

Good Works, Inc. – A Community of Hope

Celebrating 42 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 2023

Greetings with gratitude!

Suddenly Summer! We are about to embark on yet another season of Summer Service starting Monday, June 19! By counting the different photos of staff and interns on the wall of the front room in the Good Works Hannah House, this is our 23rd year of Summer Service. Wow... I am amazed and smile as I look back and see all the precious people who have experienced life-changing internships with us over many years.

On May 19th, we hosted the 30th birthday of Friday Night Life. I remember starting FNL in the kitchen of the GW Timothy House (TH) before it was named the TH way back in 1993. That was the season where I worked every day at the TH and really got to know many residents. I remember those days with joy and exhaustion. How did I do that?

SPINNING PLATES

As most of you know, we are doing a lot of different things and caring for a lot of different people simultaneously. The GW Timothy House staff are having very full days with many telephone interviews, pre-admit interviews, intake interviews, care-giving meetings, etc. We are also navigating a lot of preparation for the Summer Discovery Club and Summer Lunch. We are welcoming 4 summer staff, and a new full-time staff in June. Meanwhile, we are also welcoming new participants in the Transformation Station. This month, due to lack of sponsors, Good Works (mostly Darlene Wasserman) has had to put together the Friday Night Life dinner every Friday. In addition, several of our staff have been making site visits to our neighbors in preparation for our summer outreach to the homes of those we love and serve in Athens County. Oh... and one of our former interns and one of our current staff married each other in May!

STRANGERS AND INVISIBILITY

Love the stranger. I was a stranger and you invited me in. Do not forget to entertain strangers. (Deuteronomy 10:18-20, Matthew 25:31-46, Hebrews 13:1-3). As a community we put a lot of thought, planning and energy into welcoming strangers at Friday Night Life, The Transformation Station (and other initiatives), but especially at The Good Works Timothy House. I think it's safe to say that hospitality is our paradigm. Our intention is to see our relationships with strangers start with kindness and move through service towards friendship. WE are bridge people. WE are focused on good communication, listening, and facilitating trust between people who may not naturally be drawn to one another. WE are also peace makers, always seeking to find ways to connect people in healthy life-giving relationships.

These days, I am sensing both in our neighborhoods and beyond a growing apprehension and fear towards strangers. This grieves me. Because I see our community as peacemakers, bridge-builders and bridge people, our sincere desire is to make safe connections between people and people groups. And so, when I learn about the various levels of apprehension, I become concerned. While it is true that not all strangers are safe or should be trusted (and Good Works has a lot of structures which aid our discernment), it is also true that God brings all of us the life-giving gifts of love, beauty, and perspective through strangers; and especially when strangers become friends. For our part, Good Works

sets up and facilitates structures and arranges safe environments through all of our initiatives, so that there is a possibility for strangers to enter friendships.

EXPECTATIONS

The Good Works community has developed different protocols intended to facilitate healthy relationships among all people, but especially across the lines of race and social class. We encourage our staff and volunteers to slowly (and in consultation) develop friendships which extend beyond their official role at GW. We give thanks for every 'transformational' relationship formed through Friday Night Life, Senior Friends, Work Retreats, and the Timothy House. We are aware that these kinds of mutual relationships (when kept in the light) are formed because people want them, not because they are required to have them as part of their staff or volunteer roles. In fact, there will never be a time when these authentic and sincere friendships could ever be required.

IN THE NEWS

- We have several 1 or 2 Service Days open this summer. Maybe you would like to organize a small group and join us as we reach out with love and service to our Neighbors at their homes?
- We still seek and welcome gift cards from Aldi's, Walmart, Kroger and Piggly Wiggly for our Summer Lunch (6/19-8/3). We expect to server 40-60 adults and children each day. We also welcome fresh vegetables and meats.
- Good Works provided a participant in the Transformation Station with car #197 on May 25th. Yea!!
- WE ARE SEEKING small groups to sponsor ONE Friday Night Life dinner this fall.
- Please take a few minutes and explore the Good Works website, watch a few videos, and read about our different volunteer opportunities: www.good-works.net
- One of our interns from 2022 has returned to Athens and is joining the full-time staff this month!
- We are accelerating Neighbors Helping Neighbors and are looking for weekend groups to join us this fall.
- From September 1st to December 31st, we will be inviting people to sponsor one-day of the Good Works Timothy House for 2024. More information to come. You can learn more about Day in the Life here: www.goodworksdaysinthelife.net

IN CLOSING this month, I want to share some brief comments from my co-workers in the Community of HOPE in response to the question, **"Where do you find JOY at Good Works?"** (1) Answering the phone and sharing hope (2) When people say they want to come back to volunteer after receiving a car (3) When we can genuinely help people at the Timothy House, and when we hear from residents that they have found a place to live (4) Being able to be a part of an answer or solution to a Neighbor's prayer (Neighbors Helping Neighbors) (5) When we provide a place and environment for our community lunches for volunteers and staff (6) The fellowship that happens around the table at dinner both at the Timothy House and Friday Night Life (7) Seeing and participating in the life changes residents at the Timothy House experience (8) Providing a listening ear to someone at Friday Night Life (9) Watching the transition of people giving things to Good Works and people receiving those things, like a car (10) Having folks join us from outside the Good Works community on Tuesdays for a time of song, scripture and sharing (11) Watching the residents of the Timothy House care for and encourage other residents.

Thanks for helping to make all of these good things happen!

Love is a verb,



Keith Wasserman