



Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 30 Years!

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*“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)*

November, 2010

Greetings, friends!

What a joy it is to know that you are behind us, urging us forward. Thank you for connecting with us, and the neighbors we are serving together *so that* the kingdom of God can be experienced!

This month, I have a sincere desire to share some of the thoughts and experiences of a family we have come to know and love in recent months. We first met Matthew and Brianna when they came to live at the Timothy House, our home for people going through homelessness.

Matthew grew up in The Plains. He married Brianna, who is from the nearby town of Albany, and they have five children. Their daughter, Estella, was born during their stay at the Timothy House. In respect for their privacy, these are not their real names.

Hear some of their story:

Brianna: “When I got out of rehab, people talked with us about staying at the Timothy House. All I knew about homeless shelters was what I saw on the news, you know, police and long lines to get in. Staying at the Timothy House was a pretty good learning experience for us, and not what we expected.”

Matthew: “We got right in to the house. The staff told us to be there at five and we were there. Dinner was at five thirty. Everybody was really welcoming and nice and they treated us to a Subway dinner.”

Brianna: “When I was pregnant with Estella, I thought it was the worst thing—not having anything. But everyone was so up beat; they have a way of keeping your hopes up. They helped us through the hardest time we ever went through. They made having this baby one of the easiest things, compared to the other four! People donated things for Estella, people we didn’t even know. Usually when people give you things they want something back. These people just wanted us to better ourselves.”

Matthew: “We had been through quite a bit and changed our lives around. Estella was our new hope. Our lives changed for the better—before, during and after our time at the Timothy House. We met a lot of good people who helped us through. They helped us by the way they interacted. We were regular human beings, people that they were friends with. We had a lot of discussions. They told us that we could do it! I have never felt or experienced that kind of love or caring in my whole life. Even though we were down on our luck it didn’t seem that way because of the employees and volunteers.

Brianna: “The staff...they act like regular people. They don’t treat you any different. They help you help yourself. That was the main thing—a way for you to help yourself with out someone doing it for you. The Timothy House gave us stability and structure in daily living. Like chores, which aren’t really chores if you are the one living there! That along with teaching you how to save money and not buy things you don’t need.”

Brianna: “We didn’t have that many caring people in our lives before this. The staff may not know what you are going through, but they give you the benefit of the doubt, a chance to prove yourself without judging you first. When most people think of an addict, they think, “You are a bad person.” We were never made to feel like we were bad people. Our caregiver is an amazing person. If he couldn’t help us, he would find us someone who could. They go out of their way to help.”

We are thankful for the goodness that Matthew and Brianna have experienced through their time at the Timothy House, and for their willingness to share a little piece of their story here. In 2009, staff and volunteers extended this temporary home to 164 people for a total of almost 4,000 nights. In reflecting with the staff about this past month at the Timothy House, Andrea Horsch shares:

“We are hopeful. We see God at work in small and large ways in people’s lives. We say this in the context of almost every person here being part of a family that has been torn apart by addiction and poverty and years of instability — there are parents who do not have their children with them because of these reasons, and adults who have grown up in those settings and are troubled as a result of it. God is good anyway, healing the deepest wounds if we let him. In the mean time, it is a struggle for families to work toward stability and healing. But, we are hopeful. And people here are hopeful for good things in their lives as well.”

In the news...

- In October, most of our staff had the blessing of participating in the **Kingdom Conference** at Asbury Theological Seminary. We gave four presentations around the subject of community development: the practices that sustain our community. We are grateful for this time to be refreshed and learn from others who are doing similar work among people who are struggling with poverty.
- During the fall, we hosted 12 different groups (**Work Retreats**) who came to join us as we reach out to our neighbors. We are so thankful for the opportunity to join together with so many loving people who help provide hope through acts of compassionate service to those who are widowed and who struggle with disabilities.
- **Hope and Possibilities** has just begun its fourth year! This is our partnership with local churches by which we seek to listen to those who need immediate financial assistance and connect them with area resources. In the last 9 months, we have received over 400 calls for financial assistance and met with about 120 different people. Staff member Chip Guyton continues to provide significant leadership to this area of Good Works.
- **Training for Life** is our weekly computer class held at The Timothy House that provides our residents with the opportunity to learn computer software and access the Internet under the guidance of our staff and volunteers.
- We are planning for our 2011 **Walk for the Homeless!** It is scheduled for Saturday, January 15th. Would you like to come out to participate this year? Can you promote the WALK in your community? To download sponsor forms and for more information, visit walkforthehomeless.net.

In closing, I want to THANK YOU again for urging us forward in this great work of LOVE! I want to you to know that writing, editing and mailing this newsletter is a collaborative effort by many people each month! This month’s newsletter was primarily written by Dawn Tobin.

Love is still a verb,



Keith Wasserman