

Good Works, Inc. — A Community of Hope

Celebrating 39.5 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)

Summer greetings from all of us who form the community of HOPE!

July 2020



The staff and interns of Good Works, summer 2020

We are well. We are very grateful. We are experiencing kindness, and this form of love is creating stability in us! Could kindness be a catalyst that develops hope in others? I think so.

Bill and Neda had been participating in the Friday Night Life Community for several years off and on. Like many others, they came for friendship and community as well as the food. Last fall Bill told one of the GW staff that

he and Neda were sleeping in their car. It also became clear that Bill had some kind of heart condition that placed him at a greater risk because of the cold temperatures. Keith and Darlene welcomed Bill and Neda into Sign of HOPE at their home until The Timothy House could receive them. They ended up staying with our community in The Timothy House for several months until they could save enough money and rent a place of their own. They have continued to stay in good communication with several of us in the community and are eager to return as volunteers at some point. Last month, as Bill underwent surgery for his medical condition, our community was able to support him in prayer and with encouragement and friendship. He continues to express his love and gratitude to all of us.

TWO things we have in common with those we serve. Most of us struggle with varying degrees of loneliness, and most of us have the need to be needed. I truly believe that Good Works can (and must) address these things and create forms of community across the lines of race, class and generation where we develop authentic friendships and also meet the need to be needed. I know I have a need to be needed. You too? I find this to be one of the places where mutuality can bloom from a seed to a flower. I think this is what many of us long for. Ministries like Good Works who care for people who struggle with poverty, mental and emotional distress, addiction recovery and disability; and provide hope and healing by creating structures where people discover their place to contribute, and to be known. This is so essential. This is one of the things that sustains us!

IN THE NEWS...

- A lot of energy is going into our Summer Lunch (M-TH) which is being held at The Plains Community Park this year. WE are grateful for all of the food and supplies (and gift cards) which are being donated. And for the leadership of Darlene Wasserman who prepares the meal each day with assistance from our interns and local volunteers.
- This summer we are hosting five local teens who are participating in what we call The Kingdom Internship. These are teens, ranging in age from 13 to 18, who join us 3 days each week from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm for 7 weeks.

- We are planning two Spiritual Formation Retreats this summer led by Paul Richard. Both retreats are short hikes and will take place from 9 am to 12 noon on the Good Works property. (1) Saturday July 11 (Jesus Speaks About Faith). (2) Saturday August 15 (Jesus Confronts Doubt). For more information or to pre-register, contact us through email. There is no cost for either retreat.
- We are slowly restarting the Transformation Station (TS). We have established some new protocols and we are moving forward with our ministry of *welcoming* people into community, clothing each person with dignity, and inviting them to use their skills and abilities to help others as they move from the old identity of “needy” to a new identity of volunteer. Someone once called this practice “Asset based Community Development”.
- This summer we launched the first year of a new initiative we are developing called Crossroads. Crossroads takes place 4 days a week and was developed for teens ages 13-19. Please pray with us as Nick and Caitlyn lead Crossroads from 1-3 pm each day after Summer Lunch.
- In June we welcomed several new interns into Summer Service! They will work alongside the staff as we restart the TS, provide our Summer Lunch, re-start (albeit slowly) Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and work on our new house we call Sign of HOPE.
- Keith and Darlene have been busy working with Dr. Christine Pohl on a book we are writing which will be published this fall on the story, practices and theology of Good Works. More information to follow!
- Sign of HOPE is welcoming new volunteers this summer who want to help for a day or longer. Contact Paul Richard through the Good Works email for more information.

One important practice we have is to continue to be insistent on ways to bring together people who might be considered “poor” or “excluded” with people who are not. If we are willing and teachable, we have so much to learn from one another. For example, it wasn’t until I met someone who grew up without a car that I understood that people who grow up without their own transportation develop a different sense of time than those who come from families with a reliable car. This different sense of time impacts commitments people make (or are reluctant to make). It puts pressure on their sense of integrity and dignity in a world where one’s status is often tied to having transportation. For teens who are living in families with limited or non-existent internet or cellphone access, this can shape their lives differently. Teens who grow up without internet in their homes, but are fortunate enough to go to college arrive with a very different experience and are (in most cases) years behind their peers with regard to their capacity to use the world wide web. Where did I learn these things? From the people I am learning to love. We have much to learn and gain when organizations create environments to bring together people who are naturally and culturally different from one another. I once heard someone say ‘maybe the most subversive act you will commit this week is to sit and eat with someone who is not like you.’ Our mission is to create, sustain and facilitate different environments where people can make connections with others. Would you like to join us for lunch this summer or for Friday Night Life?

Good Works exists to connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the kingdom of God can be experienced.

Love is a verb

Keith Wasserman

