

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
Web: 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)*

Dear friends,

May 2014

We write with gratitude! This has been a very challenging month for the Good Works community, and I am again reminded of our deep dependence on God, the one who makes our work fruitful. In a mysterious way, we are also dependent on you, our faithful friends and “co-laborers.” I am immensely grateful for you, especially this month.

For those of you who do not already know, on Monday, April 7th around noon, the Good Works Timothy House had a fire. We are very thankful that no one was injured. The fire began in the dryer located in the downstairs laundry room/bathroom. We were not able to put it out with our extinguisher and had to call the fire department, which responded quickly. However, the damage to the laundry room/bathroom is extensive, and there is also significant smoke and soot damage throughout the entire facility. The electric and gas had to be shut off and the house temporarily closed.



The Good Works Timothy House

At the time of the fire, ten residents were living at the Timothy House, and three people without homes were expected to arrive that day. We are grieving over the emotional trauma that our neighbors, already without homes, are experiencing with this further crisis. We invited the Timothy House residents to be temporary guests in the Hannah House on the Good Works Luhrig Road property. Currently, we are operating a greatly adjusted version of the Timothy House out of that space. The Timothy House staff are providing care to the current and new guests who will be staying with us at the Hannah House.

We are doing the best we can in this situation, however, the Hannah House is not designed nor suited to accommodate people experiencing homelessness. It is home to our yearlong interns, Life in Transition residents, and Work Retreat participants. Neither the layout of the house, the 35-acre property, nor our distance from the city of Athens is in our favor. Nevertheless, we have begun the process of re-thinking what it means to operate a shelter for people without homes out of the Hannah House on a temporary basis. The fact that we provide the only shelter for people who experience homelessness in eight Southeast Ohio counties certainly played into our decision.

At the Timothy House property on Central Avenue, our focus is on cleaning and re-construction. Based on the recommendations we received, we contracted with a professional cleaning company who has the knowledge and equipment to do fire-clean up. The initial estimates we received indicated that it would take at least four weeks to clean up the damage. The work to rebuild the area where the fire took place is also substantial. It will include the laundry room/bathroom in addition to aspects of the kitchen and parts of our heating and cooling system.

By the time you receive this letter, we hope the restoration process will be well underway! We think we can operate a shelter out of the Good Works Hannah House until June 1st, 2014. After that date, we hope and plan to return our residents and staff to the renovated Timothy House. By God's grace, we are continuing on with as many of our commitments as possible. We have suspended the overnight aspect of our spring Work Retreats until June 1st, but are proceeding with our summer initiatives as planned.

Being on the front lines of this situation, we are experiencing varying levels of shock and grief, as well as gratitude, peace and unity as we attempt to respond to the situation and carry on. We are very thankful for God's protection, as the fire could have been much worse.

We have also received such an amazing outpouring of encouragement, prayer and financial gifts towards our insurance deductible and restoring the Timothy House. Thank you to all of you who responded so quickly and so generously. We feel loved, and humbled. We believe this difficult situation can result in GOOD, indeed we trust beauty can come out of ashes... to the glory of God.

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

— Isaiah 61:1-3

In the News...

- Last month, we conducted interviews with prospective college-age interns for Summer Service 2014. We are moving ahead with our plans for Summer Service and still planning to house our summer interns and summer Work Retreat groups in the Hannah House when the emergency shelter moves back to the Timothy House on Central Avenue around June 1st.
- We still plan to hold our 7 week Summer Kids' Discovery Club and everyday Summer Lunch, which begin on June 16th. Each year, we make plans in faith that God will provide the people and the resources. Do you like to teach children? We are seeking volunteers to make a one-time, interactive presentation about something they are passionate about at our Kids' Club. Contact us for more details! Also, let us know if you would like to help by offering gifts of food or grocery store cards toward our hot, nutritious meals that are open to kids and adults in the community.
- We are also anticipating our 6th annual Teen Agricultural Internship and 3rd Kingdom Internship to be held this summer! And looking towards the fall, we are seeking applicants for our yearlong Appalachian Immersion internship beginning in September.
- In response to the fire, many people have asked us how they can help. We will have the most specific, up-to-date information on our Facebook page, and our website under "What's Happening Now." However, if you prefer, email us or call us at 740.594.3339. Please know that your support means such a great deal to all of us!

In closing, I want to share my gratitude for how the Good Works community has pulled together during this crisis. We are working hard to honor each other as we work through these changes and challenges. We feel confident that ***we can get through this*** and that, together with your help and support, our collective expression of love will bear fruit and glorify God. Thanks for being our friends. Thanks for loving us through this difficult season.

Love is a verb,

Keith Wasserman



PS: Each spring for the past several years, we have sent out a special letter inviting people to support us as we accelerate our ministry with widows and children during Summer Service. We are not able to send an appeal this year due to all that is happening with us. If you are able to assist us as we take these steps of faith, hope and love... thank you.