

Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

Celebrating 39 Years!



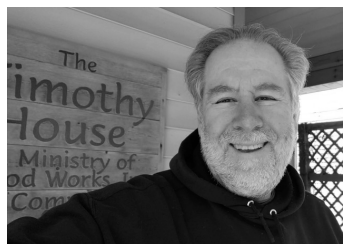
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Keith Wasserman, Founder/Executive Director

*"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)*

May 2020

Heart-felt Spring greetings to each of you from the community of Good Works!



"Everything is changing, every day, every hour." I am guessing you too are hearing things like this. For us, we are constantly making adjustments and giving thanks, constantly updating things and giving thanks, continually giving thanks!

This is a very difficult time for many of us but especially for those who live alone, who struggle with issues related to aging, and those who do not have a home. As this time of uncertainty carries on we are especially impacted, primarily because so much of what we are doing to love and serve others involves volunteers. In an average year, Good Works welcomes and works with around 1,100 different volunteers through Friday Night Life, Work Retreats, The Timothy House and other initiatives. We also include Transformation Station volunteers because we invite those who participate to leave their old identity of "needy" and join us as a volunteer as we serve others. As of this writing, almost all of our volunteers have had to stop participating and we feel uncertain how to plan. The staff are standing in the gaps and we are doing our best to love and care for those who need us right now.

The brokenness of those we care so deeply about expresses itself in many ways. One way it shows up for us is that those we serve *often* don't have the ability to recognize what we are doing for them and thus don't acknowledge gratitude or show appreciation for many of the efforts and sacrifices we embrace on their behalf. This occasionally occurs at the Good Works Timothy House when we pour our lives into someone only to see them leave abruptly and we never hear from them again. While we know we did the right thing, we often feel hurt because of zero communication and our feelings of uncertainty about what happened. I have seen this month after month, year after year and I do my best to offer my co-workers encouragement, perspective and affirmation for their efforts (and the emotional stress they carry) as they so intentionally love and serve those without a home.

We work hard to love and care for people whose lives have been shattered by the combination of living in a fallen world, making bad choices and being harmed by others. We are still learning to "die" to our own needs to be appreciated (and respected) by some of those we serve. Sometimes, the people we are intentionally loving do not have the mental and emotional "room" to appreciate what we are doing for them; or recognize the internal stress, compassion and suffering we are experiencing because we love them. This often occurs at the Timothy House where we seek to create and sustain a safe, clean and stable place for people without homes to stay temporarily while they identify, own and work on the issues in their lives, which *are* in their control. All of the "behind the scenes" work we do is not usually something they are aware of, such as work that goes into finding the funding and organizing the staffing of our ministry. Don't get me wrong, we do this because we love God and people (see Matthew 25:40), but it is still hard at times. God provides JOY, perspective, courage and strength to do what we have been called to do.

I have experienced the brokenness in others as I extend myself in love. I have also touched brokenness in myself. When they collide, I often feel confused, disturbed and uncertain how to move forward. It is at this point I am certain that the work we do – the work of repairing broken and shattered lives –

MUST be done in community where we have a high level of trust for one another, work alongside one another, and walk with one another to love people *together*. This is one of the most significant points of where Good Works functions as a ministry, not a social service agency.

The brokenness of those we serve looms large and presses against each person to define them. But we know that no one needs to be defined by their weakness, their past mistakes, or by their broken spirit. We can all be defined by how God sees us and how we are guided to see one another: made in God's image with dignity, beauty and purpose. And I could go on. For our part, we are seeking to live out this vision every day. By grace.

IN THE NEWS...

- At this writing we are still making plans to host Summer Service. We have seven Work Retreat groups scheduled to come. We are planning to make many adjustments knowing that things will look different this year.
- We are feeling the loss of not having volunteers and this is impacting all aspects of our ministry.
- We are planning a special event to replace the Good Works WALK. It will be called DAY IN THE LIFE and will be held on Saturday December 5, 2020 here in Athens. Please "save the date." More information will follow.
- If you feel prompted to send us notes of encouragement, please know that we take time to read them together on Friday afternoons.

IN CLOSING this month, I want to say this: Sometimes the emotional and physical pain people experience is loud, so loud that it both interrupts and prevents them from hearing, seeing, experiencing and appreciating the love of God, and the love and care others have for them. It is in these times that we learn to stand firm, give ourselves to the work God has trusted us with and persevere in loving and serving people as a community as best as we can, knowing that our work and our love is not in vain. (I Corinthians 15:58).

Love is a verb



Keith Wasserman

Photos of our some of our property in the Spring



Good Works Timothy House



The Good Works Property



Joan Galperin Wasserman
Memorial Garden



View from the Hannah House Porch



The Transformation Station 2020



Spiritual Formation Retreats often
take place on our hiking paths