

# Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

*Celebrating 32 Years!*



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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)*

February 2014

Greetings with gratitude!

A new year has begun, hasn't it? The Good Works community set out into 2014 together, with a unified purpose. One afternoon as we were gathered, I sat and looked at the faces of my friends and a feeling of awe crept over me. I was suddenly aware of the latent beauty and goodness and justice hidden inside our willing collaboration. *So much love* for our neighbors in need is possible as each person offers their time and talent in harmony with others.

Though you may not be with us in person, you have a very real place in this circle. We remember you and thank you for your indelible contribution of love for people facing homelessness and poverty in Southeast Ohio.

We are beginning our 34<sup>th</sup> year, and remain steadfast in our vision of *connecting people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the kingdom of God can be experienced.*

*Connecting people...* picture a college student playing basketball with a teen boy at Friday Night Life; a couple, new to Athens, visiting with a recently widowed senior at her home in rural Coolville; two men, one a resident and one a volunteer, having a lively conversation over dinner dishes at the Timothy House.

We have found that these connections, these trusting relationships between people who are economically different from each other, to be life-giving for both sides. Thus, relationships continue to be at the center of our 20 different initiatives, all aimed at providing practical care to senior citizens, children in need, and people without homes. We are motivated and sustained by the loving relationship we have with God, who is teaching us what loving others looks like!

I want to share with you about the friends I have met through Good Works, yet at times this feels difficult because I sincerely desire to preserve the dignity and honor of each person, regardless of the situation they find themselves in.

You see, the richness I receive from sitting with Esther... it's so real to me, yet hard to explain. She faces more acute struggle than most people I know; physical, relational and economic problems seem to riddle her world. Yet, Esther is filled with a more tenacious love for children, particularly troubled ones, than I have previously known. We share the same neighborhood, and I smile thinking of her vivacity, numerous hobbies, and diverse knowledge.

I first met Esther through Friday Night Life, and feel personally grateful for the opportunity to know her. The friendship we share is but one of countless life-giving relationships Good Works has the privilege of facilitating across the lines of class. We invite you to participate with us this year, in knowing and loving your neighbors! --Dawn Tobin

## IN THE NEWS...

- The Good Works WALK is on February 22, 2014, which also happens to be my 56<sup>th</sup> birthday! Please come if you can, and please support us in our goal to raise one third of the annual cost of operating the Timothy House. You can donate online at the WALK website: [www.goodworkswalk.net](http://www.goodworkswalk.net)
- It has been very cold here and we are making every effort not to turn away anyone who needs a place to sleep. In 2013, we had to turn away 177 people, including 55 children, based on the space limitations of the Timothy House. Do you know anyone who would like to become more involved in the Timothy House community?  
We offer four different weekly opportunities for volunteers. To learn more, visit our website and click on “Volunteer Opportunities”.
- As of today, 26 different groups have signed up to visit Good Works, stay at the Hannah House and participate in Work Retreat experiences this year. Through the efforts of similar groups and other local volunteers, we were able to serve nearly 50 local families, primarily widows, last year. We assist these dear friends with all kinds of practical help and small construction projects at their homes.
- Last month we completed a much-needed renovation of the Hannah House kitchen. We are excited about how usable this space is now for the many groups we host. Want to see some recent photos? Check out our Facebook page!
- This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Transformation Station. Celebrate with us— we provided car number 120 to a family last week! 2014 is also the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Good Works purchasing the Luhrig Road property. Wow... SO MUCH GOOD has come from this place!
- During December, our staff and volunteers took a full Christmas dinner to 53 families, and had an opportunity to visit with them as well. This was a way for us to bless and re-connect with people who received assistance from our Neighbors Helping Neighbors initiative in 2013.
- Good Works will offer three Summer Internships this year: our leadership development opportunity for college-aged participants, Agricultural Internship for teens from local schools, and our Kingdom Internship for teens who want to put their faith into action!
- Our campus organization, Service Living, just launched 7 new Transformation Groups, offering students weekly opportunities to experience the people and place of Southeast Ohio through service. To learn more visit: <http://serviceliving.wordpress.com>
- We are grieved to share that we are going to experience a significant loss of grant funding for the Timothy House in 2014. This is due to our decision not to receive a state grant because of its conditions and terms, which require us to violate our ethics and core values of how we believe people who are homeless should be treated. This decision has been very difficult for me. I’m glad to explain more details with you if you would like to write me an email or call me. You can reach me at 740.594.9000 or [keith@good-works.net](mailto:keith@good-works.net).

In light of this, I have been reflecting on how fragile life really is. As I see the vulnerability of so many people and touch my own weakness, I am reminded how dependent we all are on the goodness, mercy and love of God, and on the love of our friends and neighbors. Thank you for being our friend. Thank you for enabling us to impact the lives of so many people with the goodness of God.

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman