



LINKING THE NEEDS OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE—ALBEMARLE COMMUNITY WITH CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

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When God Breaks Through ...

Hazel* stepped from a life of possibilities into one that breathed of hopelessness and loss -- brought on in part by some foolish decisions. Married and striving toward being a good mother to her daughter, she seemed to have much going for her. As well, she was known as a hard worker and, interestingly, one of her previous employers had been Ray Klein in one of his 7-11 stores.

While she did not attend church herself, Hazel did send her daughter to the **Albemarle Baptist Church** AWANA program and to church on Sunday mornings. And yet, this lack of a strong anchor in her life through a relationship with Jesus Christ began to erode that apparent strength.

The first outward sign was the failure of her marriage, which she compounded with a disastrous choice. Leaving Charlottesville with another man, Hazel moved to another state with her children, now three. Like the prodigal, she ended up with no job, no family supports, and her three children were often hungry or ill clad.

Regretting that choice, she decided to move back to Charlottesville to be near her family and her children's daddy. But she found the economy was not the same as it had been several years before and it was harder to get a

good job. On top of that, she had no car.

With few options, Hazel stayed out in the county in a trailer belonging to her mother's new boyfriend. Afforded the opportunity to leave her little ones at the trailer for safekeeping, she began her job search.

But then the unthinkable happened. Hazel could not even believe it at first, though all the signs were there -- her mother's boyfriend was molesting her beautiful little girls. So, Hazel immediately removed her children and took them to their daddy, explaining to him the horror of what she had discovered.

Then she brought in the authorities. There was a dizzying round of psychological appointments, police investigations, and school appointments. To make matters worse, Hazel's mother did not take kindly to the accusations leveled at her new boyfriend. She went to court and filed an eviction on her daughter.

Finally one of the several social workers who were involved in the situation produced an emergency Section 8 voucher to help Hazel find a home suitable for her children and herself -- and Hazel breathed a temporary sigh of relief. But then she realized that she had no job and no way to earn the

security deposit.

Her children's daddy had bailed her out over and over in the last months and was now supplying the childcare, food and overhead for the children. He did not have \$800 to spare. Hazel's mother had evicted her and was very angry about the legal proceedings, so there was no avenue of help there.

Hazel was staying with an acquaintance, sleeping on the sofa. But the friend was to be evicted herself within a matter of weeks -- another empty coffer devoid of possible resources. It seemed pretty hopeless all around.

But into this emptiness, God was about to break through. Perhaps the first visible sign was in a voice mail message that Hazel left at Love INC. While she gave the outline of the molestation, she left only her first name and no phone number.

Considering the seriousness of what the message divulged, the Love INC staff scrambled to contact the child protective workers in both Charlottesville and Albemarle, but no one seemingly had a record of any of this.

So the staff prayed and finally

Hazel called again, giving a better idea of the need. And, yes, Ray recalled that she had worked for him some years before. Now, while Love INC does not provide direct funding, this case seemed to warrant advocating on her behalf. So in a deviation from the norm, Susan put out a request for the needed security deposit. Concurrently, Hazel began looking for an apartment in earnest.

Separately, concerned members from **Covenant Church of God** and **First Presbyterian Church** contacted Love INC to help with this need. Together they made up what was needed for the security deposit. So, with that commitment, Hazel and Susan went together to look at an apartment. Susan spoke with the property manager, giving assurance that Love INC donors would give the entire security deposit. By the first of the month, Hazel and her children were in the apartment.

The apartment was somewhat bare, but it had most of the essentials. Yet, something to sit on in the living room was a desire Hazel did express. And, as you might know, David Hendon of **University Baptist Church** had just the thing -- a large sectional sofa for Hazel! Though he was concerned that it would be too big for her small living room, Hazel was delighted and said it fit just exactly right!

But, this is not the end of the story. God was indeed in the process of breaking through in Hazel's life. She continued to keep in touch with Love INC. Hazel was given clothing by Roger and Kim Boutin, from **Portico Church**, and toys for the children from **Fresh Fire Church**, along with other items. But the articles

just proved to be "the carrot" to keep her in touch.

The real objective was that Hazel start attending church and come to know Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The Love INC staff kept on with the gentle reminders that she needed to get into a church. Hazel had questions about lots of things. What was that church like? Where could she find a children's program? Was this one really a Christian church? How about that one?

Then one day after a number of months, Hazel came into the office unannounced. She almost did not need to announce the news she had brought with her. Her face beamed with the obvious light of Christ.



What had happened? Hazel explained that she had started going to church just like we had been urging her to do. She had found a good church, finally. Now she was going to a class on healing of personal issues and a Bible study as well. She and her children were attending Sunday School and the services on Sunday.

Hazel kicked her boyfriend, who was an illegal alien, out of her apartment and traded the truck he had purchased — but put in her name — for a van that she and her children could use to get to church.

Without recourse — and without a work vehicle — he returned to his



native country.

And most importantly, she had given her heart and her life to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Oh the power of the Almighty God! Hazel couldn't remember the name of the church she had been attending, but commented that it was "really good."

A couple of months later, the staff discovered the connection. A number of single moms had a devoted mentor -- watching after them, encouraging them and finding help for them when they ran into problems. Anna LaBounty, of **Christ Community Church**, was their "shepherd" and here Hazel was touched eternally with the Savior's love. Yes, you guessed it, Anna was her mentor! And when Anna is not shepherding single moms, she heads up the Pregnancy Center.

Thank you Anna for shepherding Hazel!! And thank you to all those who helped with Hazel's needs, forging that link of relationship that eventually brought her to His throne.

Yes, into Hazel's emptiness, God did break through to bring life and hope. But He used many caring Christians along the way, demonstrating as well that transformations may not happen overnight. It may seem like we are getting nowhere with someone, but it was our Lord who talked about the seed, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. It takes planting and weeding, cultivating and watering before the fruit of our labor becomes evident. Hazel is living proof! ■

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

The Way it Should Be!

If you were to take a peek at Gracie's life at any given point over the years, you would most likely have been convinced that this was a wasted existence without any hope for redemption. The heartbreak woven throughout her life began with abuse as a child and spiraled out of control in the ensuing years.

Could there be any way out? Indeed, it did seem hopeless. But, looking over those same years from a different perspective -- from God's vantage point -- hope has indeed been revived. Many caring Christians have come alongside of Gracie, reaching out to this lost soul with His love over the long term -- and the difference, with the help of the Holy Spirit, is beginning to tell.

Gracie's first encounter with Love INC was back in 1995 -- soon after the office opened. At that time, **Oakleigh Christian Fellowship** helped deliver furniture for her, items that **Free Union Baptist Church** and **First Baptist Church** members in large measure provided. But there were many "bumps along the road" from that point until the present.

Gracie's maltreatment as a child gravitated into abuse of her own body through drug addiction as an adult. As a result, she lost her children, spent time in prison and then drug rehab.

The year of 2001 was especially traumatic for Gracie. The children's father had committed suicide. Her daughter began to have truancy problems and substance abuse issues. There were substance abuse troubles with Gracie as well. Of course, money issues

followed the drug problems. Gracie had a breakdown when she was finally evicted.

She was hospitalized -- as Love INC tried to find storage for all her household items. By the time she got out of the hospital, she had no place to live and no furniture. Her children's schooling had been disrupted. She faced court battles and having her children taken from her.

By 2003, Gracie was trying to get back on her feet once again. She thought she might be able to get a job, but she had no clothing suitable for interviewing. Love INC gave her a voucher to the **Albemarle Baptist Association** clothing closet. Because there was nothing readily available, the ABA gave her a gift card for some new clothes. Gracie was quite tickled because she tries hard to look nice. That year **Trinity Presbyterian Church** also had a holiday food basket for Gracie.

Gracie disappeared from the radar until 2005 when she called Love INC for another holiday food basket -- but with no phone, the contact and potential provision broke down.

A short time later Love INC heard from her briefly when she and her boyfriend were trying to get to Roanoke by bus -- but with no real plan, just thinking it a good idea that someone buy them bus tickets. The response was obvious and Gracie was silent for another two years -- quite possibly incarcerated.

In 2007 Gracie showed up at the Hand to Hand Thanksgiving Din-

ner give away and then began to show up at the Hand to Hand services thereafter.

There seemed to be a hunger inside her for the good news of Jesus Christ. She stayed after the services to pray with the prayer partners from Hand to Hand. Her name went on the prayer list.

But, again, there was no word for almost a year and it is surmised that she lived homeless, or bounced from one place to another, with no real roots. Then, in October 2008, Gracie, helped by her counselors at the On Our Own Drop-in Center, found a place to call her own again.

That rooming house was only a beginning, but at least she had a roof over her head -- but no bed. Her counselors suggested she call Love INC.

Love INC found her a bed, blankets and some house wares. Yet unbelievably, the house where she rented a room WAS SOLD!! Right out from under her. But the downturn turned out to be a blessing in disguise. God was already at work.

Gracie was contacted by her son, now out on his own. He said he wanted to take a year off from school and make sure she was situated in a stable place to live. He found an apartment on Ridge Street suitable for Gracie, her boyfriend, and himself.

Gracie turned to Love INC once again for all that she would need for this new place. The big needs were for a refrigerator and a sofa



bed. A sofa bed was found, but it became apparent that it had been used as a doggie bed and she could not use it (please do not donate your doggie beds as many have pet allergies). But where to find a refrigerator??

At this very time, Krista Darcus, a good friend of the ministry and contact person at **Covenant Church of God** emailed to find out if anyone had need of a frig. Nita and Greg Davis, from Covenant Church of God had one to donate if Love INC could find a new home.

And now begins the best part of this story. Nita and Greg con-

nected right away with Gracie. Not only did they donate their refrigerator to Gracie, but Nita, who loves to collect things other people might need, found tons of household items, kitchenware, and such that Gracie could use.

Nita visited with Gracie and invited her to church. After tasting the extension of love, Gracie called Love INC just to talk about her new church and especially about her new friend. "She's really nice to me and she talks to me. And I really like go-



ing to church at her church," Gracie said.

Nita also talked about how they had become friends and she and her other friends had enjoyed reaching out to Gracie. They have "Brought Gracie into the family."

This is Love INC in action the way it should be. The connection between a client and a furniture donor/Christian friend can lead lost souls to the healing of Jesus Christ. All it takes is for the donor to use the opening that the gift of furniture provides and bring the Lord into the midst. Are you ready to reach out? ■

Adeline Was Very Discouraged ... Until!

Adeline was very discouraged! She had recently moved to the Charlottesville area to be near her daughter, but upon moving in she tripped and broke her ankle, leaving her more unsteady than ever. Then her daughter had to leave the area to care for her father and this meant that Adeline was going to be alone for the holidays.

That prospect truly frightened her, as visions came to her mind of another possible fall – and this time without the support of her daughter. The thoughts became so strong that she even became terrified to think of taking a shower alone in a slippery tub.

Learning of the role that Love INC played in the community, she called and ex-

plained her situation. Did we know of anyone who could purchase a hand held shower for



her, so that she could sit safely on her shower stool while showering?

Oh – and she would need someone to install the hand held shower -- and do so as soon as possible. Her daughter was gone, remember? She couldn't possibly do it herself.

Well, the staff wondered where they might find such a item, never mind a person to install it. Once someone had donated a shower chair...but plumbing skills were very difficult to come by.

Then, while the staff was still wondering about the first request, Adeline had another request. Was there someone who could bring her a fruit basket? She wasn't able to get around at all and wouldn't be able to purchase any fresh fruit.

As the appeal was made, the staff mused silently that the fruit basket would certainly be easier to ac-

complish than any plumbing request. So the staff went back to the drawing board as soon as the conversation was over.

To expedite the request, an email was sent out to the churches. The first response came from James McClung of **Church of our Savior**. He said he would be able to install the hand held shower – and, oh, he also had a hand held shower in his shed that would work just fine! The staff could hardly believe it, but, once again, God reached out in His grace to demonstrate His abounding love!

Then, Lydia Clemmer, of **Mt. Eagle Baptist Church**, was the second to re-



spond. She said that she would be honored to fix a fruit basket and call on Adeline. And that she did, finding a lonely woman more than happy to have a visitor. In fact, when Adeline saw what Lydia had brought, she exclaimed

“Oh, you don’t know how much I appreciate this fruit!”

During the course of their conversation, something Adeline said gave Lydia a clue that Adeline wanted to enter into the spiritual realm. As Lydia said, “She cracked the door open and I stepped in.” It proved to be the case and Lydia found that she

was conversing with a fellow believer — Adeline was indeed born again.

So Adeline got a new shower, a kind plumber, a basket of fruit and a new friend in Lydia. She called Love INC with many thank you’s and rave reviews. And behind the scenes, unbeknownst to her, there were many prayer warrior

friends who have reached out in love. ■

As a postscript, Lydia comes in EVERY WEEK with items she has bought on sale -- just in case someone needs them: usually two bags of things, plus disposable diapers and other odds and ends.

A House of Refuge

The video scenes coming from Haiti have made us all more aware of what it is like to be homeless. It is such a wide spread and heart-wrenching situation that it can’t be missed. But, have you ever stopped to consider what homelessness is right at your own “door step” – right here in our own community?

Well, Pastor Stephen Reynolds and the wonderful people at his



church, **Life at Zion**, do. They have been working among the homeless in the tent cities in the wooded and river areas of Charlottesville and the county.

And in their ministering, they met one man who seemed very much in need of a hand up. He would be able to return to his regular job, said his doctors, if he was able to have some needed surgery on his rotator cuff.

But there was a major obstacle to getting the surgery. Jerry’s doctor at UVA would not allow the surgery unless he had a place to go after the surgery and all Jerry had was a tent. And so, the doctor re-

fused to do surgery until Jerry had a real place with a roof and sanitation and cooking facilities.

With this in mind, Pastor Stephen contacted Love INC, first looking for financial help to put Jerry up in a motel. He thought it might cost around \$1200. But Susan explained that Love INC does not have a bank of funding for financial needs.

Furthermore we do not encourage churches to pay for motel rooms under normal circumstances, especially since that amount could help a family obtain an apartment. Nevertheless, the call triggered action and Love INC was now on the trail...

The next piece of the puzzle came to play as Kimberly Downing, who serves with Charlottesville Health Access, met with Jerry. She was greatly concerned that what was holding him back from a surgery that could restore his being a productive member of society was a simple roof over his head. And how could he maintain a roof over his head if he could not work?

She wrote in a broadcast email: “(I am) hoping we can come together as a community and help a gentleman out who is currently

homeless due to a medical problem. He needs surgery on his rotator cuff and cannot schedule it until he has a place to recover for at least 4-6 weeks. This will be his second surgery. The last one tore because he was released to live in his tent on the river and did not get time to heal.”

Everyone involved put on their thinking caps. What could be done? The answer was God-sent, of course, right under Susan’s nose – literally!

Right on her busy, paper piled desk was a small slip of paper from Jeff Genda, our amazing medical student from the fall semester of 2008. He had come by the office the following summer to let us know that he was renting an entire house (occupied by Christian students).

Jeff felt that God had truly blessed him with this house and he wanted to share it with someone who was in need. He wasn’t looking to make any income, just to bless someone in need. He wanted Love INC to keep him in mind.

Of course, with a mind like a sieve, Susan forgot. Too many

phone calls...

Then suddenly in God's perfect timing, she saw the slip of paper. Phone calls were made. Jeff was made aware of the problem and agreed to meet with Jerry. Pastor Stephen was put in touch with Jeff and with Kimberly.

Then Love INC heard nothing for a long time. But, God's work was going on in his churches and among his people and, finally, an email came from our former med student, copied to Love INC.

"Stephen & Life at Zion Church

"Greetings! I am writing you today to pass along a long overdue update on our brother.

"You all originally found him at the homeless camp on Pantops, trying to find a place to recover after his shoulder surgery [which took place in early October]. He has since begun a (thankfully) healthy recovery, with slowly improving shoulder function. Due to the Lord's orchestration, you all finding a place for him to recover,

and some determination on his part, his shoulder has had time to recover and pain is slowly resolving and dissipating.

"While he has been here, he has helped with dishes and household chores, taken care of our rambunctious kitten, and has been reading a good deal. He watches TV, spends time with his girlfriend, and frequently talks about his family and thoughts on life and God. He is always ready to talk, and overall has been a pleasure to have as a tenant / roommate.

"A goal he and I set out at the beginning of his recovery was that, for a continued stay after surgery, he must begin to make significant strides in finding employment and continue to go to his physical therapy sessions.

"Beginning early next month, he has been able to find a metal/construction shop that will be hiring him to do light work while he only has one fully functioning arm, and then more involved work as he continues to heal. He has done this line of work for the last

20 years of his life, and finds it very fulfilling.

"I've told him that as long as he continues to make strides and helps out around the house, he has a place to stay. He has willingly and enthusiastically agreed.

"He was overwhelmed every time someone stopped by with a meal, and would often express amazement at the love he felt when talking with people who stopped by. A few times, he even returned home to find a home-cooked meal sitting, waiting on the porch.

"Your willingness to see a need and take action has directly affected his life. Christ's love has been expressed here, and we both thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

"In Him,

"Jeff" ■



Addendum: As of February 27, Jerry is still living at Jeff's, had a supervisory job at UVA hospital and his shoulder is healed!

An Evening to Remember

Mark your calendars! Yes, be sure to set aside May 7, 2010 for that once-a-year treat to good food, fellowship, music, testimony and sound words that will "stick to your soul" – the annual Love INC Fundraising dinner. Seriously, we promise you an evening you won't want to miss -- the 19th year for this event.

The snow will all be gone, April showers hopefully will be behind us as well and May flowers brightening your way to First Baptist

Church, 735 Park Street, where we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for the dinner and program – doors open at 6 PM, with all the festivities over at 9 PM.

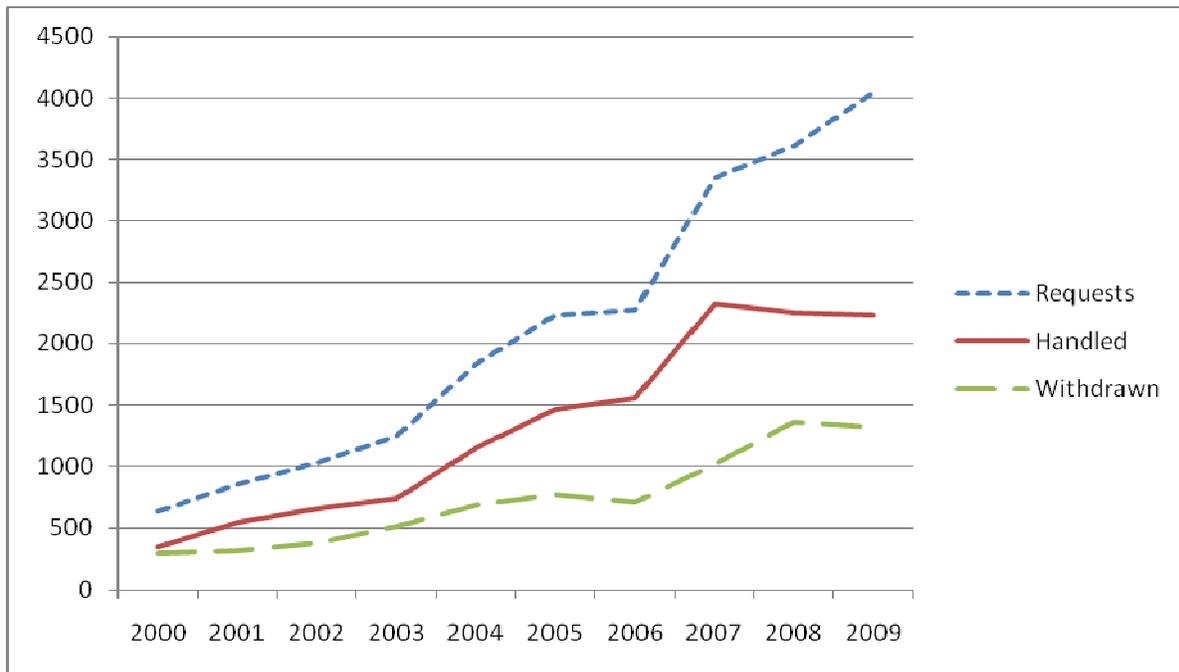
Our featured speaker will be Roger Browning, Pastor of New Hope Christian Church in Dundas, Virginia and Evangelist of 20/20 Ministries – also former pastor of Maple Grove Christian Church in Albemarle County. In this latter role, he was Ray Klein's pastor and an ardent supporter of Love INC.

Music for the evening will be provided by "Leap of Faith" from the Charlottesville Church of the Brethren.

Keep your eyes on the look out for your invitation and then please come to support the ministry of Love INC — whose mission is "To transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ" by helping our neighbors in need. ■



10 Year Tracking of Requests and Results



Over the years of Love INC’s service to the churches of the community, the number of hurting men, women and children who have been touched by the love of Christ has continued to grow from year to year. Over the past 10 year tracking of requests and results, we discovered these interesting facts — depicted graphically in the chart above and numerically below.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<u>Total Requests</u>	635	852	1032	1249	1841	2236	2273	3347	3610	4049
<u>Handled/In Process</u>	343	541	652	740	1149	1469	1561	2329	2250	2727
<u>Withdrawn/Denied</u>	292	311	380	509	692	767	712	1018	1360	1322
<u>% of Requests with No Volunteers</u>	8.5	6.1	5.0	3.8	4.6	6.4	7.2	10.2	12.1	12.2

It should be noted that many callers find solutions, or their circumstances change, so that they withdraw their request. Over the 10 year span, those “Denied” ranged from 5.9% to 11.8% of the total requests, with last year ending at 7.7%. But the statistic we regret the most each month is the “No Volunteer!” That says that we could find no one in an agency or church that would or could assist with those requests. Would you pray that this would change, with ample volunteers in the years ahead?



Alleluia! He is risen!
He is risen indeed!



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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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You will receive an acknowledgment of your contribution for tax purposes

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

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