



# Heart 'n Hands Mission

An Outreach Ministry of  
St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church  
August 2020 NEWSLETTER

*Our mission is to collect and provide clothing and other necessities to the homeless and working poor of Northeastern New Jersey and to raise awareness of the plight of the homeless and working poor in this area and beyond.*

Heart 'n Hands Mission of St. Timothy Lutheran Church is an Outreach Ministry which provides quality donated clothing and personal care items to the homeless and working poor at five food pantries, soup kitchens and community outreach programs in Paterson, Passaic and Hoboken. We also assist a poor congregation in Newark and provide clothing for Veterans and their families in Paterson. We are in our eleventh year of service in Wayne reaching more than **2,000** people with our monthly distributions. We also support Wayne Interfaith Network and members of the Wayne community. Heart 'n Hands Mission is 100% volunteer and 100% of all monetary donations go directly to meet the needs of the homeless and working poor.

## An Update from Hoboken's Lunch Time Ministry

### LTM Takes on the Pandemic

No event since Superstorm Sandy has affected Hoboken as much as the COVID-19 pandemic. But, as during and after the hurricane, Hoboken's community has stepped forward to support the most vulnerable and make sure that no one goes without a filling meal or pair of socks.

From the start of the pandemic, Pastor Gary LeCroy and St. Matthew Trinity's congregation were committed to remaining open in a way that kept everyone safe. So, for the past few months, we have been serving to-go coffee, food and toiletries. Guests stand in line outside, six feet apart from each other. Masks are required for service, and all guests must wash their hands upon entering.

Needless to say, this is very different from how we are used to doing things. However, people have gotten accustomed to the routine, and our guests and donors have respected the rules. The community's support has been overwhelming. People have donated online, sent items via our Amazon wish list, and delivered everything from sandwiches to socks to masks. Thanks to these incredible gifts, our guests' needs for food and toiletries continue to be met every day they visit LTM.

The Hoboken Shelter has also remained open throughout the pandemic, serving meals quickly to smaller groups, enforcing social distancing among guests and staff, and cleaning extra between shifts. Together, Hoboken's social services and community remain committed to keeping everyone safe while providing essential services to those who need them most.

## Back to Work

We want to thank **Barbara Kaplan** for creating a new operating plan amid the COVID pandemic with no more than ten volunteers on a Monday morning and the **St. Timothy Church Council** for approving the plan. We want to thank **Barbara** and **Pat Kaplan** for organizing Fellowship Hall to prepare for the resumption of sorting on July 6 and for continually disinfecting our work areas. We also thank **Lori VanDerStad** for purchasing disinfecting wipes and to **Bob Davidson** for securing masks for our volunteers.

We also thank our faithful **Monday Morning sorting team** for coming back to help us in July: **Lou Warner, Rick Beyer, Judy Lupichuk, Lois Clapp, Ann Rocko, Barbara and Pat Kaplan, Bob and Cathe Davidson and Vicki Coyle.**

You may recall that we shut down our operations on March 16 just before our scheduled delivery to St. Matthew's in Hoboken. Our van and our sorted boxes were filled with winter clothing! In anticipation of deliveries in the warmer weather, our Mondays in July were filled with separating all of the winter clothing donations that were left in March and storing them to make room for summer clothing. Then, getting the warmer weather clothing out of storage and preparing it for delivery.

Our deliveries will look quite a bit different when we begin. Donations will be dropped off by Mission volunteers to be distributed by the site volunteers as they are able. Our volunteers will not stay on site and nothing will come back which will eliminate disinfecting and re-sorting the clothing.

We have planned a trial run with limited donations of essential clothing and personal care items to **First Presbyterian Food Pantry in Passaic**, to **St. Matthew's Lunchtime Ministry in Hoboken** and **St. Paul's Community Development Corp. in Paterson** in August. We anticipate resuming our regular clothing deliveries to our sites in September.

At this time, **we will not accept any donations** until we are sure we have enough open sites that can use them and enough volunteers to prepare them for delivery. An email will be sent when we can begin to accept new donations.

Thank you for your patience.

## Assistance from a Distance

Since we shuttered in March, we have been able to assist some of our sites by fulfilling their requests with on-line purchases. We have provided throw blankets, crew socks, coffee, instant oatmeal, soup on the go and cans of beef stew, as well as masks and family size toiletries.

## Update on Some of Our Sites

In early August, we were thrilled to make contact with two of our sites that were ready to pick up donations that were already in storage at the Mission.

We thank **Jennifer at Iglesia Vision Celestial Church in Newark** and **Pastor Brown at Community Outreach Services, Inc. in Paterson** for picking up donations.

## Our Covid Compliance

A note from our Site and Facilities Manager, Barbara Kaplan: All pick-ups are prepared and left outside the church building to avoid unnecessary contact. The hand trucks are also sanitized before they come back into the building. We thank Barbara for her diligence in disinfecting our work surfaces and donations and keeping us safe. We also thank our volunteers for their diligence in wearing masks and socially distancing during our work time.

## Life, Loss and Change

So much has changed in these last five months. We privately mourned the loss of dear friends of the Mission and our site directors have sadly lost loved ones and friends as well. And yet, the Mission Board rejoices in the birth of a new grandchild. The cycle of life made that much more complicated in this time of uncertainty.

The seasons have changed, too and so the needs of those we reach each month have changed. We realized that the babies are growing up! We've been sending baby items to one of our sites for the last few years. They have been so appreciative of all we have been able to provide. But, in our most recent conversation we discovered that the babies aren't babies anymore! We are so grateful to **Cliff Konnerth** who was able to deliver the high chairs, toys, bedding, blankets and more to GERA (Global Emergency Response and Assistance) where they will go to families in need through Passaic County Social Services.

Our Blessing Bag Program also has a new look for 2020! Please see our flyer on the last page of this newsletter for information on how you can help spread some holiday cheer to our friends in need.

## A Message from Pastor Jane

**Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ... Luke 10:30-37**

**Dear Friends,**

As we enter the sixth month of this pandemic journey, with so many challenges to social distance, wear masks, feel separated from family and feel the tensions of these uncertain times, I often find myself thinking about the homeless and the effect on them!

In fact, this week as I enjoy the blessing of being in Texas with my daughter, son in law and my new granddaughter Abigail Jane with a roof over my head, food to eat, air conditioning, and being able to hold this new blessing from God, I think "why me Lord" and not my friends on the streets of Hoboken! Why was I chosen to be so blessed?

Last Christmas as we were delivering the Blessing Bags in Hoboken, there was not one person there who did not thank us for their gift and with such appreciation. In fact, in some cases, you would have thought we gave them an expensive gift of the world. Many of our friends there probably did not know where they might stay that night or how they would stay warm over the winter, yet thanked us for this bag of toiletries. And to think the challenges of Covid 19 were yet to come!

In the midst of that group of people was a young woman and her boyfriend, who was pregnant and would deliver in the spring. I remember her sharing with great excitement that they had been accepted for Section 8 and would have a place of their own to stay with their child. I remember thinking that I would need to find out what she had and perhaps could bring some clothes for the baby in the spring knowing they had so very little. It's August, I still wonder not only about the birth of that child but were they all safe in the midst of the pandemic. Did they have a roof over their head and food for not only themselves but that blessing from God? Was that Mom and her baby healthy like my Jenna and new granddaughter?

Each day we are called to be "Good Samaritans" as children of God! It does not mean we all have the same calling or will help in the same way. It does mean; however, we are all called and should keep our eyes open to the ways God will lead us to help those in need! There are times we might be like the priest and walk on the other side of the street because of our own fears of safety or concern; then there are times we are like the Levite and pass those in need because they are different and again fear creeps in; and then there are times we are like the Samaritan and jump in and help because we have been moved by compassion and the spirit of Our Lord.

Since I began being part of the Heart 'n Hands ministry, I have never been able to look at life the same and the same is true of a travel size toiletry. It actually cracks me up that I find myself looking at that aisle in the stores for Gold Bond powder for a dollar or less. Just yesterday, I ran into a Target in Corpus Christi for my daughter and there I was seeking Gold Bond powder, but not for 1.69 a piece! Yet I must tell you that for someone living on the street that Gold Bond powder is "gold" and I would have bought them all up if they were 1.09. That sure would have given the TSA a chuckle as I travel back next month but it would have been truly worth it. Perhaps I will get to Walmart before I come home. Yet I believe that is God moving me to be a Good Samaritan in a small but mighty way!

How about you? Where will God lead you to be a Good Samaritan in the coming days and weeks? Are your eyes wide open to see those in need with the heart of compassion?

As we take our shower today with our soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrush, and powder with a roof over our head, may we give thanks for the simple things we so often take for granted! May we also keep our eyes open to the needs around us and jump in to help whenever possible!

There will be wonderful opportunities to help with the Blessing Bags this fall too and although it will be done differently this year, due to the pandemic, remember these "bags" are truly a blessing to all those that receive them! And don't forget to "Jump in" and help wherever possible as a Good Samaritan! Remember that is God nudging at your heart to show His love so another heart can be changed in His name!

Blessings from Texas, P.J. Aka Pastor Jane

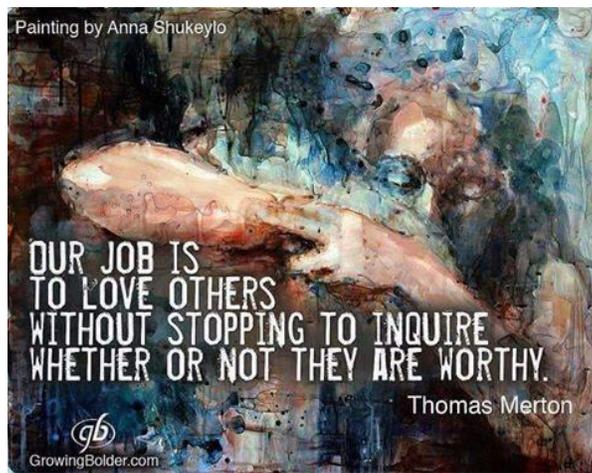
P.S. Perhaps I will run into you at Target or Walmart when I get home. If so, you will know where to find me. I will either be on the aisle for travel size toiletries or the Baby section. Blessings!



We are able to continue to spread joy and hope to our friends in need through your generous donations. We sincerely appreciate and humbly thank those who have blessed us with financial gifts since our last newsletter. Your donations make it possible for us to continue our mobile ministry.

We thank **King of Kings Lutheran Church** in Mountain Lakes and **Barbara and Richard Westerberg** for their generous donations. We also thank **Ann Rocko** who sewed countless face masks during this pandemic and donated the profits to Heart 'n Hands Mission, as well as **Preakness Faith Community Church** for their generous donation of gift cards.

And so, with the generosity of our volunteers and supporters, as well as the donations of clothing and personal care items from so many, the work of the Mission continues.



**Love. Care. Serve.**



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## *Heart 'n Hands Mission ~ Blessing Bag Project*

*Our Blessing Bag Project has a new look for 2020!*

### *Virtual Blessing Bags*

We are grateful to the many individuals, scout and school groups, congregations and clubs that have contributed to our Blessing Bag Program over the last 7 years. In an effort to **keep everyone safe**, we ask that you participate in a different way this year.

We are planning to go **contactless** with our Blessing Bag donations in 2020. Rather than filling individual bags, we will be ordering items in bulk that can be delivered to our sites.

**How much do you typically spend on a Blessing Bag? \$20.00?**

Please consider making a similar monetary donation to Heart 'n Hands Mission.

Of course, our donations won't have the personal touch that they have had in the past, but **our friends will still be receiving the personal care items they so desperately need** to maintain good health and hygiene.



Your monetary donations can be sent to: Heart 'n Hands Mission  
St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 395 Valley Road, Wayne, NJ 07470