



Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

Celebrating 38 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)*

October 2019

Greetings from Good Works!

Our staff was recently posed the question, "What might HOPE mean?" In the midst of our discussion, some thoughts and themes emerged from our experiences. Several in our community spoke about recognizing hope in their own lives after having lived in despair during different seasons. Someone reflected on the feeling of being crushed, as opposed to feeling like their life was sustained through finding hope. Another person reflected on a time when he felt like he had no purpose, versus the way that having hope can fill us with purpose, and having purpose can fill us with hope, especially when that purpose is to help others.

While these experiences are not unique to the staff of Good Works, I believe it is *uniquely good* that as a community of people who have journeyed from despair to hope, we are able to welcome people in poverty at their point of despair.

After serving at the Timothy House in different ways for over a decade, I have read and heard thousands of people's stories of falling into a season of homelessness. They have described the cycles of despair that have trapped them. A lack of hope looks like scrambling and hustling. It looks like fight or flight, or sometimes being frozen. It looks like relapse. It looks like going back to an abusive relationship. It looks like not having the energy to go to the counseling appointment. Hope might be the biggest factor in making the good decision in the middle of a crisis. In our context, having hope for someone often means to believe in a good future for them until they can believe in it themselves and can have the clarity to picture a future that is better than their past.

Hope is contagious. In 2019 we have had a steady stream of single parents stay at the Timothy House with their kids. This year hope has looked like kids moving in and immediately forming friendships in a new place with the kids who are already living there. Hope is a mom bouncing a baby on her lap, talking about her months of stability and sobriety, and saying of her daughter, "She's worth it." Hope is a family showing off the keys to their new place. Hope is seeing another mom, who sobbed to us a few weeks earlier about how things could not possibly be worse, crack into a big smile and say, "I'll get my place next!"

As one of my coworkers said, "Hope pulls us into the future and gives us something in the present that draws us forward. That is our identity; we begin to have a sense of who we are because of hope." – Andrea Horsch

Andrea served as the Director of Caregiving at The Timothy House from 2005 to 2014. She now oversees and provides leadership to several Good Works initiatives and internships. Andrea and her husband Ben live outside of Athens with their son James.

IN THE NEWS

- Our Ground Breaking Ceremony for our new home we are calling Sign of HOPE took place on September 28th, followed by an Open House at The Timothy House. We are so very grateful for all the support we have experienced already for this new initiative!
- After a break in August, our Work Retreat season resumed in September. We have several week-long and weekend groups scheduled this fall. We feel so encouraged and grateful for all of the volunteers coming to serve alongside us as we continue to care for our neighbors who experience the challenges of vulnerability, aging, and loss (Job 29:13).
- Thank you for passing the word about our need for cars. We are still asking/hoping that people will donate good, working cars and appliances to us to be provided through the "sweat equity" vision of the Transformation Station!

- Friday Night Life, now in year #27, continues to provide a community of HOPE to adults and children every week. We provide take-home food to 25-35 families every week through FNL. We are very thankful for all of the teens who choose to participate in FNL each week and the mentors who serve as volunteers with Good Works. We are so grateful for all of the groups who sponsor FNL and provide a hot, nutritious meal for 100-140 adults and children each week.

FAITH BASED

We often identify Good Works as a “faith-based” organization. By this we mean that, as followers of Jesus, we have faith that what we are doing to love and serve people in their vulnerability and brokenness is simply the right thing to do, regardless of whether we see the “results” we desire. We have faith that the people who serve alongside us are growing in their love for their neighbors, their integrity, and their capacity to trust God. We have faith that those we are so intentionally serving will *experience* love, as well as protection, safety, and the HOPE found in new friendships. We have faith that those who come to *receive* from us will experience the opportunity and invitation towards mutuality and reciprocity; and discover the JOY to serve others, give back and “pay it forward.” We have faith that the resources we need to carry out the ministry God has trusted us with will be provided to us.

IN CLOSING, I am confident that what we do to love and serve the people who seek us out through all the Good Works initiatives—that this is a trust. It is also a gift and a privilege. We serve with gratitude. There are pockets of weariness, but there are also seasons of JOY based on the deep HOPE we carry. We know we are loved by God and YOU. We know that there is good will and intentional support for us, and the ministry God has trusted us with. Thank you for walking alongside us.

“... hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts...” (Romans 5:5).

Love is a verb,

Kw

Keith Wasserman



Timothy, Darlene and Keith at Sign of HOPE groundbreaking



Neighbors Helping Neighbors 2019



Sign of HOPE groundbreaking



Friday Night Life “9 square in the air” for our teens.