

# Women Have Hearts For Charity With Trinity Lutheran Ministries Efforts Each Year

by Brandon Harris  
January 3 2022 3:53 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Melissa Dunn and Casey Shank both have charitable hearts in their work for the Trinity Lutheran Ministries.

The two were behind the start of the annual Ugly CHRISTMAS Sweater race, which this year benefitted the Ed-Glen Food Pantry and the Edwardsville Neighbors group.

Dunn has volunteered for the race from the very start. “This is our fifth year,” she said. “We are coming off a virtual year because of COVID and attendance was a little lower, but we were still thrilled with the turnout.”

Casey said they are thrilled to be able to help out the Ed-Glen Food Pantry and the Edwardsville Neighbors group.

“We also had students at Trinity Lutheran donate canned goods,” she said. “We donated 400 canned goods to the food pantry as well. We had some Edwardsville High School students who caroled along the route which added a lot to it. We are so happy we can be a part of this.”

Melissa and Casey’s husbands are both involved in the Trinity Lutheran Ministries. Casey’s husband, John Shank, is the senior pastor, and Melissa’s husband, Eric, is the director of Christian education there.

Trinity Lutheran Ministries associate pastor Jess Biermann said the Ed-Glen Pantry and Neighbors in Edwardsville are two key charitable organizations the ministries focus on each year.

“Those are main charities we try to raise funds for,” he said. “We had a Christmas shop store here where students purchased gifts and we raised over \$6,000. In general, Trinity Lutheran Ministries works to assist the general care of the community and the needs of our congregation. We do also support multiple avenues of charity.”

Casey and Melissa came up with the Ugly CHRISTMAS Sweater Race idea about six years ago when they viewed a lot of “millennials” out running. “We have all ages of runners in the race,” they said. “We noticed a lot of runners in our community, so we thought why not have a Christmas kind of festival with a race that raises money for charity.”