



Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 31 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)*

**LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN
LIKE WATERS, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS
LIKE AN EVER-FLOWING STREAM. — Amos 5:24**

Dear friends,

August 2011

Sometimes, when we sit face-to-face with people who are surrounded by grief and oppression, this is what our souls cry out for.

“I pray for God’s justice to come with both the speed of an avalanche, and the transforming power of a glacier,” says Chip Guyton, one Good Works staff member. Since the fall of 2007, Chip has given himself to listening to and advocating for those facing emergency financial needs.

For the poor, bills pile. Money for rent, electric, water, natural gas and propane are among the most common requests we receive.

Monday through Friday finds Chip at work to create what we have entitled *Hope and Possibilities* for people in crisis. Ironically, Good Works does not distribute any money through this avenue. Rather, it is our commitment to do our best to work *with* each person to help them access resources available through church congregations, local agencies and government programs.

Among our church partners, we take a specific role: to provide guidance as they discern how to respond to those asking them for help. Through building a foundation of relationship with each person seeking assistance, Chip is able to examine their situation and recommend those with credible needs. Chip then becomes their advocate.

In our experience, advocacy is not distant: it is personal, and it begins with seeing a *person*, not a “case,” a “cause,” or a “need.” Literally, this means taking into ourselves the sorrow of others. Thus, meeting face-to-face with each person, listening well, and offering the spiritual support of prayer is our intentional first step. This allows us to know Cathy, and how hard her month has been. She lives down the road from us; Cathy is our neighbor.

“I’m paying \$50 a month for gas, and they want more,” she says. Cathy is on a fixed income, and doesn’t consider herself the kind of person who asks for things. But she asserts that at Good Works, she got help, and they treated her really well.

With her permission, Chip carried Cathy's need to a network of partner congregations who desire to share the burdens of people like her. Funds typically come in from at least three different sources, and go directly to the utility company or landlord. When someone has been long deprived due to situations beyond their control, *this* is a little trickle of justice.

So far this year, Chip has received 274 calls and met with over a hundred different individuals. We truly celebrate the opportunity to love people in this way! I want to remind you of the significance of your part, your piece, in bringing hope to the daily lives of our neighbors. Thank you.

IN THE NEWS...

As you read this newsletter, we are wrapping up another season of **Summer Service**, and saying goodbye to our summer interns. Seven weeklong groups visited us and found joy in serving in many capacities:

Replacing a bathroom floor, mowing grass and painting all became opportunities to love our neighbors who are older and struggling with disability. Our volunteers played a key role in these **Samaritan Projects!**

Our **Kids' Discovery Club** and **Summer Lunch** have really impacted the lives of many children and adults over the last few months. For our fantastic volunteers, presenters, and those who shared money and food for our daily meal...we give thanks. Providing a hot, nutritious meal for 60 to 70 people every day is quite an undertaking! Darlene Wasserman was this year's cook.

This was our third year to hold the **Teen Agricultural Internship!** Eight local youth grew in character and job readiness through agricultural work and serving others here in Athens County.

Last month, we were able to provide car number 83 to a participant in the **Transformation Station**. Please pass the word on our need for good working cars!

Although we are now using the **Hope Center**, work continues on the outside and we are looking for skilled carpenters to assist us as we finish out the deck and siding. Interested?

Looking towards the fall, we are making plans for our third year of **Service Living** with Ohio University students. We hope to begin 8 different Transformation Groups in which students will learn about the history, beauty, values, needs and people of rural Appalachia. With relationship-building as a focus, we will be inviting students to grow food, build houses with low-income families, and visit with adults who have developmental disabilities, just to name a few!

All these activities, plans and people...they come together under our vision for the righteousness of God's kingdom to flow like a stream into and out of our lives. It is exciting when we feel this happening—and we know that it is God's love and yours that carries us along. Hear our gratitude for you!

Love is a verb,

Keith Wasserman

