

# Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

*Celebrating 33 Years!*



PO Box 4, Athens, OH 45701  
Phone: 740-594-3339  
Email: [goodworks@good-works.net](mailto:goodworks@good-works.net)  
Web: [www.good-works.net](http://www.good-works.net)

Keith Wasserman, Founder/Executive Director

*“I made the WIDOW’S heart sing, I took up the case of the STRANGER, I was a father to the FATHERLESS.”  
(Job 29:12-13)*

Hello to each of you!

August 2014

If you were with us this Friday night, we’d be exchanging greetings in person, and you’d hear the familiar call: “Welcome to Friday Night Life!” Come, spend the evening with us!

*“Us” is a wide variety of people: some who call the Timothy House home and others who prepared the meal tonight. (Wonderfully, it’s often difficult to tell who is who!) Some of us have lived a long time, others are very young. Some might be labeled “different,” but at this time of the week, each person is known simply by name. You might be asked by a regular, “Where are you from? Is this your first time coming?” Perhaps you will hear the story of how Friday Night Life first began 21 years ago. Back then we met at the Timothy House and had spaghetti every time! Current residents cooked the meal, and we invited people who had moved out of the house back for dinner as a way to stay connected.*

Over the last twenty years, Friday Night Life has grown and is now a group of 100 to 150 people on any given night. Thanks to The Plains United Methodist Church, we meet at their facility half the year, and for the other half we enjoy a picnic style meal at the Good Works property. Every year more than 40 different groups, made up of 7 to 14 volunteers each, sponsor and participate in the meal and community activities that follow. Some groups enjoy the experience so much they come back often!

As you can see, Friday Night Life was born out of community: specifically, relationships across class lines. And at this party, those who are experiencing physical and economic hardship or social lack are the honored guests (see Luke 14:12-23). Together, all of us celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, love kids who keep growing up, and grieve the passing on of friends. Every Friday night, people who are called poor and people who are called rich keep sharing food, companionship and hope with each other. We all seem to know intuitively that these three essential elements of life are intertwined; the heart needs friendship and the soul needs hope just as much as the body needs food. Time after time, friends who provide the meal say that Friday Night Life feels like a family reunion, and this makes me smile because God says he sets the lonely in families (Psalm 68:6). I’m a recipient of this gift, too!

Building a community like Friday Night Life in which people *feel* loved takes many forms. Here’s a glimpse of what is important to us:

- Creating a culture of respect, gratitude, and affirmation. This includes SINGING to people and giving them birthday gifts!
- Providing *nutritious food* to our neighbors, including many who experience chronic illness due to not being able to afford or access healthier foods.

- Mentoring children and youth through consistent, intentional leadership of our after-dinner club for kids aged 4 to 17.
- Offering opportunities for adults to get to know each other, build trust, have fun, and participate in personal and spiritual growth. This past year, we held concerts, game nights, haircuts, nutrition presentations, a tobacco cessation group, and a weekly group called “Prayer Share Sing.”
- Intentionally making avenues for people who enter the community as recipients to become participants by contributing their time, skills and gifts.

*Thank you* for investing your resources to create such a community of HOPE!

*“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” – Romans 12:16*

#### IN THE NEWS...

- As this newsletter arrives at your home, we will be wrapping up **Summer Service 2014!** We provided internship experiences to 15 young people, in addition to our every day Kids’ Discovery Club and Lunch. It was a joy to welcome Work Retreat groups from Kansas, Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky and North Carolina who served at the homes of our friends in need in rural Athens County. When so many people work in unity to love their neighbors who are vulnerable, we feel immense gratitude!
- Would you consider organizing a group to **sponsor ONE Friday Night Life** this year? Sponsoring groups should be made up of 7 to 14 people, and willing to provide a nutritious meal for 125 to 150 people. To find out what dates are available, contact us by email or call Sherilyn Weinkauff at 740.594.3339.
- Our third annual one-day seminar called **Going Deeper** is scheduled for Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm at the Hope Center. Taught by Paul Richard, Andrea Horsch and Keith Wasserman, this learning experience is for people who desire to follow Jesus into deeper relationships with people who are struggling with poverty. To register, email us or call Dawn Tobin at 740.594.3339 by Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.
- At the time we are writing this, the downstairs of the **Timothy House** still has some minor work to be completed before we can fully move in. We are still hoping to see all of the restoration finished in the next few weeks. To see up-to-date news and the date of our Open House (which is to be announced), visit our website and click on “What’s Happening Now.”
- This fall, we are expecting 14 different **churches and community groups** to visit Good Works and serve together with us through our Neighbors Helping Neighbors initiative. If you’d like information on bringing a group to Good Works, contact us!

In closing, I want to say this: When people ask me how I am, I often respond that I am grateful. Even when I do not feel grateful, I plan and try to choose to be grateful. Indeed, gratitude is a mindset, which helps us overcome the challenges we face in life. Gratitude, promise keeping, truth telling, and hospitality are four very important values that we are learning to practice in the Good Works community. *Thank you* for encouraging us as we grow into deeper, life-giving relationships with one another and the people we serve.

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman