



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ



WINTER 2011-12

VOLUME XX, ISSUE IV

“A Little Bit of Heaven” Ministry

One of the gaps in services in our area is the availability of cleaning/household help for those unable to attend to their own needs. With the economy the way it is and the enormous cut-backs in social services, many in need are falling between the cracks. These people are often in great need but don't meet the social services criteria for a personal care assistant.

Thankfully, a church in the community is filling the gap in a big way — and demonstrating the reality of the gospel in word and deed. Todd Brown, with the aid of his pastor, Dr. Liz Emrey, has put together a new ministry of help from **New Beginnings Christian Fellowship**. And what a ministry this is!

Love INC has been able to refer a number of clients to this new ministry, clients in many cases that have never been able to get a church volunteer, or whose

volunteer was not consistent in meeting with them. But that no longer is the case.

Todd goes to their home, sometimes on his own, sometimes with someone from his church, meets with the person and assesses what needs to be done. Todd has a very gentle, non-threatening manner and has been able to develop good relationships with some hitherto very problematic clients.

Since the summer Todd has worked with a half dozen clients.

He has battled (and won!!) a roach issue. He has dealt with a fallen ceiling, broken plumbing, and a clogged tub. He took laundry through the **Belmont Baptist Church** Loads of Love program for a disabled man. He helped an elderly woman laundering sheets and cleaning her



apartment.

Todd tackled a hoarder's kitchen. He cleans for and ministers to a woman with stage four cancer. He often brings his pastor into the situation to minister as well. In fact, Todd's clients are rarely able to get to church, so he brings church to them.

Todd pours much into “his” people, not just assisting them in their cleaning needs, but teaching them how to do these things for themselves. But there have been some times of sorrow as well. In the last two months, Todd has lost some of “his people.” They died suddenly and unexpectedly, which has been very hard on him.

Thankfully, Todd's pastor has been right there for him in those times of sorrow. At the same time, he would appreciate your prayers as he goes about his work — a ministry for which God is using to greatly bless many, including Todd. ■

unable to walk.

“They sit around looking at me waiting for me to die,” she com-

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Judy's Bathroom

The doctor's gave Judy* only three months to live. That was in June when they took her to a Richmond hospital to put pins in her fragile

pelvic bones that had been eaten by cancer. On top of that, the cancer had spread to her lungs and lymph nodes and, worse yet, she was sent home

plained to her friends and family. If she could have stomped her foot from her bed, she would have, she said. “But I don’t want to die! I want to live! I can beat this thing!” she insisted. “But I just wish I could get into my own bathroom and take a shower in my own tub.”

But that bathroom was built as an afterthought adjacent to the tumble down old house that was her home. The chimney to the oil furnace went right through the bathroom, making it impossible for a wheelchair to get in. Then there was a step down to the bathroom itself. An old electric heater, long broken, hung on the wall and the old vanity blocked the toilet. Mold and mildew were everywhere.

Into this bleak situation stepped two area churches, with volunteers having some natural connections. Bill Mack from **Maple Grove Christian Church** has ties to the part of the county where Judy lives, and Bill Shelito from the **Rockfish Outreach Center** lives in the area. **Evergreen Ministries** has been helping as well.

These volunteers teamed up with some men from their re-

spective churches to remove the chimney and vanity, install new flooring, a new pedestal sink, a new heater, and a WINDOW — which meant Judy could now see her back yard and bird feeders from her hospital bed in the living room.



Pastor Steve from Maple Grove also came out to visit. And each new church visitor who entered her home prayed with Judy, giving her hope of life and encouragement to keep on fighting. Then one night, to the joy of all, she accepted Jesus as her personal Savior, weeping and confessing her sins to the Lord.

When Judy was ready, she started to take the chemotherapy designed to kill the cancer cells — and hopefully not her life, for she was so very sick. At the same time, serious battles of prayer were waged on her behalf against the darkness holding her in its grip.

Watching the two “Bills” at work, some of Judy’s relatives began to share in the renovation, making her kitchen sink and cabinets

accessible. The next project was to have been a ramp into the laundry room so she could do her laundry, but Judy then surprised everyone when her bones were declared strong enough for her to start walking again. She was now able to alternate between her walker and her wheelchair, bound and determined to take care of herself as much as she could.

Judy now is very grateful that she can take a shower by herself without help, thanks to the rear-ranged bathroom. She can lie in her bed and watch the birds come to the feeder. Even her cat got in the act, bringing one of the birds as a ‘gift’ to Judy, just in case she wanted one.

The Love INC staff has done behind the scenes coordination with her various social workers, advocating for daycare money to be found for her son and medical care during the day. But Judy is improving a little at a time and needs less and less help from others. But one aspect of her care continues unabated. Her volunteers and friends continue to pray. ■

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

Sacrificial Service!

The social worker from Albemarle Department of Social Services reported that Catherine’s toilet was not flushing properly. So a call went out to all the Love INC volunteers and James from **Church of our Savior** on Rio Road answered the call. The Love INC staff gave him the name and address for Ms. Catherine and James went to investigate. But

the real situation was nothing like what had been described.

The toilet was certainly not working. In fact it was not even remotely repairable. James could see that right away. The tank, the bowl, and the top were all cracked and in fact dangerous. He took a trip to Lowes...

Ms. Catherine’s daughter, also

elderly, related the story to us that a nice man named James had come to the trailer to look at the toilet situation. He did not say much to them, but returned with a new toilet from Lowes. He took away the broken pieces and installed the new toilet.

She told us that everything was



working fine now. She thanked us very much for finding James for them and then commented that they never could have afforded to pay anyone for the work done or for the toilet. She then thanked us at Love INC for getting the toilet.

But Love INC did not purchase that toilet. James purchased it himself!! The Lord has provided this area with some wonderful unsung hero/volunteers, has He not? And this is not the first volunteer opportunity James has tackled. Now James is off in

search of two other Love INC clients needing some of his skilled help! We will hear about him again in the future, that's for sure. ■



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God Still Does Miracles!

In the spring of the year, just after having a car donated to him, our dear Christian brother, Gerald, was put into the hospital yet again. This time the doctors shook their heads and said there was nothing more they could do for him. They suggested assisted living and palliative care.

Gerald was at a loss as to what he should do. He thought he might give his 'new' car to a friend and began to make arrangements to clear out his apartment. But in reality he was too ill to think of much beyond just breathing.

So, he sent a message to Love INC asking for prayer. In turn, Love INC contacted a couple of his Christian brothers asking them to pray for him. And pray they did.

One man from **Victory Hill Church of God** in Crozet went to visit, laid

hands on Gerald and prayed for his healing. And praise to God, Gerald did not die as his doctors expected. He did not even go to assisted living. In fact, he recovered and returned to his apartment!

Unfortunately he had already ended the lease on his apartment, expecting to die. Now he had to clean up the apartment and find another one. Mercifully, his friend from Victory Hill was able to assist.

But the cleaning was hard for both these fellows, as the friend also has a disability. Made aware of the situation, Love INC was able to engage the needed resources through the newest



"Gap" ministry created at **New Beginnings Christian Fellowship!**

Todd Brown, our New Beginnings volunteer, made contact with Gerald. Together they got a steam cleaner and made short work of the apartment cleaning. They also became instant friends and Todd will keep up the connection with Gerald, helping him with various things as he is able.

What kind of "Gap" ministry could your church do? Would you be willing to start a small ministry in your church? Men, could you do oil changes or minor plumbing jobs? There are hurting people all over this area who need the touch of our Savior through YOU — and your skills may be just the connection that will open the door to their hearts! ■

Love Has No Language Barriers

Mr. Wood, from **Aldersgate United Methodist Church**, wanted to donate a living room chair to Love INC. And, since he had a truck and was able to deliver, he offered to take his chair to the designated recipient. So, he was given the name of a refugee family that was greatly in need to whom he might deliver the chair.

When he arrived at his destination, pulled his truck up to the door of the home and had barely gotten out, a crowd of young children came out the door and gathered round him, tugging at him and chattering excitedly in a language he could not understand. They started trying to pull the chair off the truck themselves and "help" Mr. Wood bring the chair to their home.

Soon a woman that Mr. Wood assumed to be the mother of this brood came out and shouted something to the children and they backed away, thankfully allowing Mr. Wood to lift the chair from the truck unhampered. But as soon as he neared the front door, the children swarmed around again, pulling and tugging on the chair to get it through the door. Unfor-

tunately, with all this assistance, the chair hit against the door's window, breaking it.

Now it was the mother who was upset and began talking excitedly with her hands. Mr. Wood tried to assure her that he was able and willing to fix the glass, but the communication barrier was too great. Neither could understand the other, even Mr. Wood's attempt at pantomime.

The women and the children talked among themselves for a moment then went running down the street. Within a minute or two they re-appeared, bringing

with them a man who was able to translate for them. Mr. Wood was not sure who this was in relation to the needy family, but the job of communication went better after that. Mr. Wood assured them all that he would return and replace the broken glass. They cleaned up the mess.

Later that day, Mr. Wood returned with the replacement glass and fixed the window. He had fully intended to invite them to church, but the 'translator' had disappeared. He did write the name and address for Aldersgate UMC on a piece of paper

for them, but they never did come. However the gratitude was apparent as the children hugged Mr. Wood and the mother smiled.

We have many refugees in the city of Charlottesville, many of whom do not yet speak English well enough to communicate with our volunteers. How could we reach out to them so as to share the gospel? Would you pray about how YOU could reach out with His love in action? ■



A Summer Gem!

At just 16 years old, Elizabeth Montana Eavey provided a valuable asset this past summer as a Love INC office volunteer. And wanting our readers to have a snapshot of how the Lord called this special young lady to Himself and then into His service, we are sharing the following words, which she penned for this very purpose.

"I go to Jerusalem Baptist Church. My dad's girlfriend, who is like my step-mom, goes there. I love the environment there because the people love you for who you are and they have helped me get through my rough times. The pastor is awesome because he is more than a pastor to me. He is like another dad to me.

"I have always believed in God growing up, but no one in my family ever went to church. After I started living with my dad and started going to church with my step-mom, I have found a real

relationship with God. I never read the Bible growing up. I used to think God lived on the moon when I was really little.

"But after going to church I realized there is more to God than His just existing. I found out that He actually made the world in seven days, and that He works in our lives to bring us to Himself. I mean, I would not have met Pastor Thomas or the Jerusalem Church family or the Love INC staff if God hadn't been working in my life!

"How I heard about Love INC: well, I first heard about it when Mr. Ray came to speak at Jerusalem Church. I signed up to be a volunteer right away. At first I thought I would just do babysitting. Then I heard that Love INC needed an office volunteer. At first I volunteered because I needed to volunteer somewhere, but then I fell in love with the staff here because they love me so much.

"My first idea of Love INC was that it was some kind of huge organization in a huge building where no one knows anyone. I did not realize it would be such a loving place with people who care about me and who care about all the clients.

"Before I came to Love INC I knew I wanted to help others, but I had no idea how to do that. After working here I have grown more confident in talking to other people and to talk on the phone. I am able to handle taking charge of some of the office duties without running to Susan or Ray for help.

"I have been writing all the thank you letters since I came here to work. It has become MY job! I can even answer the phone now without shaking all over. I like it here! I wish I didn't have to go back to school!"

We too wished that you hadn't needed to go back to school, Elizabeth! ■

Ms. Snowball

Love INC received a desperate call from a long-time client who had recently been placed into an assisted living unit. While Love INC receives many different kinds of requests, the plea that was heard on this call was definitely a first: “Could you find a home for my rabbit?”

The family members in the lady’s previous apartment — both confined to wheelchairs themselves — were trying to cope with the rabbit, but they could barely care for themselves, never mind for a helpless and dependent creature in a cage. Worse yet, the rabbit had accidentally escaped from the cage into a room full of packed boxes.

The occupants of the wheelchairs could not even get into the

room. Further complicating the picture, a church involved with the family members cautioned the Love INC staff strongly that the apartment occupied by these folks was not safe for anyone to enter due to the unsanitary conditions.

Nevertheless, the staff put out a request via email.

“Was anyone able to care for this rabbit?” And much to the staff’s surprise, there were several offers! The first reply was from a quiet, professional woman, a volunteer we had known from **The Church of the Incarnation** in Charlottesville. In speaking with our volunteer, her quiet home seemed right for this poor creature.



The next hurdle was to actually retrieve the rabbit. The assisted living lady would have to come to the apartment herself and call the rabbit -- hoping it would come to her -- and put it in its carrier. After some difficulties, this was accomplished with the help of a wonderful volunteer from the cab company, who said that he had known our lady for 20 years, and was glad to be part of this rescue mission.

To everyone’s delight, Ms. Snowball hopped right out from behind the boxes, where she was hiding, and into the carrier our client held out for her. Then, with the help of the staff, the sweet fluffy bunny was on her way to her new home. And upon her arrival, she snuggled right out of her cage and into her new “mama’s” arms. ■

A Note of Thanks!

Where at Love INC would like to thank the **Best Western of Zion Crossroads** for donating large quantities of serviceable items that have been used to meet the needs of many folks in this area. They have given huge boxes of linens, dozens of chairs, and many useful household items in the last year, items that have been divided among approximately 50 different families.

The blessings have come when every few months a manager will call with another load to pick up! And a thank you also goes to Darlene from **Maple Grove Christian Church**, who has

picked up many of the linens, bringing them to the office for distribution.

On another — but related — note, we are always looking for somewhere OTHER than our small office where we can store and distribute linens, kitchen and household items. Is there a church group — perhaps a women’s group — that would be willing to take on this ministry?

We would be bold to even say that you would find that coordinating household items for a family could be very rewarding — you might enjoy it as well. For more info, call Susan @ (434) 977-7777!!! ■

“...behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all



people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’” [Luke 2:10-14].

We wish you a Blessed Christmas!



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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.

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