

MAY 2023, ISSUE 1



THE AGAPE MONETA NEWSLETTER

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



2023 "Getting Ahead" Graduates

The Agape Center is proud to announce that the 2023 "Getting Ahead" class graduated last month on Wednesday, April 5th. It was an incredible journey watching each of them come alive with the hope of a better tomorrow.

In a safe, caring, nonjudgmental environment, we watched them eagerly participate and learn new principles and skills to improve their lives. But what we didn't expect was to also witness them forgive, let go of bitterness, reconcile relationships, set boundaries, face their fears, and move into a more intimate and authentic relationship with God and each other. We may have started out as strangers but ended up becoming more like family.

The "Getting Ahead" class transforms lives and impacts generations.

We believe the class of 2023 are inspired, encouraged, and challenged to step out in faith and become the people they were always meant to be.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who prayed, supported, encouraged, taught, and served breakfast over the last few months. We are so grateful for you. Thank you for being willing to serve and be a part of changed lives.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

JEREMIAH 29:11



"This class gave me the confidence to change my life. It gave me the tools to move forward and build a better future for myself and my children. "

Results of the Program

- Two GA grads were homeless one year ago for a period of two years. They took the class with a desire to learn how to become financially stable. We loved watching them come alive and go from needing to learn how to budget to actually finding it FUN. They're currently saving and putting money aside for an emergency fund. They've learned to set boundaries, build healthy relationships, and stay away from financial predators. Both have completed a CPR class. One of them has applied for financial aid and will begin college classes in the near future.
- Another grad came to class wanting to learn what she was doing wrong, how to save money and do better. She learned how to put God first, set boundaries, say "NO" to people that use her, and to implement better financial habits like paying off her credit cards, making payments on time, and stop unnecessary spending.
- Another grad (a recovering addict) felt like she was in a rut and wanted to be a good example for her family. She learned to think before she makes decisions instead of acting out of her emotions. She's implemented a budget, applied for her first credit card to start rebuilding her credit, and has an emergency savings fund. She has also obtained a job that she loves helping others out of addiction!
- Another grad took the class with the hope of bettering herself and helping her family. She went from being nervous about a group setting to using her organizational skills to gather the class together after it ended for continued community and bible study. During this short period of time, she started attending counseling to overcome childhood trauma and work on her marriage. She learned to set boundaries, not listen to the negativity of others, rediscover her love of crunching numbers and pursue her dream of becoming an accountant.

19TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNEY

Saturday, May 20th, 2023

Copper Cove Golf Club

Hardy, VA

Registration/Lunch 11:30AM

Shotgun Start 1:00 PM

All spots have been filled for this year's
golf tournament, but we are still in
need of sponsors!

SPONSOR



Mentor Bob Moore sat down with a family of Ukranian refugees who are clients of Agape. This is their story.

Client Focus: Sasha, Masha and Vitalik

INTERPRETED BY THEIR COUSIN, DEMA

Sasha, how long has your family been a client of Agape?

My family has been a client for about 5 months. My three children got the chance to pick up Christmas presents in December. We were also able to obtain furniture and toys for our children.

How did you get to the US?

When the war started, my pregnant wife took our children to Lithuania. Then, my cousin, Dema, was willing to be our host family here in Goodview.

Do you still have relatives in the Ukraine?

Yes! My relatives are getting used to the new normal. They are just going through life. One of my cousins got married during the war; now she's pregnant with twins. I have another cousin who is in active duty near the border with Belarus.

Our relatives are mostly out of the harm's way; no bombs have exploded on their streets. However, there are bomb warnings daily; the kids get traumatized by it and get frightened and scared and have a hard time sleeping. You need to drop whatever you're doing and shelter immediately because you never know where that missile will land. You are never out of harm's way because you never know whether it's your turn or not.



"THIS WAR REALLY OPENED MY EYES TO SEE HOW THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD ARE TEMPORARY. I NOW SEE HOW WE CAN GET ATTACHED TO OUR HOMES, OUR CARS AND EVEN OUR LOVED ONES. I FIND GREAT COMFORT THAT THE WAR CAN TAKE EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE FROM ME EXCEPT MY GOD AND I'M COMFORTED THAT HE IS WITH ME. HE HAS NEVER FORSAKEN HIS CHILDREN. I SENSE GOD'S PRESENCE IN MY LIFE, THAT I'M NOT FORGOTTEN BY HIM, THAT HE'S WITH ME AND THAT GIVES ME STRENGTH."

SASHA B.

What else would you like our readers to know about Ukraine?

I worked as a truck driver in Ukraine and delivered products to places affected by the war. I saw with my own eyes the destruction that the Russian presence left in our towns. Russia did not hide anything! Many children have been left orphans! Many people have lost limbs! Russia has ignored any rules that the world community established for how to conduct a war. The atrocities are unspeakable! Russians would just shoot Ukrainians and kill my people just for sport.

Many Ukrainian children simply vanished! Russian soldiers just forcefully removed them from Ukraine families and took them to Russia. The families have no idea where their children are.

I am sorry that your family has been so impacted by this war. Have you found a church in the area?

My host cousin attends Eastlake Community Church, and my family attends Sunday service with him.

What role do you feel God has played in your life?

This war really opened my eyes to see how the things of this world are temporary. I now see how we can get attached to our homes, our cars and even our loved ones. I find great comfort that the war can take everything and everyone from me except my God and I'm comforted that He is with me. He has never forsaken his children. I sense God's presence in my life, that I'm not forgotten by Him, that He's with me and that gives me strength.

Every day I'm so thankful for the gift of family like my cousin and his family. They welcomed us and they cared for us in every way possible and that made a huge difference. We see God's love through it!

What can our readers do to help?

There is a huge need to pray for the people of Ukraine because there is a lot of suffering. Please support organizations like Agape that are doing so much for Ukrainian refugees!

Sasha is a welder by trade and has extensive experience as a diesel engine mechanic. He is looking for work in the field of car or truck repairs. Contact Agape's Moneta location at (540) 296-0609 with any leads.



This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:16-18

Goodview Elementary School Donates to Agape

CANS FOR COMMUNITY KINDNESS

For Kindness Week, the students at Goodview Elementary School collected cans of food and attached notes of affirmation to each one! Octavia Davis, the school's counselor, brought in over 450 pounds of canned food to Agape. This food will be such a blessing to our clients!

