

Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

Celebrating 36 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)*

Dear Friends,

October 2017

Warmest greetings from the community of HOPE called Good Works! The seasons are changing, and with them our community is adapting and adjusting. We are continuing to walk with our neighbors as they persevere through ups and downs in their lives. People living in poverty often face the most difficult choices, suffer the greatest losses, and endure the longest recovery after a crisis.

We observe in our corner of Appalachia the manner in which the long, slow devastation of generational poverty places those who are physically and relationally exhausted into especially desperate situations. Poverty is lonely, and the isolation that comes with age and infirmity sometimes sharpens that loneliness into despair. Our lives are interconnected with the lives of so many people who struggle with these challenges every day.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors is our own modest effort to intervene into the lives of widows and older adults in Athens County who have a need for labor-intensive help with their homes. Last year, we were able to serve 61 different older adults who did not have another means of having the work completed. We had 79 requests for assistance. Recently an older woman in our community wrote to us, “I lost my husband in April of last year, and it is very hard for me to do this stuff. That’s why I’m asking for the help. I am a very sick person.” Another woman wrote, “I am disabled. I live alone and on a fixed income. My money runs out before the end of the month. I have had open heart surgery, leg and back surgery, and am not able to do much.”

We hope not only to meet some of these physical needs, but also to bring the relational support and healing described by Job when he says, *“I made the widow’s heart sing”* (29:13). Paul Richard oversees Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and describes our purpose as “to provide relational connections with people who are struggling with loneliness, age, and financial difficulties, with a hope to see the reciprocal benefits to both sides of that encounter. Providing practical service is an important part of Neighbors, but it only makes up a part of the experience.”

Buddy Ballard is a skilled carpenter on our staff, and leads teams of volunteers out to our neighbors’ homes all over rural Athens County. He recently reflected on an experience he had with one of the neighbors he served through Good Works. “In the case of Margaret, she was deeply depressed and very lonely. She had a son, struggling with addiction, who caused her grief and problems when he came around. She had lost her husband, and on top of that, had cancer and was going through chemotherapy. Even though she was so ill, she wanted to remain in her own home, where she had formed her memories with her family.”

We receive upwards of 40 Work Retreat groups each year, and teenagers from a church youth group served as Buddy’s construction crew that particular week. They worked to restore running water to the fixtures and appliances in Margaret’s home. Buddy said, “It seemed like these kids kept goofing off, and I would have to call them back to task all the time. It turned out they had been rehearsing a song for Margaret—a beautiful version of hallelujah. They didn’t have a gift for

plumbing, but they did have a gift to give Margaret, so I encouraged them to practice, ‘Practice all you want!’

“By the end of the week the water was flowing again. I said, ‘Margaret, would it be okay if these kids sang you a song?’ While they were singing, she just lit up, and laughed—this laugh that came out of the inner part of her bosom. I could tell that Margaret hadn’t experienced that kind of joy in who knows how long. We all knew we had brought something more to Margaret than running water; the joy of the Lord was flowing out of her!”

IN THE NEWS...

- We continue to be so grateful for all of you who give to Good Works. If you prefer to support us through online giving, you can give securely on our website through Network for Good. WE ALSO have an arrangement with our local bank through which you can set up automatic monthly giving, which we prefer. Contact Sherilyn at 740-594-3339 or send us an email to learn more.
- The Good Works email has recently changed to: email@good-works.net
- Our Fall Work Retreat Season began in September. We are expecting 40 different groups to visit Good Works this year to support our on-going vision to “make the widow’s heart sing.”
- The 2018 Good Works WALK is scheduled for Saturday, February 24th. Please “save the date” and come! This is a family friendly event. All donations to the WALK go to providing shelter at the Timothy House to those who experience homelessness in rural Southeast Ohio.
- GIVING TUESDAY is November 28. Would you encourage others to give to GW on this day?

IN CLOSING, I want to tell you that I have been spending a lot of my time helping each person on our staff grow into deeper levels of leadership and responsibility. Encouraging, directing, and guiding our community to grow in their character, skills and ability to *practice love* with integrity, sincerity, gentleness, kindness, and generosity... this has become very important to me. Thank you for *your* support!

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman

PS- Please consider joining us this year for our annual one-day conference on the Good Works Luhrig Road property Saturday, November 11th. Please share this invitation with friends you know!

<h2>Going Deeper</h2> <p>Good Works is hosting a one day seminar on Saturday, November 11 9:30am to 4:00pm (lunch included)</p>	
Agenda for the Day Registration & Welcome Session I—Service as Worship Session II—Strengthen the Weak Lunch Breakout Sessions Final Session Worship	Breakout Sessions Welcoming the Stranger—Fran Bissell Theology of Work—Doug Schmaltz Justice for Fatherless Kids—Nick Smith Justice for the Widow—Timothy Wasserman Walking with People in Recovery—Buddy Ballard Tour & Talk about Good Works—Keith Wasserman
For more information or to RSVP, contact Andrea Horsch at email@good-works.net or call 740-594-3339. A donation of \$25 per person is requested. RSVP’s are needed by November 6.	