



Heart 'n Hands Mission

An Outreach Ministry of
St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church
December 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, provide clothing for Veterans and their families in Paterson, and a refugee assistance program also in Paterson. We are in our eleventh year of service in Wayne and are now reaching more than **3,000** people with our monthly distributions. In addition, we 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.

Angels Among Us

Heart 'n Hands Mission is blessed with many angels who work behind the scenes to help those less fortunate. **Marty** faithfully arrives each Monday morning on his way to work with a smile and a bag or two of donations. **Stacey Braden** continues to collect donations from family and friends, pre-sorts them and delivers them to the Mission ready to be distributed. And, we were happy to learn that Stacey's partner in service and "brother" **Paul**, who moved earlier this year, is doing well in his new home. An **anonymous** angel arrived one Monday morning in October with bags of much-needed family size toiletries and feminine hygiene products. Then, when a Veteran requested a set of queen sheets, our friend **Roberta Ginsburg** ordered a new set right away. Despite the challenges of owning a restaurant amid the coronavirus, **Amy Mikelis** is still collecting donations from the patrons of the **Montville Diner** for Heart 'n Hands. In addition to being the coordinator of the Monday Evening Sorting Team, **Debbie Andersen** is our liaison with **Iglesia Vision Celestial Church in Newark**, coordinating the pickups and even does the occasional delivery to help out.

*I've seen and met
angels
wearing the
disguise of
ordinary people
living
ordinary lives*

~Tracy Chapman

These are just some of the angels among us who quietly support the work of the Mission. We are so grateful for their dedication and their willingness to serve.

“Warm Clothes for Warm Hearts”



In late October, we were contacted by our friend **Roberta Ginsberg**. She learned of business owners in Montville who were interested in holding a clothing drive in town. Roberta connected us with **Nina and John Hogan of Blue Nail Roofing & Siding**. Not only were Nina and John willing to accept all donations at their place of business but also agreed to sort, bag and label the clothing for us and deliver it to the Mission as well!

We are truly grateful to Nina and John, and all the customers and friends of Blue Nail Roofing & Siding for their donations and tremendous support of Heart 'n Hands Mission. Special thanks to **Angelo and Dan** for delivering the donations and to Roberta for making the connection for us!

Important Information About Your Donations

UPDATE: Mission operations were suspended on November 13th (see page 6). Please hold on to your donations if you are able. We will send an email when our operations have resumed.



When we resume operations, Heart 'n Hands Mission will collect in-season, clean, wearable clothing and accessories. Your donations can be brought to Heart 'n Hands at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 395 Valley Road, Wayne on **Monday mornings from 9 am to 11:30 am** when Mission volunteers are sorting. **Please wear a mask and ring the bell at the single glass door in the parking lot behind the church.** A Mission volunteer will come out to accept your donations.

Reading Glasses



There is an ongoing need among our area homeless for reading glasses. Please collect your old readers (non-prescription glasses only please) for Heart 'n Hands.

Insulated Food Delivery Bags

Do you subscribe to a food delivery service? Please save the insulated food bags and inserts for Heart 'n Hands Mission. They are an invaluable resource for our friends who live on the streets. Their purpose? Well, that is a secret!



Did You Know?



Socks are the #1 most requested item in homeless shelters. Heart 'n Hands Mission collects new white and black adult crew socks year-round.

Please remember the Mission when you begin to travel again.

We collect new, unused hotel size toiletries and distribute them to the homeless year-round. Unfortunately, with limited travel these days, these toiletry donations are non-existent. In addition, there is growing concern by many hotel chains to limit plastic waste. Yet, these small items are convenient and easy to carry when you must carry everything you own. Have you traveled lately? Do you know a supplier? Could you help us make a connection?



An Update on our Sites



St. Matthew Trinity Lutheran Church Lunchtime Ministry in Hoboken has been accepting Amazon deliveries from their Wish List and drop offs only from Heart 'n Hands since the summer. Spike, Director of the Lunchtime Ministry, is always grateful for whatever we are able to provide. Small tables and chairs are set up inside the barricades along the street where guests can enjoy some soup and coffee, and social distancing time with friends. On cooler days, LTM has begun distributing hot meals inside. "This winter will not be an easy one, but we are hoping that we can continue serving our guests' needs while keeping everyone safe."

First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry in Passaic closed this fall and is still looking for a permanent home. Debbie Hanson, Director of the Food Pantry, has a wonderful crew of family and faithful friends who are always willing to help those in need. We look forward to continuing our service with these dedicated volunteers when a new location is found in Passaic.



Helping Hands Food Pantry in Passaic resumed their operations in October but were only permitted to work outside their church building. The food delivery service arrives each week with 50 food boxes for registered families. They also serve about 20 homeless men and women. We were able to gather some much-needed clothing for their homeless population which was distributed in early November. Director Paula White and her husband Willie were very happy that we could supply necessities to the people they serve.



Catholic Charities – Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) in Paterson – Sherina is a new Outreach Worker at SSVF helping homeless and at-risk Veterans obtain and sustain their housing. We were happy to meet her and make a new connection to assist our Veterans.

Community Outreach Services, Inc. Food Pantry and Clothing Ministry in Paterson resumed pick-ups in September. Pastor Brown is grateful for our assistance.

Iglesia Vision Celestial Church in Newark is a small Christian based church serving over 100 members. Jennifer, the church secretary at Iglesia, works with Debbie Andersen and Barbara Kaplan to fulfill specific needs of her congregation.

St. Paul’s Community Development Corp. in Paterson is currently serving 900 families each month with their Food Pantry. There are also 19 individuals in their homeless shelter.

Global Emergency Response and Assistance: GERA in Paterson – St. Timothy has worked with GERA for over three years, having first tutored new refugees to this country in English. GERA has since expanded their assistance to both refugee families and the needy in Passaic County to include donated clothing, furniture and household items. Heart n’ Hands Mission has been able to provide clothing, baby items and other necessities to assist these refugees. We are grateful to friends of the Mission, **Cliff and Andrew Konnerth**, for delivering the donations.

Our 8th Annual Blessing Bag Project and 1st Virtual Blessing Bag Project

Our annual Blessing Bag Program traditionally collects travel size toiletries to distribute to those served by Heart ‘n Hands Mission as a special holiday gift. Travel size items have filled gallon size Ziploc bags with 22 essential toiletries and snacks. Included in each bag was a holiday greeting, a note created by a child, or a message of hope. Over the past seven years, we have distributed over 3,800 Blessing Bags with the support and generosity of many individuals, congregations, youth groups, clubs, scout troops, schools and businesses.

This year, however, the COVID pandemic required us to think “outside the bag.” In an effort to keep everyone safe, we asked that our supporters participate in a different way this year. We planned to go

contactless with our Blessing Bag donations in 2020. Rather than purchasing individual items to fill bags at our annual Blessing Bag Assembly Day and accepting filled Blessing Bag donations, we simply asked you to consider donating the money you would have spent. Then we ordered pre-packaged personal care kits and a few extra items in bulk that will be delivered to our sites. Of course, these donations did not have the personal touch that they had in the past, but our friends still received the personal care items they so desperately need to maintain good health and hygiene.

Donations from individuals and congregations will enable us to safely distribute 336 pre-made bags of blessings, as well as medicated powder and hand sanitizer to the homeless. In addition, large-size shampoo, lotion, body wash and toothpaste will be delivered to 300 families in need. These blessings will be delivered to the following sites:

Catholic Charities – Supportive Services for Veteran Families, Paterson
Community Outreach Services, Inc. Food Pantry and Clothing Ministry, Paterson
First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry, Passaic
Global Emergency Response and Assistance: GERA, Paterson
Helping Hands Food Pantry, Passaic
Iglesia Vision Celestial Church, Newark
St. Matthew Trinity Lutheran Church Lunchtime Ministry, Hoboken
St. Paul's Community Development Corp., Paterson

We want to thank everyone who has so generously supported our Virtual Blessing Bag Program so far this year:

Janice Gardner	Barbara Conklin
Len Smith & Kathy Jones-Smith	Lois Clapp
Nora Pecci	Carol Neilson
Carrol Norton	Valerie McGrath
Carl & Margaretha Johnson	Pat & Harold Winters
Mary Laverack	Jennifer Carr & Family
Carol & George Labadie	Lenore Ochs
Dawn & Conrad Brassel	Cliff & Nancy Konnerth
Debbie Houlihan	Marjorie Davidson
Ann Rocko	The Schloesser Family
St. Timothy WELCA	William and Carol Ann Lindsay
Rabbi and Mrs. Randall Mark	Bill and Dolores Monsees
The Gabel Family	Janet and Philip Schirner

Kasey and Rob Lai – In Memory of Tom Neilson

The Congregation of King of Kings Lutheran Church, Mountain Lakes
The Mikelis Family and the Patrons of The Montville Diner, Montville
Pastor Jane Harlan and the Congregation of Preakness Faith Community Church, Wayne
Marie Beyer & the Prudential Benevity Program, Newark
Trudy Coppola, Maureen Moran and the Cedar Hill Elementary School Character Education Committee, Faculty, Students and their families, Towaco

The Work Continued and then Operations were Suspended... Again

We are grateful to St. Timothy for allowing us to use Fellowship Hall as our home base so we could safely social-distance while sorting each Monday Morning from July to November and we thank **Barbara and Pat Kaplan** for everything they did before, during and after Monday mornings to prepare deliveries, organize donations and keep the Mission humming along.

We also thank our faithful **Sorting Teams: Lou Warner, Judy Lupichuk, Lois Clapp, Carol Cook, Vicki Coyle, Ellen Grexa, Ann Rocko, Bob** and **Cathe Davidson, Debbie Andersen, Danette Andersen** and **Monica Herasimtschuk**.

And our Delivery Team: **Craig and Marie Beyer** and **Bob Davidson**

Unfortunately, the fall COVID-19 spike shut down our collecting and sorting operations in mid-November rendering us unable to gather and perform the many varied tasks necessary to sort and prepare clothing and accessories. Fortunately, our teams had been hard at work prior to the second shutdown and many bags and boxes of clothing, shoes and coats had been prepared for delivery and pick-ups. We are also fortunate to have household groups among our Mission Board who were willing to stage donations for our sites, meet pick-ups outside the church building and make much needed drop offs with winter coats, clothing and Blessing Bags. We thank the **Kaplans** and the **Davidsons** for continuing to safely provide necessities for our friends in need through the end of the year.

We will continue to do whatever we can to safely support our sites during this unrelenting pandemic. We pray for the health of all of our volunteers and all of our friends in need, and we look forward to the day that the Mission can gather and get back to the work that is so desperately needed in our area.

*After Each Storm of Life
There's a Rainbow of Hope*



The rainbow is God's promise
of hope for you and me,
And though the clouds hang
heavy and the sun we cannot see,
We know above the dark
clouds that fill the stormy sky,
Hope's rainbow will come shining through
When the clouds have drifted by.

"It is More Blessed to Give than to Receive!"

Submitted by Pastor Jane Harlan

Recently I have been drawn to the Bible verse from Acts 20:35. Many have heard the words of Jesus in it but let me share the entire verse for just a moment. **In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" which teaches that there is JOY in the act of giving when it is done with pure motives.**

Years ago, when our family was going through difficult times and my husband was unemployed, there were times I often did not know how we would pay a bill or even go to the grocery store. Yet, God always supplied our needs (not necessarily our wants) and through those two years He always took care of us especially through the hands and feet of His angels on earth. I remember many times that I would find grocery bags on our porch or a surprise gift for one of our children.

On one Sunday morning as I headed into church, a senior citizen took my hand and as she held it, passed from her hand to mine a \$50 bill. I was taken back and said to her, "thank you but we are okay." Her response and her friendship over the years changed me. She then shared that when she was praying that morning, the Lord brought me and my family to her heart and told her to share the gift with me. Again, I said "thank you but we are really okay!" It was at that moment she said, "Do you like to give to others?" "Of course," I responded. She then asked me when I gave to others, how did I feel? I immediately said "It gives me great joy and I would rather give than receive". At that moment she said to me, "I too, love to give, and you are taking away my JOY by not accepting my gift." Well, you know what I did, I received it and to be honest, I had no money in my checking account and it paid for groceries that week. Life was never the same for me after that especially since that experience opened a blessed friendship with this woman, Doris, until she joined the Lord at 102 years old. In fact, friends, she became my spiritual mentor and together we studied the word for over 10 years together. Talk about JOY!

I share this with you as we choose to give this season with pure motives with the hope, we will experience His true JOY! Has the Lord touched your heart, like Doris years ago, to give in a way that can make a difference and change a life?

As we continue through this pandemic and unrest in our world, I believe "giving with pure motive" is a true way to bring HEALING and JOY! How will you do that this season?

May I suggest a few ways:

1. Stop at Dunkin Donuts or Starbucks one less day a week and share that money with someone in need!
2. Secretly, drop off a "blessing gift" at the doorstep of someone who could use encouragement!
3. Go through your clothes, which are probably still in excellent condition, and share them with those less fortunate! Especially a coat, hat or gloves!
4. Pay it Forward at McDonald's by surprising the car behind you with a paid bill.

5. Send a contribution to Heart 'n Hands to help them purchase toiletry kits for the homeless. Imagine something as simple to us, as toiletries, being something so important to another. Whether you can help with \$10 or \$100, every dollar counts.
6. Etc.

And friends, as you enter into this season of giving, may you discover it is more blessed to give than to receive! I wish for you healing and much JOY!

Merry Christmas!
Pastor Jane



Wishing you all a Wonderful Holiday Season

*Merry
Christmas*

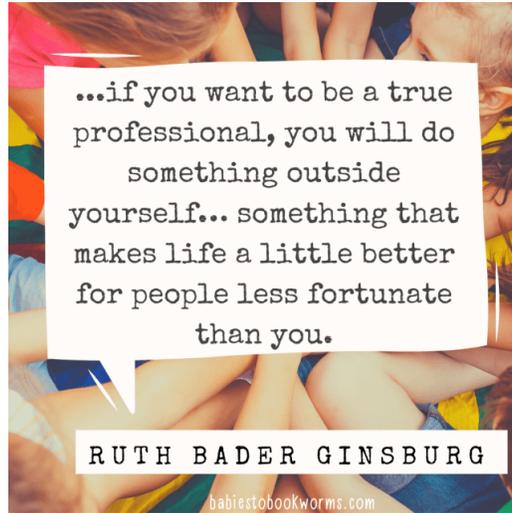
*Happy
Holidays*

From all of us at Heart 'n Hands Mission



We are able to continue to spread joy and hope to our friends in need through your generous donations. Your monetary donations make it possible for us to continue our mobile ministry.

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 will continue.



Love. Care. Serve.



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