

# Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope



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***Celebrating 40 Years!***

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)*

## **THANKSGIVING, 2021**

Greetings with JOY and gratitude from the community of HOPE,

The fall season is always a beautiful time in southeast Ohio. The colors and beauty of the trees, the cooler temperatures and the fall traditions are good and refreshing. Come and visit!!

### **WE GIVE THANKS**

- For the unity of our staff and interns and the like-mindedness we share in mission, vision and love!
- For the kindness of those who continue to sponsor Friday Night Life each week with food and friendship.
- That our technology and vehicles continue to work and for those who work on them when they don't.
- For the unique and wonderful opportunities we continue to have to learn *from* the people who come to us seeking help, coming to Friday Night Life, and those who participate in the Transformation Station.
- To everyone who contributed to DAY IN THE LIFE last year (155 days of funding were provided for the Timothy House) and for everyone who will contribute this year: [www.goodworksdayinthelife.net](http://www.goodworksdayinthelife.net)
- For the JOY of sharing meals together every day with one another and *with* those we serve.
- We are thankful for all of the notes and visits from friends who come to spend time with us!
- For the blessing of Good Works Bed and Breakfast, those we host there and the funds provided which help with the costs of our utilities.
- Grateful for the impact that the book Good Works: Hospitality and Faithful Discipleship is having!
- For the opportunity to host Work Retreat groups from all over the US, and for our neighbors, especially widows who are impacted for good through Neighbors Helping Neighbors!
- I feel so thankful to witness all of the beautiful relationships that have formed through Good Works, especially all of the many marriages which have taken place over the years.
- Partnerships: For more than 40 years, Good Works has been *sustained* by many partnerships with congregations, foundations, businesses, other non-profits, families and YOU! Our partnerships have three things in common: Good Communication, Integrity and Trust.
- WE are thankful for our Transformation Station volunteers who continually tell us they like being here and feel at peace. One person even said that coming here was like taking a vacation.
- ALL the support we have received for Sign of Hope including financial support, tools, time and resources.
- We are thankful for everyone who looks at our needs and wish lists, and brings us things we need!
- We continue to be thankful for everyone who volunteers with The Timothy House, those who brings things from our needs list, and everyone who provide support for this aspect of our ministry, especially through Day in the Life!
- We are thankful for everyone who prays for us, intercedes for us, and offers us encouragement!

### **IN THE NEWS**

- Friday Night Life moved from the Good Works property to The Plains UMC in October. This partnership has helped to sustain FNL for twenty of almost thirty years. We are grateful to all of the sponsoring groups (around 50 each year) who provide food and extend friendship with those we serve. Food insecurity remains a real problem here. Many people don't know where their next meal is coming from but they do know they can come on Friday!
- We continue to provide an opportunity for people to experience reflection, rest, and solitude through the Carter Cabin. It was named to honor Robert Carter, my dear friend (and roommate at OU) who served on the Good Works staff for about 10 years.

- DONATE YOUR CAR? We have been able to provide 190 vehicles to individuals and families through the Transformation Station because of the generous hearts of those who support us. Can you pass the word in circles you travel in about the opportunity to be a change-agent through a car donation?
- Applications are available for our Summer Service 2022 Internship. Interns live on the GW property in the Hannah House and serve alongside us as we reach out through Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Summer Lunch, Kids Activities, and The Timothy House. This will be the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of Summer Service.

## HISTORICAL STORIES

- Janet was young when she arrived at the Timothy House, maybe 20. We had talked on the phone before she arrived so I was aware that she had cancer. We sat in the kitchen and talked. She told me she had stage 3 cervical cancer. Soon after her stay with us I learned she had died. I don't think I was prepared for that news at that time. It was hard. I will always remember her.
- Shawn first came to Good Works during his late teens. He was a mess. He had been using different kinds of drugs off, and on and seemed to be stuck. He was one of those people who stayed with us, left and then came back several times. At his last stay he met Michael (one of our staff at that time) and something really good happened. Through Michael's invitations into community and mentorship, Shawn experienced a lot of stability and hope. He also met his wife through a small congregation outside of Athens. They now have two teenage children. Shawn never returned to the instability of those years. I just smile as I witness the good and beautiful things in his life these days.
- By the fall of 1984, Good Works had been operating out of our home on Elliott Street in Athens for almost 4 years. We were praying often about another location for Good Works knowing that it was not sustainable to continue in our basement. One day, during my regular time praying about this with my friend Andy, he looked up from the table in his kitchen and asked, "what about this house"? Within weeks, everything came together and Good Works was able to assume the mortgage and eventually move into 91 Central Avenue. It would be more than 10 years before we chose to name this house The Timothy House (and paid off the mortgage).
- During the fall of 1996, I was able to take time off for a few months. At that time, one of our staff served as Acting Director. One day a woman knocked on the front door and asked to speak with the staff. The women handed our staff a deed to a house in the city of Athens, and said she knew she wanted to give Good Works this house. This is one of several amazing stories of how the LORD has provided resources for Good Works, helping to lay a strong and firm foundation.

IN CLOSING, I want to share this: The gap between the rich and the poor *feels* larger. I am not talking about economics. I am speaking about the growing social disconnect between people whose lives are stable, predictable (and even prosperous), and those whose daily struggle is simply survival. I see it, and I feel it. We continue to talk with and see many people whose lives seem to be in chaos. What they all desire is a relationship with someone who cares about them and understands them. They want to feel safe and trust someone, and have someone trust them. Many of us struggle between sharing and oversharing, but when your neediness is huge, it is easy to lose perspective. These days, I am hearing A LOT about all of the various and helpful services available to people in need, especially those who choose recovery, and this is good. What I have learned however, is that those whose lives are broken and vulnerable need someone to simply be their friend. Years ago, I heard someone speak a word from God that impacted me: "I have not given you projects who are poor, I've given you friends". LORD, help me, help us to be a friend to someone who needs a friend right now.

Love is a verb,

Keith Wasserman *Ku*



Sign of HOPE, November 2021



Keith & Darlene on their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 9/26/21