



## Prayer on the Mall

**T**here is food, clothing from all over the world, a miniature carousel, beer and entertainment on Friday nights. So much of the world crammed into a small space with little room for God.

But now there is a prayer “booth.” Several people from the Downtown Prayer Room have put a table on the mall where they invite passersby to come for prayer. No strings attached. Just prayer. For whatever you need from the Lord.

Grace\* was feeling especially low when she came through the downtown mall. She was homeless – again. She had bought a tent and gathered blankets for a comfortable “home” down near the Rivanna River. But someone had found her “camp” and had slashed her tent with a knife.

And then “to add insult to injury,” it rained and all her belongings were ruined. So, she moved her tent to a more secluded location, but inside she really wondered whether there was much point to doing so. She was feeling like no one cared.

Then she saw the prayer table. Eagerly she asked for prayer in expectation of God’s providence. The people at the table prayed with her, not knowing, of course, all the difficulties she faced.

After Grace finished working that night, she made the long trek back to her new campsite. There, to her surprise, were two boxes of food at the front of her tent. “How did they find that spot?” she said. “That tent was completely hidden.”

On one of the boxes was a note from a new church in Zion Crossroads, **Life at Zion**. Grace was completely amazed and she bubbled over at how much God cared for her. This touch from God made the other hardships easier to bear.

When Grace came in to tell us about God’s goodness, Love INC was able to help with some clothing from the office. Another prayer room participant had helped her with new work pants and a new Bible and is working on a room or apartment for Grace.

Now who are all these players in this work of the Lord? The Downtown Prayer Room participants Colin, Anna, Diane, Terry, and Glenn attend various churches in the area: **Calvary Chapel Charlottesville, Christ Community Church** and **Cornerstone Church of Albemarle**.

And the boxes? Diane and Stephen, with the youth at Life of Zion, have a heart for the home-

less, and now have a ministry among the homeless, gathering supplies through area businesses and visiting each “camp” with prayer, a comfort word, and sustenance.

On a recent Saturday, the Life at Zion Youth Group walked areas where they had previously ministered to the homeless in several camps. While a couple of the previous camps were not there, they did find two camps that had people living in them. The first camp had a couple of men making some coffee to drink.

The teens brought them a couple of boxes of food and extended a hand of friendship.

After some conversation, they discovered that one of



the men's tent was in disrepair and needed to be replaced. They prayed with the men and inquired about other needs that they could meet. Later that afternoon they went to the store, bought a tent, and took it back to the camp.

However, before they went shopping, they stumbled on another homeless camp, which

was well hidden in the woods. But when they found this camp, they discovered that the people living in it were not there. They prayed for the people at the camp and left two large boxes of food, trusting God to care for those who were living there. This was the camp where our friend Grace was staying.

That afternoon, as the Life at Zion Youth went tent shopping, they also had in mind picking up supplies to fill H2O bags, another homeless project that they were planning for the next day. H2O, or Hope2Others, is a national ministry to the homeless that Life at Zion is participating in. It is designed to provide a bag with a small non-perishable meal, a water bottle, a gospel tract, and a few basic supplies in it — with the goal that Christians driving through town may give them to homeless people they encounter.

Life at Zion Youth packed 150 H2O bags that day to give to their church members so that when they encounter homeless individuals who are on the street, they can reach out to



them in the name of Christ with an H2O bag and a little hope. To accomplish this task, they had gathered donations of supplies (water bottles, tuna and crackers, fruit bars, etc.) and monetary donations to purchase supplies to fill the bags.

If you concluded that this group of youth was already overcommitted in their outreach to the homeless, think again. They truly have a heart for the homeless and continue to look for ways to make a difference wherever possible — some very unique.

For instance, on World Homeless Day (10/10/10), the Life of Zion Youth went to the streets of Charlottesville to Panhandle for Panhandlers. While such an activity may seem strange at first blush, they had a very rational two-fold purpose. First, the activity brought in money to use to pack more H2O bags to distribute to homeless in the Charlottesville area. And secondly, it gave those participating a little insight into what homeless people must experience as they reach out to ask others for help.

The youth encountered many divergent responses. There were those who looked away as they drove by, those who shouted at them to get a job — even with a

Christian fish on their bumper— and those who gave some change or a dollar to help those less fortunate, even speaking words of blessing.

Jesus said that anytime we reach out to those who are considered less fortunate it is like reaching out to Him. The youth of Life at Zion plan to continue reaching out to the homeless in the name of Christ and are currently seeking to help others to start their own chapters of H2O in its aim to provide hope to homeless people one bag at a time.

This group of youth simply gave out of hearts that wanted to serve God and "the least of these." Isn't it like God to bless them with the rest of Grace's story! They are praying for her. And may God transform her life into a living testimony to the goodness and greatness of our God. ■

*\* Names of those served have been changed throughout the newsletter to protect confidentiality*

"The thought of my suffering and homelessness is bitter beyond words. I will never forget the awful times ..." Lamentations 3:19-20

## “You Don’t Have to Tell Them Nothing”

**A**s an elderly woman, Betty lives in housing designated to accommodate her disabilities as well as her age. Suffering from years of heavy smoking, her raspy voice is well known to Love INC office volunteers.

In fact, Betty can barely get the

words out to let the phone volunteer who responds to her call know what she needs. She says she has emphysema and has described some other ailments, but no one here has figured out exactly what she is trying to say.

On this particular occasion, however, Betty made sure she was

clearly understood and that what she needed was someone to clean her house. Due to her illnesses, she said that she wasn't able to do chores any longer. And Betty was persistent. She called at least three times a week to find out if there was anyone to help her yet.

She called Love INC the “cleaning service.” For a time, the office staff was not entirely sure that she understood what Love INC was all about. But Betty was spoken to gently each time she called and she was reassured that God would send someone to help her.

Finally a volunteer came forward from **Charlottesville Vineyard Fellowship**. Jean (not her real name) and her son, Charles, agreed to begin on a trial basis wanting to see if helping Betty was the kind of volunteer job she and her son could do together before making a full commitment. Unfortunately, the first attempts did not go well. For the first scheduled appointment, Betty cancelled. The second week she greeted Jean at the door with “I don’t think I will need you.”

Unfortunately Jean was offended by that and decided not to return. But seemingly, Betty did not communicate her true feelings to Jean. Actually, Betty’s daughter was visiting and it was not a good time for cleaning. When Jean did not return, Betty resumed calling the Love INC “cleaning service” every day. “When will Jean come back?”

Betty had evidently lost Jean’s phone number or she would have been calling Jean directly. She begged Love INC for that phone number and someone finally relented. Soon Betty and Jean had a better understanding and Jean was back at work with her son on Wednesday afternoons between 3:30 and 5.

Betty now calls Love INC frequently just to tell them “Thank

you” and to tell them all about the wonderful job Jean and her son do on her apartment. She says, “We talk about different things every time. Thank the Lord for (Jean). I’m so glad. The boy knows exactly what to do. You don’t have to tell them nothing. They make it real nice. I really like them. It is just wonderful. Thank you.” At least that is the gist of what we can discern from her!! ■



## “He Did Not Consider Divine Intervention”

“**M**ay I ask you to say a prayer for me today? A week ago I suddenly went totally deaf. An ER doctor put me on a high powered antibiotic for 4 days and my hearing improved. Then my hearing deteriorated again. I can hear some voices, but they sound like they (or I) are under water or in a very deep well and I can’t understand them. I am going to an ENT specialist this afternoon and am scared to death that he will tell me my severe hearing loss is permanent. I sure can use some prayers.”

With these words a dear sister in the Lord had e-mailed Love INC. But since she could not hear, the staff could not call and pray with her. Instead, they responded in like manner, e-mailing a prayer back to this lovely sister:

“Oh Father, I lift up my sister up to You. Please surround her with Your peace and Your assurance that all is well. Please give her the trust to know that You have all matters in Your gracious hands and that all things work together for good for those who love You and are called according to Your purpose.

“And then, Lord, I know that You are Lord of Heaven and earth, all-powerful, almighty God. You can reach down with one touch, one breath and heal any illness. It says in Scripture that by Your Son’s stripes we are made whole.



Make this dear sister whole, Lord. In Your Son’s name. Amen.”

Then the staff added a few words of further encouragement:

“Love you! Sorry this is happening. Don’t believe EVERYTHING the doctors tell you. They are not wise enough to know what God knows about your problems!!!”

Within minutes this sister wrote back:

“Thank you so much. I love your prayer for me and have printed it out to carry with me. Of course we know differently, but the doctor told me that my ear nerve is not working and that there is only one hope for me to improve my hearing. I can try Prednisone, and I will even though it will play havoc with my diabetes.

“Many thanks again for your wonderful prayer. I read it again just before my hearing test. Thank you also for letting my pastor know. I heard from him before I left home, and it was so nice to hear from him. I will keep you posted on my hearing.”

The Love Inc staff had called her pastor to contact her for prayer and a visit which he had done. (all names are withheld due to confidentiality). Within a few days this dear sister had e-mailed back a

praise report.

“The prayers have worked very well for me. My low and medium pitch hearing are back in normal range. My high pitch is not, at least not yet. In any event, I can very well manage with what I have now.

“I believe the prayers had everything to do with it. I heard almost zero a week ago Wednesday when I saw my ENT doctor. He told me my only hope to regain my hearing was Prednisone and I

am taking it, but the very next morning before I took even one, my hearing was even better than the evening before.

“Of course, my "one chance of Prednisone" was not really my only chance. He did not consider divine intervention. Needless to say, I am thrilled I have recovered almost all of my hearing. And by the way, I still carry your prayer everywhere I go and read it over and over. It has helped me tremendously.” ■

## This is CHRISTmas!

“Can I tell you a story! I saw Christ tonight! After church my husband, son and I, along with another mom and her daughter, went to deliver a Christmas tree and tons of decorations to the Brown family. It was a surprise...and oh, they were so surprised! If you could have seen the little girl's face when she saw the tree!



“Then we came to find out that the little girl, was having a birthday on 12/23...and so was the young lady who went with us! The little girl is turning 11 years old, whereas our young lady is turning 14. Her mom hugged me and wouldn't let go...then the little girl and the 6 year old boy too.

“We prayed with them and then I promised to be back. For you see, on Sunday we are taking gifts to put under their tree and

then we are delivering dinner on Christmas Eve. Shh....don't tell...this is all a surprise!

“We were so blessed tonight. In fact, I know we were more blessed than the Brown family. And the blessing was multiplied when we walked to our cars and our teenager said to her mother, 'Mom, Can the little girl come to my birthday party on Sunday? It can be a party for the two of us!'

“Responding quickly, her mom said, 'You know that they don't have a telephone,' so we turned around and went back to the house. The teenager from our church went back to the door and invited this little girl to 'their' birthday party on Sunday. I wept...as I am weeping now! I saw Christ in this teenage girl. THIS is CHRISTmas!

“Oh, I need to go shopping..I have to buy two birthday presents for Sunday — to include my new friends. Please pray for the Brown family: Denise and her children. And thank you, Lord, for 'introducing' me to them!!!

“We weren't able to speak to Denise about the Lord directly; we sang, we prayed and we invited them to our church. I can't really answer the question fairly whether her heart is opened to Him....but give us (the Holy Spirit and me) a little time. At the same time, I knew that Denise was my new friend when I got in the car last night.

“Is she open to God in her life? I pray that I am and that she will be also.”

The words above are the reflections of a sweet encounter Terri — from **First Baptist Church, Park Street** — experienced and passed on to Love INC via e-mail prior to her relocation out of the area. ■

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" **Luke 2:11**

# Where Do You Fit In?

If you read, were attentive and have a very good memory, or if read and then acted upon what you read in the Fall issue of the LINC, the facts you are about to see concerning our finances will probably strike a familiar chord with you.

It is not that we want to be like the advertisers who bombard you with the same information repetitively in hopes that the message will finally sink in and you will go out and buy their product. Rather, we bring them before you prayerfully and carefully because we believe that the Lord wants to make the needs known to those who read this publication — to those who have the same heart as we for the poor and needy in our community. It is not to pressure, but to inform, so that you might pray and consider how He would have you respond.

Just as a quick review, let us portray what was previously shared via text by means of this comparative chart:

	2000	2009	Increase
Requests	635	4,049	637%
Budget	\$88,000	\$147,000	67%

**Love INC served over six times the people in need with just over 1 ½ times the budget**

From the chart you can see how the volume of requests has multiplied astronomically over the past decade in comparison to the budget increase. There are a number of reasons for this dichotomy. Obviously, the economy has

brought many more individuals and families our way seeking help. The success of Love INC in linking those in need with churches and agencies has also been a catalyst for spreading the word, bringing new clients our way. And the long-term commitment of staff and volunteers has helped to streamline the operation — so there has been “more bang for the buck.”

But, there is a limit. And that is what we want to bring to your attention at this time. First, listen to what has happened most recently concerning the growth in needs — as people become more and more desperate for help. **This year from August through October, requests received have again increased. This time, it was 24% over last year!**

And the tragic part is that the needs continue to out strip funding. To give you a perspective of the magnitude, in the two months prior to this article readying for press, **our contributions have dropped seriously. They were down 31% in September and 44% in October!**

So, what is “the bottom line?” Would you please pray? You have read in this issue how the power of prayer has impacted several lives for His glory.

We believe that He will also respond to the prayers of His people for this ministry that we are convinced is dear to His heart.

What should you pray? That God would raise up generous givers, men and women who will

co-labor with Him in supporting the needs of this ministry. And ask Him to show you whether you should be a part of the answer to that prayer, even whether you should come alongside of us at this critical junction with a year-end gift.

We look to the Lord to grow this ministry and help the people we serve to be more financially self sufficient. At the same time, we look to His people to align with us in prayer and financial support. Can we count on you?

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work” [2 Corinthians 9:7-8]. ■

**Sound Off is a Youth Project educating them about poverty in America. Order the FREE material kit. 1-800-777-5277**





Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ

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Love In the Name of Christ

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*Thank you so much for your support!*

### Office Information

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9 A.M.— 4 P.M.

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