

Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

Celebrating 35 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)*

Warm greetings to the Community of HOPE,

September 2016

There are, it seems, signs of hope always around us. Fall is coming soon, and then winter, but spring will follow. Our neighbors experience faith and joy in spite of hardship. Old friends depart and new friendships begin. Hope takes many forms.

Have you ever planted a garden? It is a very hopeful act! It is an act that declares in the spring that I intend to weed and sweat so that I can enjoy and share a harvest months later. Doug Schmaltz led the planting of gardens at 15 homes and one on the Good Works property this growing season. These neighbors are older, some are living with a disability, and we have had many interns and volunteers pitch in to help with the labor-intensive work. But the garden is *theirs*; it is planted at their home, and they invest time in tending it from day to day.

The expectation of good food becomes a reason to get outside. Fresh cilantro is in the smell of the coriander seeds that require our neighbor's participation to become salsa. Fat white seeds from the green beans picked past their prime last year are returned to the earth and will become dinner this year. The food is something to look forward to, and the partnership of working the garden together gives a shared interest and makes its fruitfulness dependent on our interdependence.

Cultivating life gives us life. Potential is realized because we hoped together.

Have you ever asked for help? Sometimes asking for help feels so impossible we stay silent, and we suffer alone instead. People can get lost inside their own anguish, and struggle to believe anything good could come from inviting another person into it. For the several hundred people who call the Timothy House to ask about shelter every year, I cannot help but think that they have discovered some hope at the moment that they call, with a lump in their throat, and tell us their story.

Fran Bissell leads the Timothy House care-giving team, which hears the many stories of people who have become displaced. The need in our area is greater than our capacity and we can't help everyone, but the care-giving team receives these stories and looks for the possibility. When they move someone in, the care-giver works together with the resident to make a path out of their hopes—to fashion a plan from their ideas and to say, *This is possible, let's figure out how you can get there.*

God is careful with our hopes. "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on the earth" (Isaiah 42:3-4).

When we are able, by the grace of God, to see the possibility of a future in someone who cannot see through their despair, then we have hope, too. Sometimes it is a small and smoldering hope, but hope nonetheless. It is hard to fan that into flame on our own. Hope is

best kindled in a community—a community that can remind its members of God’s faithfulness. Communities can say, *We have been here before, and things can get better. The work will be worth it—press on! We will stick with you in the mean time.* - Andrea Horsch

THIS MONTH I want to invite you to join us in our journey of imparting hope and healing to many people who feel lonely or forgotten and who are often in despair. The Good Works community remains committed to investing in people’s lives with love. We are not called to fix people; we are called to love people. And the work of love is hard, very hard. But together, we are moving in the direction of hope.

IN THE NEWS.....

- The Good Works staff is leading a one-day seminar called **GOING DEEPER** on Saturday November 12th from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm in the Hope Center. Lunch will be provided for a donation for those who pre-register. Going Deeper is primarily about what we have learned about navigating relationships with people who struggle with poverty, exclusion, addiction and injustice. Please consider coming, will you? Call or email Andrea for more information.
- This was our 7th year of providing an every-day Summer Kids Discovery Club for seven weeks followed by a nutritious lunch. Led by Emily Axe (an intern in 2006 who joined our staff in 2008) and supported by our summer service interns, we had 35 kids register and were blessed by 50 volunteer presenters who shared on topics ranging from art to animals. We were also able to provide 1700+ meals prepared by Darlene Wasserman and many volunteers.
- On an average year, we host around 40 different Work Retreat groups of 15-30 people who come to serve with us through Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Beginning in September we are expecting 11 groups during the fall season.
- The Timothy House has been especially busy this summer, and we have experienced an increase in the number of people without a home seeking shelter (both singles and families with small children). We are looking for volunteers willing to step into relationships of service this fall at The Timothy House.
- TWO teen internships this summer represent our vision to *invest* in the young people of our local community. They were diverse experiences and we are grateful for the leadership provided by Doug Schmaltz and Nick Smith!

IN CLOSING, I want to say this: “It is always right, at all times and in every way to give thanks.” This phrase represents Gratitude, one of the core values of our community. We are also leaning more deeply into learning how to practice Promise Keeping, Truth Telling and Hospitality. These are four deep and abiding values that hold up the structure we call Good Works.

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman