



Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

March 2018

## Mark Your Calendar: March 14 Contribute to Agape Pantry Refrigeration Unit

### AGAPE MEMBER CHURCHES

Bedrock Community Church  
 Bedrock Church Franklin County  
 Covenant Fellowship  
 CrossPointe/Franklin Heights  
 Baptist Church  
 Dwelling Place Christian  
 Fellowship  
 EastLake Community Church  
 Flint Hills Baptist Church  
 Goodview Baptist Church  
 Halesford Baptist Church  
 Inner-Faith Fellowship  
 Ministries  
 Morgans Baptist Church  
 Palestine Baptist Church  
 Radford Baptist Church  
 Rocky Mount Baptist Church  
 Staunton Baptist Church  
 Vitalize Church  
 Westlake Baptist Church

### PRAYER FOR AGAPE

Please join as you are able in prayer for the Agape ministry, clients, and volunteers! Join the Agape Prayer Team in the Meeting Center at

**8:45 to 9:45 am**

**Tuesday — March 13**

**Thursday — March 22**

**Tuesday — April 10**

**Thursday — April 26**

Help Agape buy a new walk-in cooler/ladder for the produce program that is starting soon. Agape will soon be receiving more fresh produce for our clients as part of a new program of Feeding America Southwest Virginia. To help raise funds for the additional refrigerator space required, Agape has joined in the Roanoke Valley Gives on-line fundraiser on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. We are trying to raise \$15,000 to increase the space needed to store fresh fruits and vegetables. This fundraising effort is limited to 24 hours on Wednesday, Mar 14th.

#### It's easy to donate~Grab Your Credit Card!

- On March 14, go to the Agape web site at <https://www.agapecentersml.org>
- Click on the purple box that says "RVG Website"
- Click link to "Participating Organizations"
- Scroll down near the end of the list to "The Agape Center"
- Click the orange "Donate" button and complete the required information
- Use your credit card only: minimum donation is \$10.
- *Note: You can donate earlier as long as the last block, "Charge date", reads 3/14/2018.*

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Pray for Agape — Join the Prayer Team** in the Meeting Center to pray for the day at Agape.

**March 14, 2018—Roanoke Valley Gives: SEE ABOVE**

**March 30—9am-1 pm — HELP IN CLOTHING:** All volunteers invited to help switch SEASONAL clothing.

**May 19, 2018—Agape Center's 14th Annual Golf Tournament—**The Westlake—Registration at 12 noon; T-Off at 1 pm. **Volunteer or Play!** (See Page 5)

## Bedrock Church Franklin County Joins Agape — before they even have a church building!

Bedrock Church Franklin County is the newest addition to the member churches partnering with Agape. Pastor Russon Bibbs, a native of Franklin County and graduate of Franklin County High School, says, “I am excited that Bedrock is part of Agape, as the mission of Bedrock is completely in line with Agape’s in serving our community and connecting those in our community with Jesus Christ. We feel blessed to have a ministry partner which is already serving our community with the same purpose, and being good stewards of the resources God has provided.”

Bedrock is built on the foundation of nurturing strong, family relationships through weekly meetings in homes, called LIFEgroups. Pastor Russon continued, “We are developing the small group culture with discipleship as the primary focus. As the LIFEgroups grow, they will form the basis of a weekly gathering together.” It is a church plant through the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and is part of the national Bedrock Network of churches.

A 2009 graduate of Liberty University Baptist Seminary, Pastor Russon has served in several church plants, including in Georgia where he met his wife Nicole. They have served in Bedrock Roanoke since 2013, which is their sending church. Nicole has been mentoring teen moms through the ministry of Straight Street in Roanoke. She is excited to begin the women’s outreach in the Henry Fork area of Franklin County, where they plan community events for women during the next several months which will lead to the development of a weekly LIFEgroup for women in the area.



**Pastor Russon and Nicole Bibbs**

Pastor Russon concludes, “Our church exists to bring rescue and restoration to our community by the Gospel of Jesus. God has called us to reach those who are far from God, those either never having had a relationship with Him, or those who have strayed from Him. This is in line with Agape’s mission of turning or returning people to Jesus. And we are excited to be a part of Agape and plan to bring a team to serve at Agape in April.”

The Bibbs have five children under five and another on the way. For more information, check out their website at [www.BedrockFC.com](http://www.BedrockFC.com).

### By the Numbers Served. . .

**February 2018**  
Families 810  
Individuals 2773

**February 2017**  
Families 824  
Individuals 2682

### Welcome New Volunteers

**Erin Kilpatrick**—Pantry  
**George Marinow**—Pantry  
**Bill Parker** — Furniture, Transportation

### March 2018 Volume 10 Issue 3

*The Agape Newsletter* is a monthly publication produced by The Agape Center for volunteers, member churches, and other interested individuals and organizations. Comments may be sent to:

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Donate to Agape through **Roanoke Valley Gives** an annual, community-wide fundraiser on March 14 to purchase a new walk-in cooler/ladder.

## Stocking the Pantry—Day-in and Day-out

### Volunteers Support Each Other in Times of Need



Whether the Agape Center is open or closed, food deliveries continue to roll in and volunteers are here to unload and stock the groceries. Glenn Johnson (top left) is a regular when it comes to unloading, three or four days every week. He recently had surgery on his foot, twice in 3 months, and couldn't do 'his job'. He wanted to send a huge 'thank you' to those who filled in for him so "I didn't have a thing to worry about! Carol Moyer (top left) was my 'right hand lady' and others who were tremendous were Curt Woolwine, Laura Flight, Rick Johnston (top right), and Jim Perry (below right)." Thanks be to God, his foot is finally healing properly and he can now wear shoes!

### GRANT PROVIDES FUNDS FOR NEW WALK-IN FREEZER



The Lynchburg Community Trust provided an \$8000 grant for Agape's new walk-in freezer. This will assure greater efficiency and quality control for the frozen goods Agape provides to over 2500 individuals every month, particularly our autumn donations of venison and the approximately 1000 Thanksgiving turkeys Agape distributes every year. Tom Galofaro, a Pantry worker for over five years, says, "I really noticed the difference and the improvement with the new freezer. The new unit is more energy-efficient, and the door is self-latching, preventing the door being unlatched and unintentionally left open. The LED lighting is enables us to see our products better. It is also easier to get in and out of while carrying frozen foods. It is much larger than the old one, and the extra space is definitely a blessing. Finally, this new unit is much easier to keep clean. It is a beautiful gift, much needed for our clients, and the difference between night and day compared with the old one!"

Jack Lipscomb, left, and Bruce Smith at the entrance to the walk-in freezer, currently -2°.

Donate to Agape through **Roanoke Valley Gives** an annual, community-wide fundraiser on March 14 to purchase a new walk-in cooler/ladder.

## Construction continues with Gift Department/Toy Factory and Mentor Rooms



While construction has slowed down in the Gift Department, pending additional shelving and space, Gift Department volunteers are prepared for the long haul with their dust masks! Top left: Karen Fusaro, Kim Gauthier, and Barbara Mullins.

Carl Thomason (above) and Tammy Pauley and Keith Mitchell (left) install shelving for the Gift Department.

Construction is completed in the Storage Shed; organization and set-up are in the works.

Construction is continuing on the mentor rooms and is expected to be completed by mid-April.



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*Editor's Note: Each month, hundreds of volunteers work at Agape, from one shift to daily, from a few hours, to several shifts per week. There are many who go above and beyond, both in roles outside their main job description, and outside the organization. This new column will feature those busy people who never say "no" to an opportunity to serve God by serving others. If you know of someone who can be highlighted in this column, contact karenbaker015@gmail.com.*



Bonnie Fiori works hard in the Book Department, often during hours when Agape is not open. She is more than willing to help in other areas as needed, but in her spare time, she enjoys gardening. Each month, she finds seedlings among her indoor plants, and transplants them to decorative pots that are donated to Agape. She then re-gifts them for the birthday gifts in the Gift Shop, providing hand-nurtured plants for client birthdays. She's truly a Servant: Agape & Beyond.

## Volunteers: Play Role in AGAPE'S OPEN

There are many ways Agape volunteers can participate and support Agape's 14th Annual Open at The Westlake on Saturday, May 19.

**Participate**—by signing up a foursome, or sign yourself up and see who your team is! Sign up on Agape's website.

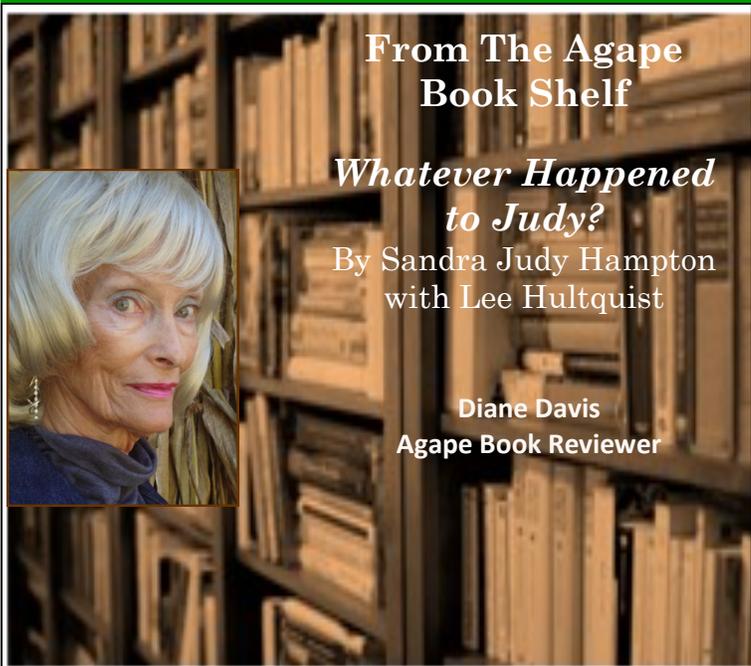
**Volunteer**—help on-site with welcoming, water distribution, or a variety of other roles. Help with the after-tournament dinner at Halesford Baptist Church. Contact Bob Winters (484/888-1856) to get involved.

**Donate** — Agape volunteers are invited to participate by contributing toward the Agape Hole Sponsor. Please give the Hole Sponsor contributions to Mark Plumb.



**Did you know?** Agape can use your old newspapers in the store to wrap breakable items for clients. Drop off your newspapers in the store!





From The Agape Book Shelf

Whatever Happened to Judy?

By Sandra Judy Hampton with Lee Hultquist



Diane Davis  
Agape Book Reviewer

Judy and her two brothers were deserted by their father when he met and later married June. Their mother couldn't support the children and sent them to live with their dad, Jess, and June.

June began to abuse the children, especially Judy. Judy told June she was hurting her and June said that she would kill Judy if she told anyone. Judy was terrified and made up excuses for all her bruises, cuts and especially her red eyes.

The truth was June pushed on Judy's eye for punishment! Eventually, Judy began to have blurred vision and became blind.

Judy was sent to the hospital where the doctors said her condition was caused by trauma to the eyes, causing detached retina and blindness.

The children were taken from the home and put in foster care. After Judy finally admitted what her stepmother had done to her, June was arrested and found guilty of child abuse, serving three years of her prison sentence. Jess said he knew nothing of the abuse.

Judy grew up, married and had two children. Jess passed away, her mother remarried, her two brothers had families of their own. Judy and her husband became Christians.

After many years, Judy forgave June and discovered that her dad and stepmother had both become Christians. "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

*Note: This book may not be what we like to read, but this was a true story covering a very real and terrible situation that repeats itself over and over again. As the abuse of innocent children has always touched and broken my heart, I wanted to share this story with you. The forgiveness of June by Judy had to come through the Lord. Only He could ever give her the strength. Praise God. DD.*

Agape Volunteer Publishes Second Book

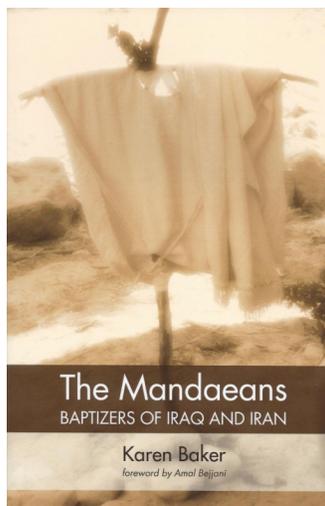
Karen Baker, Agape Floor Supervisor and Newsletter Editor, has recently had her second book published. This is the second in the series of "Hidden Peoples of the World", people who have remained hidden behind political boundaries, cultural xenophobia and religious isolation.



Karen Baker

The secrets of a complex belief system that have sustained the Mandaean in their centuries-old native lands in Iraq and Iran have been collapsing before their eyes. This little-known Gnostic sect has been hidden from global awareness until now.

With a passion for the obscure, Karen Baker has delved into this secret sect, exploring the effects of the turmoil they have faced in their homeland, and are now facing in Diaspora. The Iraqi and Iranian Mandaean have fled their homes with nothing more than the clothing on their backs, being thrust



into the status of refugees, watching their traditions and cultures crumble as they encounter new lands and new cultures.

The book discusses the potential receptivity of Mandaean to Christianity through several perspectives including an evaluation of their relationship to the Gnosticism of the first through third centuries CE as well as its syncretic adaptations to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It will be of

interest to those interested in little-known cultures from a historical and religious perspective; those involved with refugees and immigrants; and those who desire to understand the foundational beliefs of Mandaeanism.

The book is available from Amazon at [https://smile.amazon.com/Mandaean-Baptizers-Iraq-Iran-Karen-Baker/dp/1532619707/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1519502826&sr=8-1&keywords=karen+baker+mandaeans#](https://smile.amazon.com/Mandaean-Baptizers-Iraq-Iran-Karen-Baker/dp/1532619707/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1519502826&sr=8-1&keywords=karen+baker+mandaeans#).

## Costa Ricans cook for Agape Volunteers

Many times Agape volunteers bring their house guests to help at Agape, whether it be grandchildren, adults, or in this case, missionaries from another country. Mark and Lin Plumb met Enrique and Rebeca Barboza Robles 25 years ago when they went on their first international mission trip to Costa Rica. Recently, the Robles were in America and contacted the Plumbs to arrange some time with them. The result included spending a day at Agape, preparing Gallo Pinto. This is the national dish of their country, served everywhere, every day. It is often served for breakfast but is appropriate for any meal. The name literally translates to "Spotted Rooster", because the black beans in the rice are said to resemble the feathers of a spotted rooster.

They prepared this food, to serve as encouragement for Agape volunteers, who welcomed them warmly. The dish requires a specific sauce, Salsa Lizano, available on Amazon.



Rebecca and Enrique during their morning time with the Lord.

### Gallo Pinto (Costa Rican Beans and Rice)

Prep 10 min · Cook 20 min · Makes 8 to 10 servings

#### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons light-tasting oil (vegetable, mild olive, canola)
- 1/2 Red bell pepper , chopped; 1/2 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- Bunch cilantro, chopped
- 2 cups cooked black beans
- 3/4 cup reserved bean cooking liquid
- Salsa Lizano (Salsa Englaise) (see image)
- 3 cups cooked rice , preferably, day-old and refrigerated
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- Butter
- Additional seasonings:
- Sazón Completa (Brand name- Badia)
- Goya Cubitos en Polvo (caldo con sabor a Pollo) - chicken bouillon in small packets

#### Directions

All amounts are approximate, to taste.  
 Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering.  
 Sauté chopped pepper and onions until peppers are soft and onions are translucent, about 6-8 minutes.  
 Stir in two packets of Goya Cubitos en Polvo bouillon. Add cilantro and cook for 1 minute, until fragrant.  
 Add black beans, stirring to combine. Add a little bit of the bean cooking liquid.  
 Gently stir in cooked rice, a little at a time and continue to add some of the bean cooking liquid until it is the right consistency; stir in some Salsa Lizano, to taste (maybe 1/4 cup for this amount). Sprinkle with Sazón Completa, to taste.  
 Continue to stir gently to mix in the seasonings. Cook until heated through and most of the liquid is absorbed, but not

dry, about 3-5 minutes. Stir in additional chopped cilantro. Season to taste with additional Salsa Lizano (I added about a tablespoon extra).  
 Make a well in the center and add a chunk of butter to soften, then gently stir it in.  
 Serve warm with more Salsa Lizano on the side.

#### Notes

To cook dried black beans, place 1 pound sorted, rinsed black beans in a large bowl and add enough cool water to cover by 1-2 inches. Soak overnight, 8-12 hours. Drain beans, transfer to a large pot or Dutch oven and cover with fresh, cool water by 1-2 inches. Add a few whole garlic cloves, if desired and a little salt.  
 Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low to maintain a gentle simmer, and cook until beans are tender throughout. This can take 1-2 hours, depending on size and age of beans.  
 Or, you can cook beans in one step without pre-soaking in an Instant Pot; 1 pound dry beans, 4 cups water at high pressure for 6 minutes; let pressure release naturally. Save cooking liquid.

This sauce is used in the Gallo Pinto Recipe and available at: [https://smile.amazon.com/Lizano-Salsa-24-7-Oz-700ml/dp/B005TBURAI/ref=sr\\_1\\_1\\_a\\_it?ie=UTF8&qid=1520466495&sr=8-1&keywords=Lizano%2Bsalsa&th=1](https://smile.amazon.com/Lizano-Salsa-24-7-Oz-700ml/dp/B005TBURAI/ref=sr_1_1_a_it?ie=UTF8&qid=1520466495&sr=8-1&keywords=Lizano%2Bsalsa&th=1)

