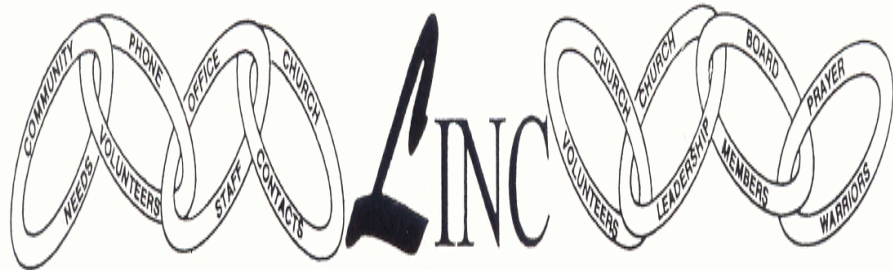




Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ



SPRING 2014

VOLUME XXIII ISSUE I

A Christmas Story Worth Telling!

“See, Grandma! I told you God would send me what I really wanted for Christmas. I told you not to worry!” Chloe* said with delight this past Christmas morning.

Chloe’s confident declaration to her grandmother — who has raised her since she was little — came to pass that day, because her mother is a drug addict who only sporadically has stable housing or employment. While it has been a constant struggle for this grandmother, Chloe is happy and doing well in school — and a great blessing to her grandmother. And, as might be expected under these family circumstances, there was little extra for Christmas gifts or school clothing or holiday food.

But, God did have a plan to provide what Chloe anticipated in her child-like faith — and even more. When Robin — who attends **Maple Grove Christian Church** — asked for a family with one little girl in order to provide Christmas gifts, the Love INC staff chose little Chloe as the perfect recipient.

Excited by the match that had been made, Robin eagerly called the grandmother asking about clothing sizes and gifts. But, when she was told that what Chloe wanted more than anything was an “American Girl” doll, Robin’s heart sunk. Those dolls are beautiful,

but costly — way above Robin’s income or holiday budget.

Realizing that what Chloe longed for was too expensive an item for anyone to purchase, the grandmother graciously told Robin that this was not something she expected her to buy. But Robin kept thinking about that little girl...

And, as she continued to ponder her dilemma, she shared the story of the little girl’s heart’s desire and it reached the ears of some of her neighbors, families of some means and home to several teenage girls.

When they heard about the little girl’s Christmas wish, they decided to go through their ‘old’ dolls to see what they could come up with. And then, to her delight, Robin was presented with two “American Girl” dolls in immaculate condition, complete with many extra outfits for each doll, as gifts for Chloe. In addition, Robin was able to purchase an “American Girl” horse to go with the two dolls. So Chloe really did get her Christmas wish and more!



The grand-

mother added that she felt she had found a new friend in Robin. She said that they had talked and talked on the phone and in person and that she felt less lonely and isolated having a new friend to talk with.

She reminded the Love INC staff how “down and out” she had been when she first came to Love INC in 2007. She had just moved here from upper New York State and was trying to cope with her daughter’s drug addiction. She had been put in touch with a small group at **First United Methodist Church** and gradually had come to know the God she had ignored most of her life.

She has since moved out of the city so was unable to get to church as often as she would like, but she said, “I always tell everyone what God did for me in bringing me to Love INC and about all the friends I have made through Love INC.”

When Robin volunteered to provide Christmas gifts for a little girl, she never imagined that it would also lead to lifting the spirits of Chloe’s grandma and creating a bond of friendship with her. But, that is just what happened.

And, there are many others longing for a friend who will care about and spend some time with them — elderly folks, single moms and

other lonely souls.

Could you perhaps be just such a friend to someone? Are you willing to pray about doing so? If you have any interest, or feel God's tug at your heart to step forward, give

us a call and we would be delighted to explore the opportunities with you. Or, just make your gifts, talents and time availability known to your Love INC church contact and who knows what relationships might develop as you accomplish

an assigned job, coming to the aid of someone in need. ■

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

Her Church — and Others — Rallied Around Her

We got to know Amira when she would come into the Love INC office periodically -- actually dating back to 2010 -- looking for clothing and other items. But she needed so much more!

Amira and her husband were refugees from the Middle East. The Jefferson Area Child Health Partnership first referred her to Love INC for clothing and baby items, but her story is a great example of the Christian and secular communities here in Charlottesville working together for the common good.

Imagine having to flee your country and move halfway around the world to a foreign culture, where you know only bits and pieces of the language. No family, few friends, limited financial resources — these were Amira's challenges. And these were the challenges that Love INC and area churches embraced in the name of serving Jesus.

Amira now speaks English fairly well, at least enough to communicate her needs, though we puzzled for a while over her request for a "treasure," which we finally determined to be a "dresser." Love INC had given her whatever was available by way of maternity and baby clothing and, additionally, gave her a voucher for the **Belmont Baptist** Clothing Closet.

She was connected for a time to **Olivet Presbyterian Church's** diaper ministry as well. And she

got her "treasure" through the generosity of a family from **Portico Church**. On another visit there she got some blankets and towels for her family. Yet another visit yielded dishes and household items.

After her second son was born, she continued to receive diapers and additional baby clothing. But this second son was a handful, busy and into everything. Amira often left him strapped in his car seat when she made her less frequent and MUCH shorter visits to our office. She would shake her head and look distressed.

Fortunately the Jefferson Area Children's Health Improvement Program (CHiP) staff person was still working with the family. At Christmastime, CHiP found some toys and books in hopes of helping keep the children busy. A VCR and an older TV were also provided.

But in the summer of 2013, new problems arose and Amira came into the office in tears. She was pregnant again and at her wit's end. Amira explained that her second son was wilder than ever, and she didn't know how she would be able to cope with a new baby. She had not planned this pregnancy and said in a very determined voice that this was the LAST child she would be having.

Furthermore, she feared that the family vehicle was on its last legs. By early fall, she knew that this

baby would be another boy. At this point, she didn't look well and the Love INC staff grew concerned. We sent an e-mail about Amira's health to her church and to agencies she worked with.

Then we placed a phone call to **Meadows Presbyterian Church**, sharing the situation with our contact at the church. "Amira came in this morning very distressed. I was trying to get the gist of her story, but it seems that her blood pressure is fluctuating wildly and causing headaches. She is also complaining of swollen and numb fingers. I tried to talk with her about the importance of getting this checked out. One of her other issues is that her younger son, the 2 1/2 year old, is a 'hellion' and is causing her a lot of distress. I've seen him in action! He needs to be in HEADSTART or daycare or something. What can we do? He almost seems like he needs to run around the entire city of Charlottesville EVERY DAY to get out some of that energy!

"Do you have anyone who might be able to take him even a couple of days a week? I'm going to ask the Christian Club at UVA if there are a couple of students willing to run around with this child. Any thoughts on your end?"

Meadows went to work. Our staff also got back in touch with CHiP and let them know about Amira's problems — and we are grateful that her CHiP worker works closely with Love INC.

Meadows Presbyterian came back within an hour, thanking Love INC for the concern. It seemed the church had been aware of some of Amira's issues and several of the church ladies would be trying to work with her. The secretary remembered hearing that one of these ladies was trying to arrange to have someone come for speech therapy for the little one, and possibly finding a placement for him a few days a week. The secretary relayed that another of the ladies was going to see Amira the next day.

The secretary also expressed her own concern: "She has to get in to see someone about the blood pressure. This happened with her last pregnancy, too. We have tried very hard to help her, but sometimes I think we don't know what to do."

The next day there was an update from Mary Alice, one of the caring women at Meadows. She said, "Amira really is having serious health issues. I found out that she didn't have an appointment with her OB/GYN and I was surprised. How could that be?" Mary Alice said that she had taken Kitty, a retired nurse, with her on a visit to Amira. Kitty then called the doctor's office describing Amira's symptoms and Amira was promptly given an appointment.

The doctor wanted to do a CT scan of her head, but Amira refused, thinking it would harm the baby. Mary Alice and Kitty finally convinced her that she needed the scan and that it would not hurt the baby. Kitty agreed to visit every other day or so to monitor Amira's health situation. Mary Alice decided to take some helpful items—an automatic can opener among other things, since her hands were so swollen—and some fresh food.

Mary Alice asked if Love INC had a television because the TV we gave Amira previously had stopped working, and Mary Alice felt the family urgently needed one to help with the kids—especially for the children's VCR tapes. Mary Alice took some children's books to add to Amira's collection, but she doubted if Amira had read any of them to the children.

She reported very few toys in evidence and said that the older boy played games on a computer, but the younger boy had nothing to keep him busy. Her observation was that the children rarely went outdoors and really needed some place to run and be active. Incidentally, Mary Alice and her husband paid for the repair of the family vehicle, which was not in as dire shape as Amira had feared.

So what about that pregnancy? Mother and child were doing fine. Another update a month later included the good news that, along with a healthy December delivery, other things were progressing well—and the energetic two-year-old had a place in a playgroup/daycare setting where he could go three mornings a week.



Graciously, the ladies were continuing to help find assistance for Amira after her new baby was born. While we at Love INC have not had an opportunity to see this latest precious bundle, we do look forward to our first meeting!

Amira and her family still have their struggles, but Love INC and our network of churches—with the support of community agencies—have had a significant impact in helping them. More importantly, this family from the Middle East has been shown that Christ's love knows no bounds and follows them wherever they go. With God's help, we will continue to live out that message as we work with them in the future. ■

Who Will Minister to Our Donors?

A denim jacket heavy with all sorts of political and advocacy pins / buttons hangs in the back room at Love INC. It belonged to one of our donors and came into our possession after her death—given to Love INC by her parents, along with all her furniture.

As these grieving parents sorted through their daughter's belongings in her apartment, they had

found among her papers a Love INC letter thanking this woman for her donation. After sorting through the donated books, and from this denim jacket, it was clear to the Love INC staff that this donor was troubled and had some sort of need for healing.

Regrettably, we here at Love INC had not picked up on that at all when she came to the office bring-

ing her donations some years back. Now, the jacket is a reminder that it may not be just our clients who may be hurting.

Another donor, Meghan, came often to Love INC, usually in the late afternoon, bringing very tiny and expensive clothing to donate. She brought vitamins, make-up, household items—all unused. She would say she was cleaning out!

She drove a fancy little sports car and was often on her way to an appointment when she dropped by.

Because she came often, our staff was able to discern that she also was troubled. In this case, we were able to gently ask questions and pray with her. Sometimes there was an odor of alcohol.

Typically, Meghan was tearful as she spoke about the futility of her life and her hopes for the future. Often one of our staff would just put a friendly arm around her shoulder and pray for her.

Eventually Meghan started going to counseling and 12 step meetings. One day she announced that she had been clean and sober for over a year! We all rejoiced and sent up praises to our God that He would work so wonderfully in her life!

Trudy also dropped in periodically to donate. In a similar way, it was obvious that she was very unhappy — facing a divorce from an abu-

sive marriage.

She brought in boxes of assorted household items. Our staff began to go through these carefully as there were often items that we were certain she did not wish to part with, such as photographs and personal letters.



Again we listened and prayed with her and, thankfully, her life began to stabilize. She cried often in the beginning, but after she started attending church things seemed to improve for her. Smiles and laughter replaced her former tears.

A couple years went by and one day Trudy came in to introduce us to her fiancé! Again our praises were lifted to God for His powerful healing and renewal!

So, do you get the picture? All the ministry does not happen out in the

community. The need may not even have an outward face of a material or service request. It may not even be specifically expressed, but gleaned by engaging in dialog with hurting people. And, it does happen right here in the Love INC office. In these cases, it was with donors. It may happen face to face, as in these examples, but it also can occur over the telephone.

So, there is a very real need for help on this front. Love INC would greatly appreciate a couple of spiritually discerning, caring and nurturing volunteers to “man the battle stations” and minister to donors as well as to the clients that come into the office.

We are looking for someone who will listen, ask appropriate questions, get to know the people a bit, and of course, PRAY! Only the Lord knows WHEN donors will be coming into the office, so there is no real scheduled time. But if you find the Lord tugging on your heart, give us a call! ■

An Excursion Into the Country!

From time to time, we receive a very detailed account of a volunteer’s experience in serving those in need – and you are about to read one of those. But, before doing so, you might want to know the background to her story, so, first off, we take you behind the scenes to glean the reasons for this need to be met.

A woman from Albemarle County called Love INC, having been referred by the Pregnancy Center in Charlottesville. She had taken on the care of her sister’s infant while the sister was in a medical facility. It had all happened so quickly that there had not been any temporary custody granted and our client was in desperate need of baby formula, diapers, and wipes.

When it became clear that the usual channels for assistance were not going to yield results, a church in her area was contacted and, thankfully, they were quite willing to assist. In fact, a church member agreed to deliver the items, since our client had no transportation. And here is the story in her own words.

“I took 3 containers of baby formula, a box of diapers, wipes, a couple packs of crackers and some Sprite liter bottles of soda over to your client yesterday. The crackers and soda were for her 21 year old daughter, who had come home ill with the flu (go figure — coming



home to mom’s house with flu and with a baby in the house).

“The client was very appreciative of the help. She felt the need to give me directions along the way, though I have a (usually) very competent GPS built into my vehicle. It turns out that the GPS was not nearly as competent as I had given it credit.

“Wouldn’t you know, she lives in a green and white trailer with a broken down truck in the driveway and I went to the second of three green and white trailers with a broken down truck in the drive — and it was the wrong one. But, she was able to look out and see me from her green and white trailer with her broken down truck and come and

meet me BEFORE I found myself stuck in the mud with an unleashed pit bull gnawing at my tires and it's owner aiming a sawed off shotgun into my driver side window. Whew!

“Dear girl, my days are too short, but we do what we can with the time we're given. Anyway, final story is that we spent \$93.21 to-

ward this worthy cause. Thank you for calling to let us know about this need we were happy to meet. I know that it is a real possibility that the client's sister (mother of the baby) will have her stay extended, so let us know if you hear anything before we do, and I'll keep you posted likewise.”

How grateful we are for volunteers like this, a willing church member, who bravely stepped out of her comfort zone to make this delivery — even while getting lost in the process. And, for those wondering, no, there really was not a pit-bull or sawed-off shotgun! Our volunteer has a very vivid imagination, however! ■

Our Report to You on Our Stewardship

Virtually every individual supporting a ministry such as Love INC is keenly interested in knowing the impact of his or her giving. Christians want to be assured that the ministry operates with high integrity, that the Lord is deeply involved in the work, and that any funds given are making an impact for His kingdom.

With this objective in mind, our thrust is two-pronged. We want to gain your confidence that we are good stewards of your contributions and, at the same, time give you a taste of what the Lord is doing for the advancement of His kingdom by virtue of Love INC serving in our community.

First, addressing the ministries' impact, once again we were a very, very busy office this past year! A year ago, we had received about 5000 Clearinghouse requests, while that number dipped — statistically -- to 4240 in 2013. At first glance, it appears that our workload went down, but that is far from reality, the decrease basically the result of a change in the reporting requirements from the National Love INC Board, not a reduction in the number of calls received or services given.

Of the 4240 requests we handled, 2603 were met through one of our 111 churches, or referred to one of 94 agencies where a need could be met — or about 61% of the requests received. Now, keep in

mind that one call in normally requires numerous calls out. In meeting these needs, we served 1690 adults and 1683 children with goods and services valued at \$243,923.00!

At the same time, we had some real concerns, primarily the fact that we processed 429 requests for which there was no available assistance -- no agency or church to which we could refer. Aggravating the problem, the government safety nets have all but disappeared and few churches have unlimited benevolence funding as in the past.

Some of these “NO VOLUNTEER” requests, however, came originally as an appeal for hands-on help for an agency's client, and represent a need that was put on the list of Opportunities for Christian Service and went unanswered for 9 – 12 months. Sadly, these needs went unmet because no one in a church volunteered to meet the need!

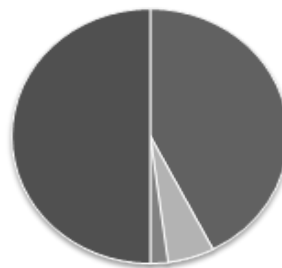
On the financial stewardship side, we hope that the graphical presentation displayed, coupled with some brief explanations, will help to give you the information to weigh our stewardship. At the same time, we

would tell you that if you have any questions or want to go deeper, we welcome your inquiries.

Often an inquiry into the stewardship of a ministry centers around how much of the income resources are used for direct ministry. The pie chart below reflects these figures: 85% program expense, 11% administrative and 4% fundraising. As noted in prior years, in the non-profit world, anything below 25-30% is considered an efficient administrative expenditure.

Needless to say, we are very grateful to the Lord for the financial and prayer support we have received. — and we do believe that these two are interdependent. In this time of financial uncertainty, we deeply appreciate all who have given of their resources, all who have prayed and all who have served with their time and talents! ■

Program Services	Administrative	Promotion & Development	Total
85	11	4	100



- Program Services
- Administrative
- Promotion & Development
- Total





Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ

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Love INC is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit ministry that links people in need to volunteers from a network of area churches.

Web Site: www.loveinccville.org
E-mail: office@loveinccville.org

I/We appreciate what the Lord is doing through the Ministry of Love In the Name of Christ of Charlottesville/Albemarle County and want to share in its support with a financial gift.

Please indicate amount:

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City, State _____ ZIP: _____

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... Gifts to Love INC are Tax Deductible ...
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Thank you so much for your support!

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9 A.M.— 4 P.M.

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Business Line: 434-293-6060
Fax Line: 434-293-4499

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