



Crowded Closet

MCC THRIFT SHOP



Our neighborhood dreaming big, blooming



SOUTH OF 6
IOWA CITY BUSINESS DISTRICT

On the move. That was the tag line of Crowded Closet’s move in 2019, to Pepperwood Plaza in the South District Neighborhood of Iowa City. Local residents were already hard at work revitalizing their community. The Closet was one of the first to select South District for it’s bright, growing future. “If we wonder where Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) would choose to work in Iowa City, this would be exactly where it would be,” shared Christine Maust

Beachy, Volunteer Coordinator. The Closet’s choice, presence and revitalization of the former Kmart building helped to create positive momentum in the neighborhood.

**Local residents
... hard at work
revitalizing the
community**



Today, big things are happening in the community. A new Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) for the South District Neighborhood aims to elevate and enhance the business district on the south side of Iowa City. The SSMID will generate funds through a levy placed on commercial properties within the geographic boundaries of the district. Revenue collected will be directly invested in the district and, through coordinated efforts, help stimulate business growth and development.

Specific goals include:

- feet-on-the-street – more people drawn to the south side to live, to shop, and to do business
- transformation of space – beautifications such as signage, additional walkways, community art and entertainment
- business unification – a collaborative culture between businesses increasing communication, building relationships, and sharing resources to foster a sense of community partnership.

**a voice to encourage
community
development**



A small group of SSMID board members gather for a planning session including Closet representative Carey Miller (back row, third from right).

To help guide the initiative, a large group of community businesses, residents, stakeholders and city leaders came together to form a board for the SSMID. Because the Crowded Closet Board of Directors values the South District, Executive Director Carey Miller serves on the SSMID board, saying, “The Closet has a vested interest in what happens in the neighborhood and wants to have a voice to encourage community development.” In addition, Operations Manager Alisa Ketchum made great contributions to shape District branding and marketing.

**our own MCC project
in the making**

The decades-long work of neighborhood residents is seeing steps of positive change.

They are invested for the long-term with dreams for the future. This kind of long-term investment, walking with the people of the South District is our own MCC project in the making.



Changing lives locally and around the world. Shop. Donate. Volunteer.

MCC responds to crises

Devastating earthquakes hit Syria and Türkiye February 6 causing widespread damage and loss of life. The needs of the people are vast as the country is already strained from years of conflict. Meanwhile in Ukraine, Russian attacks continue the yearlong war on the country. Loss of electricity and harsh winter temperatures amplify the hurt of the people. In both situations, MCC is working with partners to provide emergency assistance such as food baskets, clothing, hygiene supplies, and winterization supplies as well as psychological and trauma training.

Please keep the people of Ukraine, Syria and Türkiye in your prayers. For additional ways you can help, visit mcc.org.



Photo courtesy of Uman Help Center



Check us out on: [ebay](https://www.ebay.com)   

Volunteer finds friendship and connection at the Closet



Mary Ann Roberts brings heartfelt enjoyment to service at the Closet where she volunteers almost every day. She values the family of volunteers she has formed here, calling Crowded Closet her “retirement family.” Together they talk and laugh around the tables as they process fabric, linens, and crafts. They share life, the happy times and sad times.

Service at Crowded Closet has connected Mary Ann to new service activities, like Crooked Creek Christian Camp, MCC quilt projects, Mennonite Disaster Service, and more. She keeps coming back because the experience of service is fun and well supported by the team of volunteers and staff.

Looking for connection and friendship through service? Contact Volunteer Coordinator Christine Maust Beachy at 319-337-5974 or email crowdedcloset.volunteer@gmail.com to find your place at Crowded Closet.