, new features and products we have in inventory. We have had several followers engage with our account and like and save our videos. This platform is meant to be fun and trendy, provide inspiration and make thrifting cool again! Join and share our #thrifthok community @hope\_chest\_thrift\_store!





After Just a few weeks of creating this account, we already have 71 followers and 39 likes!

This post of our inventory (mannequins' outfits, furniture display, vintage vault and home goods designs) was viewed almost 2000 times!

- **NEW: We are now on YouTube** – In September, we built a YouTube channel for the store where we plan to upload videos to a variety of playlists: Origins of New Hope, Testimonials, Events, Staff Orientation and Continued Education, DIY Projects and Inspiration and More! We hope to develop a podcast as an outreach to connect with our community and share scripture and stories, as well. The possibilities are endless in this digital age to extend the love of Jesus in a variety of creative ways. We would love it if you would subscribe to watch how this channel develops in the coming months: <http://www.youtube.com/@HopeChestThriftStore>

### C. Marketing and Design

- **NEW: Marketing Strategy Developed – (See Appendix #2)**
  - Since not every event should be shared the same way depending on audience, inventory limitations, etc., we now have a strategy to categorize types of events and how and where to market each event. This is shared with the leadership team and the planning teams for each event.
- **NEW: Design Strategy Developed – (See Appendix 3)**
  - Judy, Sheila and I developed a design strategy for the following purpose: 1) a strategy did not previously exist for cohesive and unified designs, 2) to ensure our designs aligned with God's vision and purpose and 3) to intentionally inform and inspire customers as they shop. When I asked Judy what her strategy was for dressing a mannequin, she said she just picks an outfit she likes that she thinks looks nice. Having this strategy has boosted our customers positive

experience and increased revenue! It's become a joyful game to the staff every day to see how many mannequins need to be redressed because the customers love the designs so much! Judy has even collected pictures from the internet for inspiration and is more engaged with "what young people are wearing" so that she can grow in her retail designing. **We will continue to implement design strategies throughout the rest of the store in the coming months with the Furniture and Fixture Design Coordinators.**

- **NEW AND REFRESHED SPACES: Nursery, Tots to Teens and Young Adults:**

- As we were discussing design, it occurred to me that our "Juniors" section is not a traditional Juniors section but really a kid's section, our "Baby Room" is really full of toddler clothing and doesn't support moms as much as it could and we have no space for an entire population of Young Adults. With some simple reorganizing we can accommodate and better clarify our marketing to these key areas.
  - ★ The Baby Room will now be known as the Nursery with an emphasis on baby sizes from newborn to 2T. We will also develop our maternity clothing section, maternal supplies and add a self-care element for mom's we will call "Mommy Kisses". This element will include gift baskets curated with items to make mom feel well cared for while she cares for her babies such as lotions, fuzzy socks, encouraging devotionals, and more!
  - ★ The Juniors Room will now carry clothing from 2T to size 14 and be reclassified as a Tots to Teens space. This room has been previously sparse in pre-teen clothing but adding the toddlers makes it feel more plentiful and affords valuable space in the Nursery for an abundance of baby clothes we currently have in our warehouse. We will add a coat of paint and a few more shelves in the spring to finish the look.
  - ★ The Young Adult section will also be added in 2025 where we currently keep shelves of nicknacks and DVDs near the men's section and changing room. This will primarily be a wall installation of current trends and outfits for ages 15 to 25, a missing demographic in our customer population. This feature will allow us to market to young adults in the community which we have determined do not know we exist and/or don't think it's cool to thrift shop. We will be working with Indian Hills Community College as well as other local schools to post fliers and get word out.

**D. 15% Revenue Increase** – In our New Hope Main Strategies I've added a stretch goal I believe God is giving us to increase the store's revenue by 15% in the 2025. This number came as a surprise to some but we are already seeing steady growth since June that points to this goal being achievable. I am praying God continues to direct our path to ways to better connect with the community and have clarity about how to steward this increase for His glory. I believe that this goal will be accomplished to a large degree by our increased digital presence and focus on young adult demographic.

### III. Pouring In to Pour Out – A Growth Mindset:

- A. **Developing Staff** – Romans 14:19 says *“So then let us pursue the things of peace, and the things for building up one another.”* Empowering and growing people in love is essential in ministry, especially. In June when I started, The Lord directed me to be a person of peace, to provide a space of safety and healing and to implement that same “structure and clarity” in our staffing. Here are some of the ways we are following the Lord’s directives:
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Job descriptions did not previously exist for any member of our team other than the Director and Assistant Director and even then, the Assistant Director job description needed to be modified. Now, appropriate Job Descriptions are built for the Assistant Director, the Retail Coordinator, the Assistant Retail Coordinator, the Retail Associates and the Warehouse Coordinator’s is in production. I have worked with each person to go over their roles and duties; to encourage them how valuable their contribution is to the ministry and find out what their passions are or opportunities they may have to want to grow. Once this process is completed and approved by leadership, it’s signed by both parties and placed in their personnel files. These are now the known expectations and goals for the coming year that they will be evaluated on, annually. This clarification alone has brought tangible peace and motivation and empowerment to the team dynamic.
  - **Teams for Initiatives:** I am working with cohorts of teams to build staff skills, bonding and cross training for various initiatives. For example, I held a meeting with the “Design Coordinators” for the front of the store and we developed Design Strategies for the front of the store retail objectives. This has helped to create an accord in overall vision of the retail space, inspire ideas for marketing and creativity as well as clarify how each area can help each other expedite store projects cohesively. We also have a “Christmas Creative Team” which consists of staff from each area of the store, the warehouse and New Hope to coordinate the “Walk with Jesus” build projects as well as fulfill planning the Christmas Hope for Families events. Teams were an integral aspect of the success of our Back to School Bash in that each person on the Back to School Team knew their role, took part in event planning and marketing and daily participated in morning huddles and evening debriefs to discuss process, issues and pray for each other and our customers.
  - **Growth Lifestyle:** I’ve encouraged each staff member, not just the “full time staff,” to participate in the weekly Prayer Center since it is right here in the building and to live a lifestyle devoted to spiritual, personal and professional growth. In the coming months we will begin developing personal goals and periodic check ins with resources and support to help them meet their goals.
  - **Increasing Staffing:** When I started in June, we had a volunteer go out on medical leave who was essential support both in the warehouse and at the register. The staffing was also known only to the Assistant Director and there was no written schedule. Since then, the schedule is now built and posted for everyone to see, which helps us to understand our staffing gaps. I’ve hired two additional Able Network team members and I’m still working on a third volunteer to be a float person. This additional staffing not only fill the voids but provide flexibility in the schedule so that each staff member who wants to attend the Prayer Center on Wednesdays can do that as well as continue production when people are out sick or on vacation. These new folks have become some of our hardest workers and are such a joy to have on our team. They are so cheerful, eager to learn and grateful to be part of New Hope and have the opportunity to develop professionally.

#### IV. Perspectives – A Shared Testimony:

(Some names have been removed to respect privacy.)

---

*“This is what I love about being a part of New Hope Ministry.*

*Today a sweet gentleman walking with a cane came into the store. He asked for assistance in finding some pants. We did not have the size he needed on the floor. I asked him to take a rest, we would check in the warehouse.*

*As I helped him to a chair, I offered to get him a cup of coffee. “No, thank you,” was his reply, “I can’t have caffeine”. I then offered him a bottle of water, which he accepted. While handing him the water I noticed a small tear in his eye. “Are you ok”, I asked. With tears running down his face, he answered. “I just came from the doctor’s office and was told I have stage 4 bladder cancer.” I took his hand, giving words of encouragement and comfort. I asked if I could pray for him. I did! Then I shared with him about how much he reminded me of my late husband. He smiled and blessed me.*

*Melody came back with several pair of pants. The man retold her about his situation. Telling him to put his trust in Jesus, we all encircled him, laying hands upon him, again prayed for God’s will. We also let him know if he needed additional help or encouragement that we were here for him.*

*After many hugs and tears, the man and his sister left the store. As they walked out the door, I heard the man say “They just kept saying ‘Trust Jesus, Trust Jesus’”.*

*Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus.”*

*Judy Earhart*

---

*“I met this gentleman when he came into the store to see if we had any size 38-inch blue jeans, as a result of losing weight due to prostate surgery. I went to look in the warehouse and the first time I brought back several pair of sweat pants and a pair of 36-inch blue jeans. When those didn’t fit, I went and brought back a pair of coveralls. When I returned, he was seated in our store easy chair, being prayed over by sis, Judy. He had revealed his sister died 8 months earlier to cancer and he was afraid he would also die. He took the coveralls saying they reminded him of his dad. I asked if I could hug him as he cried.*

*We asked his name, telling him that we would like to continue praying for him, especially on October 17<sup>th</sup> since that is his doctor visit to see where he is at about the cancer. His sister was with him and before they left, she was also loved on by sis, Judy. We were all teary eyed as they left the store.*

*It is such an honor to get to work at an establishment that allows us to pray for anyone who needs us. We get to be like Jesus!!!”*

*Melody Engle*

---

---

*“From the vantage point of my open office door, I saw an elderly man sitting in our winged back chair with his cane, my staff gathered around him and his sister at the register desk blotting her eyes. The staff had been bustling around the store minutes before trying to fulfill his practical needs, but quietly engaging with his visibly tender heart. I witnessed Judy providing the man comfort while he tried to dismiss her to more important things. Judy, unwilling to leave his side just smiled and said “there is nothing else more important”. With curiosity stirred, I was drawn away from my computer and administrative duties. I walked out of my office and heard the man share his story with Melody. She held his hand and said she was so sorry. “Believe me I understand”, she said. “I lost my husband just three years ago. I know its scary. I understand loss”. A painful and beautiful peace swelled in the room. I thought to myself, what an incredible moment. My heart was reminded how deeply connected we all are and how intimately effected we can be when illness and grief are shared with one another.*

*As they all helped the man up and to the door, sharing hugs and tears and gratitude, I looked around the room at my staff, each one with tender hearts needing to be ministered to. I hugged Judy as well as Melody’s sister, Gail who was a prayerful bystander to it all, careworn with her own health crisis. Both women were crying so I affirmed their generosity, thanking them for taking the opportunity to bless this man. “This is why we are here”, I said.*

*Later that evening as she was closing the register, I checked in with Melody and encouraged her for her innate tendency to show such compassion and for her responsiveness when those opportunities arise. I acknowledged that three years must seem like nothing when you lose your spouse. She agreed. “It’s like yesterday to me”, she said.*

*I’m reminded in times like these, and they happen regularly, how marvelously blessed we all are to have the opportunity to take part in this ministry at New Hope, how God brings each team member here on purpose, how God brings each customer to the store on purpose and how He interweaves us all together with a great assignment: to love one another well.*

*THIS is why we are here.”*

*Jen Alexander*

---

V. Appendices:

APPENDIX #1 – WHO ARE WE?

# Hope Chest Thrift Store: Who Are We?



**APPENDIX #2 – MARKETING STRATEGY**

Marketing Strategy

MARKETING PLAN LISTS >

STATUS COLOR LEGEND & TOGGLE

Not Started	In Progress	Delayed	Complete	Custom 1	Custom 2	Custom 4
ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF

2024 EVENTS	STATUS	OWNER	ASSIGNED TO	AUDIENCE	TV DISPLAY	SPECIAL SIGNAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING	EXTENDED MARKETING
BACK TO SCHOOL BASH	Complete	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
KIDS COAT GIVEAWAY	In Progress	Jennifer	Melody	Local	YES	NO	YES	NO
HOMECOMING DRESS SALE	Not Started	Jennifer	Judy	Local	YES	NO	YES	NO
VAULT GRAND OPENING	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
JUNK JOURNEY	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	NO	YES	NO
STORE CLOSED	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	NO
HOPE FOR CHRISTMAS	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
VETERAN'S DAY	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	NO
BLACK FRIDAY	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
WALK WITH JESUS EXPERIENCE	Not Started	Jennifer	Peggy	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
CHRISTMAS/STORE CLOSED	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	NO
NEW YEARS DAY / STORE CLOSED	Not Started	Jennifer	Jennifer	REGIONAL	YES	YES	YES	NO

**APPENDIX #3 – DESIGN STRATEGY****DESIGN STRATEGY**

Date: September 4, 2024

**HOPE CHEST THRIFT STORE**

Concepts to follow to keep the store refreshed, focused and cohesive in an effort to provide a peaceful and enjoyable experience for our customers and staff.

CONCEPT	QUESTIONS TO ASK	EXAMPLES
GOD'S VISION	It aligned with God's vision for us? Does it represent us/Him in an honorable way?	Nothing displayed that goes against policies.
CREATIVITY	Is it eye catching? Is it fresh, new, something unique? Does it draw your eye and inspire?	Keeping manikins changed periodically throughout the month. Have fun! Show them a surprise!
RELEVANCY	Who is our audience? Who are our customers? Who do we want our customers to be?	Marketing to the folks that already shop here and being thoughtful about the folks we want to draw in. Focus on sections for parents, older women, older men, young adults.
SEASONAL	Is it appropriate to the weather, season, time of year or current event? Is the retail room cohesive in theme, telling the same or similar story? When you look around do you "get it"?	The right clothes for the right seasons are available. Items for promotions are set aside and clearly marked. The room makes sense as a total picture. The feel of the room is what you want them to buy (i.e. fall: cozy/textures/colors)
INSTRUCTIONAL/INFORMATIVE	Does it inform the customer on trends and how to coordinate different pieces and accessories? Is it a whole look?	We don't need to teach people how to wear sweats. We do need to show them how to pair a necklace with blouse with bag, etc.
MOMENTS/VIGNETS	Is it defining / transitioning into a new space? Does it speak to the area where it's located? Does it make a statement that might make someone pause in that spot?	Entrance – Manikin with color of the month theme next to the sign to further the mindset of that month's sale. It's subliminal messaging. Kids section – Juniors vs KIDS vs babies. Are things labeled by age and size?
READABILITY	It is clear, organized, clean? Can you see everything or are there bare/cluttered aspects? Is everything labeled and tagged appropriately? Can you understand the display? Is it accessible?	Jewelry – 6 pegs on each row, equidistant to each other. All silver in same section, all funky beads in same section, etc. Prices clearly marked and near each section it pertains to.