



TRANSFORMING

FROM INSIDE OUT

Love In the Name of Christ

VOLUME 25 ISSUE III

FALL 2017

Love INC links people in need to volunteers from a network of area churches. Our mission is to transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ.

A Thankful Heart!

Most months throughout the year, a “needs” list is distributed among the churches in the Love INC network. Typically, it encompasses those needs that can not be met through normal agency channels. In this particular situation, **The Point Church** took this responsibility on as part of its Community Service Day. The following thank you came from the recipient of this blessing.

“Could you please relay my thanks to the wonderful team of people who completely transformed my yard while I was teaching on Saturday?”

“I felt terrible that I could not be here. I was coming off a terrible week where I had been going to doctors’ appointments and helping to organize meals for a friend newly diagnosed with cancer. And another friend’s husband had nearly died for reasons still unknown. A thousand other things, it seemed, made last week one of those times where you have to keep going, step by step, moment by moment, even when you feel like you cannot go anymore

“I’m a teacher, and I love working with my students, but I hated not to be at home for the help that was coming. I left a note on the door and came back in the afternoon after teaching. When I got home, I found some wonderful people who had done so much for me while I was away, fully taking initiative and running with it. I barely got their names! I felt as though I couldn’t thank them enough, and I fear I must have seemed terribly scattered. It probably was just as well that I wasn’t here – when I am stressed over big stuff, the simple, small decision-

making is really hard for me. Just having the yard work *done* lifted a great burden off my shoulders!

“One of the men told me that he had been a Marine for twenty years. My brain thanked him for his service, but I fear my voice did not convey what I felt because my mind kept going to my Godson who served in both Iraq and in Afghanistan. One of the men fixed my little wagon, saying he was sorry that he had lost one of the pieces that holds the wheel on – but it works fine. The wagon transports heavy things from my car into my house and had been broken since the end of last



summer. The women were incredibly kind as were the two younger people who helped. Even the youngest member of the team pulled ivy off the house!

“The back of my tenants’ unit no longer looks like a jungle, and the sidewalk is actually visible. That area is technically the tenants’ responsibility, but the husband had a kidney transplant last year and is still battling an infection.

“On top of everything, I got much, much needed hugs from the crew. I have always believed that God is love, and I felt greatly loved. Please give everyone my most sincere thanks. In addition, thank you for all you do!” □

Transformational Ministry

Each year seems to bring larger numbers of our neighbors into positions of need and dependency on churches and government programs. Something, obviously, is not working and has not been working since the “War on Poverty” began over 50 years ago. Government, then, tried to tend to the less fortunate. Programs were established to focus on the needs.

However, the main issue is that the level or percentage of need is about the same as it was over 50 years ago, only millions more people. The lack of progress is remarkable. The government has spent \$22 trillion on welfare programs since the War on Poverty began. Adjusted for inflation, this is three times more than the nation has spent on all military wars combined since the American Revolution.

Do we have the wrong definition of the word, “Help”? In helping, the government focused only on the need, i.e. rent, utilities, clothing, food, etc. Many churches did the same, simply filling needs which we call Charity Compassion. Charity Compassion simply meets needs without looking beyond the need to see the person.

Love INC’s strategy does not focus on people’s needs. We focus on the person, using what we call “Developmental Compassion,” which is not done to or for people but *with* people. It engages the giver and the recipient so both parties are an active part of the solution.¹ We call this process “Transformational Ministry.” It is a completely different strategy in helping people out of poverty and dependency. Transformational Ministry has two Biblically based components. The first is a six-week course based on the book Redemptive Compassion by Lois Tupy. When completed, those taking the course will have a better understanding of the strategy and the philosophy of Love INC. The course is designed to “train the trainers.” Volunteers act as mentors for our neighbors who will walk through their portion of the program. Question: How does one transform a life without having a relationship with that person?

The second component of Transformational Ministry is a 12 week course for our neighbors in need.

The New Image series, called “Affirming Your Potential,” is structured to be a group study like a church small group.

The lessons are all Biblically based and designed to reassure the participants that God is in control, that He doesn’t want any person stuck in a life of dependency. The mentors are in place to give direction to their decision making. Love INC offers, along with material goods, to help them balance their household budget. They will receive vouchers for attending and being on time and vouchers for doing their homework.

The first Redemptive Compassion class was well attended, with good participation.

Quotes from participants:

- “I’ve learned how to stop enabling the person I am helping.”
- “Eye opening. A different look at helping those in need.”
- “I would like to be a spiritual Mentor!”

As I write this, we are midway through the second series of Redemptive Compassion and making plans for “Affirming your Potential.” These



initiatives have been highly successful in other areas of the country in developing self-esteem and a constructive approach to life’s problems by the neighbors in need. It has been particularly successful at our sister affiliate in Fishersville and they have graciously provided us with copies of the materials as well as their strategy.

Would you like to help someone transform their life and the lives of their families? Sign up for the next Redemptive Compassion series by calling the Love INC office at 434-977-7777.

1 “Redemptive Compassion,” Lois Tupy, page 29

A Surprise Ending!

Eileen tearfully explained that she had a disconnection notice from the power company, even though she thought she had been keeping up with her monthly payments. The weather was mild, but the struggling mother's \$363 bill was larger than any she had during the coldest winter months. Desperately, she explained that her electricity was to be turned off at 5 p.m.

Love INC staff does wish that folks could call us for help *before* the last minute, but it seems that most try to find a way to pay on their own and only call Love INC as a last resort when all other ideas fail. Eileen told us that she had paid her bill every month and that social services had helped her with heating assistance in the fall.

The Love INC staff put their heads together. There might be a church in her area willing to reach out – and there was a church with a ministry helping young single moms struggling with work and childcare. But we had to verify the facts before we could make a referral.

Our staff called the power company to verify the payment history and, surprisingly, after some minutes on the telephone, the person from the power company still seemed confused. Cash payments made at a local grocery store during the winter had been credited toward a pledge made by a third party in December.

After questioning the service representative carefully, our staff wondered if social services had not made good on their fall pledge of energy/heating assistance. The



customer service representative thought Eileen's own payments had been placed as payment on the pledge.

We asked Eileen to contact social services herself to inquire about payment on the pledge, but Eileen was unable to get through to her benefits worker after multiple attempts. In the interest of time, Love INC made a call to a supervisor instead and explained that a pledge was showing as *not fulfilled* at the power company. The supervisor was very sympathetic and went straight to the comptroller to inquire about a check made out to Eileen's account.

Within minutes, she called us back and said, "Yes, we found the check written for that account. The comptroller says this is not the first time that a check has been sent to the power company and not credited to an account." She sent an email to Love INC with a copy of the check. Love INC promptly sent that copy to the power company.

About an hour later, a power company representative telephoned Love INC to explain that there HAD been an error. Not only was Eileen's disconnect threat removed, but also she had a credit of \$126 on her account. She owed nothing – a happy conclusion to what would have been a hard blow to a struggling mom!

Love INC works closely with those who call to verify stories and finds solutions that they themselves can work out. Sometimes, however, it just takes a bit of experience working with social services and the power company to be able to unravel tangles like this. Had a church received the request, it might have paid that disconnect notice, not realizing that the bill was paid already. This is why we always ask our churches, "Let us figure out the verification *for you!*" □

Annie Dodd's – All Blessings Flow Ministry

This valuable Love INC-connected ministry collects new and gently used medical equipment and then redistributes it to those in need. Annie Dodd is quite the miracle worker and has many stories of those she has served. Because of Annie's labor, we can now find a place for those cumbersome items such as stair or hoist lifts, hospital beds, and myriad smaller items like

bed pads, bedpans, and more. The following is her update:

"Good Morning Everyone."

"I was finally able to update our inventory, and I am excited to share with you that over the past two years our ministry,

All Blessing Flow, has given out more than 2,400 pieces of equipment to those in need! Each month we continue to donate close to 90 pieces of equipment and help more than 50 people as well.

“We have now served over 850 people throughout the community since January 2015. As part of a recycling program, we can also say that we have kept more than 53,000 pounds of equipment out of our local landfills.

“We are so excited about how much our mission has grown, but sadly, the cost of our operation continues to grow as well. We will continue to always give items out free of charge, but we are now trying to spread the word that though the items are free of charge...if people would like to give a few dollars to our mission

to help with operating expenses, we would greatly appreciate the donation.

“We hope to move into a facility by the fall, and we are looking for someone with the knowledge and skills of a grant writer who would like to volunteer their time to helping our mission. We hope we can find

someone with a passion for what we are doing and who would like to be a part of something that blesses so many people.

“Please share the news with friends, family members, and church members about who we are, and we hope that their hearts will be touched and will want to join our mission. □



She Slipped Away Unnoticed

Love INC received a call from a ticket agent at the Charlottesville Regional Airport, alerting us to a woman at the airport trying to fly out west. She had no money. According to the ticket agent, the woman had visible bruises and reported having been beaten. We referred her to the Shelter for Help in Emergencies, our local shelter for abused women, (434) 293-8509.

We asked that the woman herself call Love INC if that were possible. According to the ticket agent, the woman had already made a police report. Both he and the woman subsequently called the SHE shelter, but asked them for money for the flight, rather than a safe sanctuary; that request was denied.

Within the hour, the woman called us herself and we suggested she go to the shelter. However, she did not want to go; instead, she was fearful of discovery, wanting to “start over” in a faraway place. She would not even give us her name, only stating that a friend had brought her to the airport and left her the previous afternoon. She felt safe there since her abuser would not think of looking for her at an airport.

She reported having no money, no bank account, nothing. She did say that she would call the number we gave her and promised to call us back. Meanwhile we called the SHE Shelter and they said they had received telephone calls that morning.

They had told her she was “not eligible” because she was not from Albemarle County. Sobbing, she asked, “Why does this happen to me?” She told us that this particular beating had happened “a number of days ago,” but that the previous day was the first chance she had a chance to slip away unnoticed. She finagled a ride to the airport.

Someone was to have sent her money for the airplane fare, but no one at the ticket office knew anything about it and she was unable to reach the party who was to have sent her the money. She sobbed again, “I’m stuck! I do not know what to do! The ticket agent thinks the money may have gone to Charlotte (NC). They said they are working on it.” And then, she finally gave us her first name, “Gretchen.”

She had not eaten in over 24 hours and she was quite distraught. We did our best to calm her down.

Our director, Raymond Klein wanted to go pick her up from the airport and decided that he and his wife would drive to the airport and take her for something to eat, possibly putting her in a motel for the night. Another call to Gretchen confirmed that she would wait for him.



So, Ray and his wife drove to the airport looking for a woman with flip-flops, blue sweats and a white T-shirt sitting outside.

After Ray drove around twice, the woman ran up to the car. “They sent me the money! I got the ticket! I have to board in 15 minutes!”

She thanked Raymond for all that Love INC had tried to do to help. What prayers of gratitude from all involved!

We got a phone call a few days later from Gretchen assuring us that she was safe with family and friends and was getting back on her feet. What a praise!

Even if there is no funding to help a person, does not mean that we, in good conscience, leave a hurting person with a ‘Sorry, but we cannot help with that.’ Love INC always tries to find some solution for even the thorniest problems ▫

My Summer at Love INC

“I should begin by saying that, as a millennial (or “Generation Z,” technically), and being a Christian – a person of faith, in this day and age has shown me that now, more than ever, is a time we need to hold tighter to our faith. Being away at college, away from my family and my main church, **Charlottesville Church of Christ**, has proved difficult.

“Richmond is a huge city and Virginia Commonwealth University has students from all different religious backgrounds and faiths. During my first year, I had a hard time finding a place of worship that worked for me, as there were only unfamiliar church denominations in my area. Then I found The Pace Center, a community ministry on the VCU campus. There, I have been able to strengthen my faith through regular prayer and community involvement.

“These days it seems that people doubt God and have gone down the wrong path. Many seem to be moving away from what they learned as children. I believe that now, more than ever, we need to trust God. Coming from a Christian family and growing up knowing who I was, I never had to doubt, but for others it is not easy. I want to use my degree to help others heal mentally and spiritually, and to find their place in the world.

“Being an intern at Love INC has only confirmed what I already believed; help-

ing someone in need and getting them the help they need are two completely different things. You use your gifts and talents to serve others. Then you multiply your gifts by bringing others into the solution, you help them use their gifts to serve others.

“Being here has shown me that through Christ, along with some hard work, it is possible to get the help, love, and support that everyone needs. Witnessing all that goes on here at Love INC has shown me that community and faith are very important in effectively assisting someone in need. With the cooperation of churches and organizations in the area, we have been able to help dozens of families and individuals in the short time that I have been here.

“Thankfully, the work done at Love INC falls in line with what I want to do with my life. My desire is to help families repair their relationships with each other and their friends, and to show them the way of the Lord. They will keep strong relationships with each other by having a better relationship with Christ.

“I am going to take my experience this summer and use it to guide my future choices for graduate school and my profession. I am so thankful for the opportunity given to me by Love INC and hope to continue the work I have started here.”

Naiya Carter, Summer intern, 2017



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ

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