



Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 37 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)*

September, 2018

Fall greeting from all of us who form the Good Works Community of Hope!

On the Good Works property, the time between the end of Summer Service and the beginning of our fall Work Retreat season affords many of the staff a little breathing room. The Timothy House, however, cannot "schedule" times of rest and recovery. Our home for people without homes on Central Avenue filled up over the summer and has stayed very full—with 14 people staying there last night. The Timothy House continues to provide the only shelter for people experiencing homelessness in 8 southeast Ohio Counties, and this house is a very busy place!

Each relationship we enter into has its own joys and challenges. Working with people in crisis could easily frazzle the Care-giving team, but instead of fraying, the staff of the Timothy House labor to be even more tightly knit. We work hard to support one another as we put feet to the phrase "love your neighbor."

Steve Rogers has provided one-on-one care and support to people experiencing homelessness for the last five years. He began his relationship with Good Works as an intern in 2009, moving to full-time staff in 2011. Recently, he reflected on some circumstances in which the Care-giving team experienced painful relationships with some Timothy House residents.

The Care-giving team worked with one young man last spring who was doing well in the house, getting along well with staff and the other residents, and after ten weeks, he was invited into a really beneficial housing opportunity. When the moment came for him to take it, he moved out instead—into an apartment complex that he was barred from and sure to get kicked out of. Steve says, "I think we all felt extremely *grieved* at the thinking and poor choices people make some times. On the one hand, we see this great opportunity, but we can't make someone take it. We can only work within the grasp of what we have the ability to do, and everyone makes choices." Love is painful. Part of reconciling our grief is trusting that God will continue to work in people's lives. There is hope that good will come in the future, and even a willingness on our part to reconnect, to reconcile, and work with people again.

Steve commented on another person who lashed out at him during their stay. Steve said, "I needed my co-workers to step in and remind me that I am more than someone's negativity and guilt. There had to be a lot of processing with people I trusted. I can't carry the weight of the world on my shoulders for each person I want to support. By being honest with my coworkers, they're able to speak into things I'm not seeing."

As we go along in our ministry together, there are moments that crystallize for each of us the reality that no *one* of us by ourselves can be the answer. We need our community to re-center us, to tell us the truth, to pick up a difficult relationship when our ability runs out, and to extend compassion to one another. We endure hardship as a part of love, and we endure it together. This

is part of our pastoral care for one another. We remind each other that we have limitations and that saying “no” is a form of loving people, too.

Because of our love, we are often the people speaking hard truths into someone’s life—whether both sides are ready or not—out of the hope of warning people we have come to care about away from a harmful situation or choice. It’s at those times that we can most often feel misunderstood, and that we experience not just disappointment, but are more likely to receive hurtful words. It’s also at those times that we most need reminded of God’s great love for us as well.

IN THE NEWS

- We celebrate all of the volunteers (including our Teen Agricultural Interns) who have helped establish and care for another year of Good Works Gardens. In addition to our garden on the GW property, we were able to establish 15 gardens in Athens County primarily at the homes of widows.
- Our one-day conference called **GOING DEEPER** is coming up on Saturday, October 27. Our staff will focus this year on sharing the sustainable practices inside the Good Works community, and how they fortify our vision and mission. We will have presentations on Promise Keeping, Truth Telling, Hospitality, and Gratitude. Space is limited. Please register before October 23 by phone or by email.
- Staff Transitions: This month, we say goodbye to Jim Todd, who is transitioning off the Good Works staff after almost 14 years. We all feel so very grateful for the gift Jim was in our community and for his leadership with the Transformation Station. We are welcoming two former interns who have joined the full-time staff at The Timothy House this month. Caitlyn O’Connell and Garrett Smith both have a long-term relationship with our community, and we receive them with JOY!
- The Good Works 2019 WALK is scheduled for Saturday, February 23 here in Athens. This will be a very significant event in the life of our community, and we hope each of you will come. Learn more at www.goodworkswalk.net
- We are still seeking working cars for the Transformation Station. We provided car #171 to a participant in August. Please help us pass the word!
- Many people are making a transition to check-free banking. Next month we will be sending out an insert with our regular newsletter describing the different ways you can participate and support us through online giving if that is your preference.

In closing, I want to say that we recognize that the trust of being in someone’s life through the crisis of homelessness is a privilege. While it is true that we grieve with people who are grieving and are sometimes hurt in the process, we also have the joy of rejoicing with people in their successes. Glory to God, who sustains and inspires us! May God’s mercy flow through us and into the lives of those around us. Amen.

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman

