

Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

July-August 2021

Happy Birthday to You!

AGAPE MEMBER CHURCHES

Bedrock Church -
Franklin County

Bedrock Community Church,
Bedford

Covenant Fellowship

Franklin Heights Church —
Rocky Mount, CrossPointe
and Union Hall

Dwelling Place Christian
Fellowship

EastLake Community Church

Flint Hill Baptist Church

Goodview Baptist Church

Halesford Baptist Church

Inner-Faith Fellowship
Ministries

Morgans Baptist Church

Palestine Baptist Church

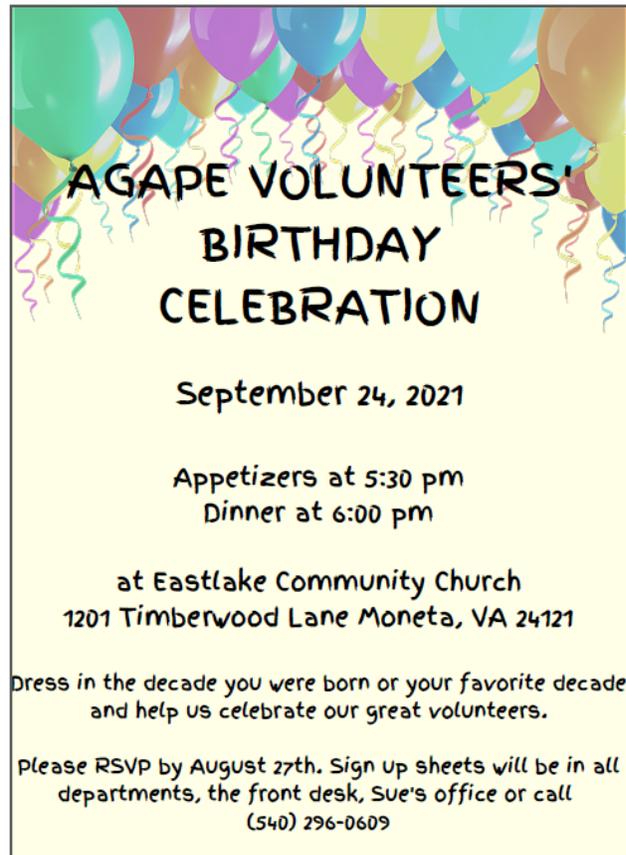
Radford Baptist Church

Rocky Mount Baptist Church

Staunton Baptist Church

Vitalize Church

Westlake Baptist
Church



**AGAPE VOLUNTEERS'
BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION**

September 24, 2021

**Appetizers at 5:30 pm
Dinner at 6:00 pm**

**at Eastlake Community Church
1201 Timberwood Lane Moneta, VA 24121**

*Dress in the decade you were born or your favorite decade
and help us celebrate our great volunteers.*

*Please RSVP by August 27th. Sign up sheets will be in all
departments, the front desk, Sue's office or call
(540) 296-0609*

Everybody has a birthday sometime during the year. And since we can't all be together to celebrate each and every one of our volunteers on his or her special day, we are having one BIG birthday party. It's the Agape Center's way of saying thank you to our volunteers for all that you do to reflect God's love and to carry out our mission to draw others close to Him.

In addition, this appreciation banquet gives us the opportunity to recognize our member churches for their ongoing support. Invitations have been sent to each pastor and his wife. It will also be a time to get to know some of our extended family — our "satellite" folks.

We're sure to have a fun evening of good food, lots of laughter and a beautiful time of sharing. If you plan to attend or even if you just think you might, please put your name on one of the sign-up sheets or send her an email (karen@agapecentersml.org). That way Karen Jones and her party planners will have an idea of how many to expect

Come dressed in your favorite decade. Hmmm?! What's tickling your imagination? The year you were born, a certain era or a very memorable event?! Surprise us!! Can't wait to see you there!



“God’s Got This!”



Susan Truitt – PRAYER CHANGED EVERYTHING!

Back in 2015 Susan left Kentucky sick in body and sick at heart. She moved in with her folks because she couldn’t support herself. In August of that year she ended up in the ER with horrible pain. The doctor ran some tests and found she was suffering from pancreatitis. Her liver numbers were through the roof. She says, “The doctor came in and told me I was dying from liver failure and that I had a month to live. I was terrified. The doctor did a liver biopsy and found that I had Stage 4 Cirrosis.”

Susan soon after started mental health therapy. There she was assigned a clinician. That young lady told her about the Agape Center and Susan came.

Her mom and dad were praying for her and the Agape mentors were praying for her. Whenever she was feeling very sick, she’d call her mother and ask her to pray for her. One day her mom said, “Suzie, God hears your prayers too.” Susan says, “I don’t think I ever looked at it that way. It’s like a light went on. He really does!” And Suzie started praying. In time, a biopsy of her liver showed her Stage 4 Cirrhosis had become Stage 1!

Susan’s life has certainly changed since then. Her health has improved greatly. She no longer has a death sentence hanging over her. Her liver went from Stage 4 to Stage 1. She was able to attend her daughter’s wedding – something she couldn’t even get excited about before. She now looks forward every day to living. She can see God at work. Last year she and her mom were struggling financially and it looked like they might not be able to make the rent payment. Totally out of the blue, a lady from church gave her a check and then both she and her mom received stimulus checks at just the right time.

Susan’s favorite hymn is a good old Gaither song — “Look What the Lord Has Done” —



Look what the Lord has done
 Look what the Lord has done
 He healed my body
 He touched my mind
 He saved me, it was just in time
 I'm gonna praise His name
 Each day He's just the same
 Come on and praise Him
 Look what the Lord has done



Carol Lemay – GOD IS MY SOLID ROCK!

You may have seen Carol in the File Room or more recently as a mentor where she is finding that her life story helps her relate to the clients she sees. Because somebody didn’t give up on her, she is able to tell others that God is always working in their lives and that their life is precious to Him.

Carol started volunteering at Agape in 2020. She and her husband had participated in the Agape Center’s Ride for Hope in 2017. Carol said it’s kind of funny that she was even riding a motorcycle. She had been in a serious accident years ago and before she became a born-again Christian. At the time of the accident, she was working as a nurse and living an active single’s life. The secretary on her hospital floor would bring her Bible to work with her every day. She would sit and share her faith with Carol and Carol would be like “yeah, yeah, but people are dying here, you know.”

Then one day Carol was in a horrific motorcycle accident and basically demolished her right leg. The pieces of the broken femur bone were one on top of the other. Carol spent a long time in the hospital in traction and eventually was sent home with a fissure vise holding the pieces of bone together. One night she fell out of her wheelchair and rebroke her leg. When she went to get up, her leg went straight and the pieces popped into alignment. She said only God could do that.

Carol had to go back in the hospital and God continued to heal her as she continued therapy. When she got out again, Cheryl, her secretary friend, would pick her up and take her to Bible Study. There was guitar playing and Bible study and people who listened. Carol was so moved she wanted to share the experience with Steve, her boyfriend. They went to the church together three or four times and both felt “this stuff was real, really real.”

Carol and Steve gave their lives to the Lord that year (1984) and were married in 1985. “God healed both of us. We had a lot to go through, but we started our marriage with a strong foundation. I wasn’t tossed to and fro anymore. I had a solid rock and God was that.”

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Carol Lemay – GOD IS MY SOLID ROCK!

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That realization wasn't there when Carol received a Bible from Billy Graham in the 70's. She didn't know then that God was waiting for her to acknowledge Him through real circumstances.

Soon after becoming a Christian, she found accepting Christ didn't mean life would be smooth sailing. Her son was in second grade and became seriously ill. He lost two-thirds of his small intestine and came very close to dying. It took a long time, but little by little God healed her son and made it possible for him to live a "normal" life. Today he is 42 years old, plays hockey, runs five miles, etc.

Through those tough times, Carol learned that God is always moving and that life is precious to Him. You never know what tomorrow will bring, but God knows the past and the future and the here and now. "He is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and He's got this!"

"The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
Psalm 18:2, NIV

Friend of Agape Makes Good Use of Her Investment Company's Generosity

Kathy Phillips is a member of Thrivent, a financial organization that provides financial advice, investments, insurance, banking and generosity programs "to help people make the most of all they've been given." According to their website, giving back is part of what makes them truly unique. Thrivent give back to causes their clients care about. Kathy definitely cares about the Agape Center so she applied for grant to put together first aid kits for Agape clients. The Thrivent Action Teams honored Kathy's request. The Agape Center received enough money to put together ten first aid packages, which were turned into ten beautiful birthday gift baskets for our clients.



Kathy Phillips & Sue Lipscomb admiring the goodies the Thrivent grant provided
 Russetta Wright & Karen Fusaro showing off one of the baskets



Volunteer Spotlight: Cheryl Turner

Cheryl volunteers as the assistant director of the Agape Center for Vinton/ Roanoke, the counterpart of Karen Jones in the Moneta Agape. The Vinton/ Roanoke Agape Center will

be celebrating its first year of service on July 6, 2021, and even that opening was delayed by the COVID pandemic. Cheryl explains, "We opened with six clients; the people were under tents in the parking lot. In the weeks prior I went all around town dropping off fliers at apartments in low income areas to advertise the opening." One year later the Center provides help to 212 client families!

In Cheryl's previous career she held several positions with the US Postal Service, one of which was Director of Finance over 229 post offices in an area covering Bristol, Lynchburg and Roanoke. "Because of my finance background people want to use me as the treasurer, which is okay, but I really enjoy working with the people."

Cheryl related the story of "an elderly lady, a client who would occasionally donate \$10 or \$20 to us, but one day she came in with a check for \$100 from her stimulus check. It made me cry."

In another story, Cheryl shared, "I had a call from an elderly lady with lung cancer. She spoke in a breathless, raspy way since she used oxygen to breathe and a walker to get around. She called to tell me what a blessing the Agape Center had been to her. She explained that her condition was 'guarded' and she was moved from the home she shared with her son and his partner to a long-term care facility. However, the lady's doctor had told her son that she wouldn't live, so he got rid of all her clothes. But she did live and she came to us. We gave her clothes and food."

As Cheryl spoke compassionately about this woman, tears welled up in her eyes, overwhelmed for a moment by the joy that the work at Agape brings to others in their time of need.

Pat Hyland, Agape Reporter

SML Charity Home Tour



The Agape Center has been selected as one of the eight Charities to participate in the 2021 SML Charity Home Tour, Oct. 8–10. It is the 30th Anniversary of the tour and is expected to raise more funds than it has in previous years.

Our volunteers will be hostessing Susan and Greg English’s one-of-a-kind home off of Burnt Chimney Road. The home has 600’ of shoreline and a spectacular view down Gills Creek to the mountain. It is loaded with re-purposed materials uniquely used for trim, furniture and accents throughout the home. The homeowners have taken the concept of recycling to unimagined heights.

We **NEED VOLUNTEERS** inside the home to guide people through and outside the home to greet, take tickets, park and help at the boat dock. Sign up the next time you’re at Agape or give us a call at 540-296-0609.

Tickets can be purchased online at the event’s website (smlcharityhometour.com) or in person at the Smith Mountain Lake Visitor Center at Bridgewater Plaza and

other places throughout the area. Ticket Prices: \$25 through Oct. 7 and \$30 online or at the homes the weekend of the tour. One ticket covers all eight homes and is good all weekend long: Oct. 8-9 (10 AM – 5 PM) and Oct. 10 (1 PM – 5 PM).

Please Note: To ensure a safe and healthy tour experience, the SML Charity Home Tour will honor all VA COVID-19 mandates in place at the time of the tour. This could include requiring masks for non-vaccinated guests and social distancing.

Thank you to this year’s tour sponsors and the 1200 volunteers who make this event possible.



Snippets from the AECO* Meeting

Welcome New Volunteers!



Tom Basham – Pantry
Donna Carlton – Pantry
Marlene Carson – Data, Clothing
Stephen Dunn – Getting Ahead, Mentor
Kirk Ferrell – Mentor
Debbie Gaura – Runner
Kurt Gaura – Loader
John Giordano – Pantry
Jordon Gollnick – USDA

Lauren Hooks – Pantry
Pastor David Janney – Mentor
Christina Kovach – Clerk, Runner
Michael Luken – Pantry, Furniture
Candace Moore – Clothing
Jackie Reiley – USDA, Mentor
Steve Reiley – Furniture
Debbie Sutton – Telephone, Receptionist

By the Numbers...

| | 2021 | 2020 |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| JUNE | | |
| Families | 491 | 619 |
| Individuals | 1,646 | 2,103 |
| JULY | | |
| Families | 505 | 544 |
| Individuals | 1,731 | 1,858 |



Volunteers Needed

- 1st and 3rd Saturdays: All areas, particularly Runners, Mentors and USDA.
- Agape Volunteer Appreciation Dinner: Keep Sep 24 open on your calendar. Karen Jones is heading up the committee for this event. If you’d like to help in any way, contact Karen.
- SML Charity Home Tour, October 8-10. Consider signing up for one of the timeslots. It is an opportunity to serve our community and meet new people as we support the Agape Center. Training, food, and fun are provided for all volunteers throughout the weekend!

Closing Prayer

Father God, we thank you so much that you are here with us and that we don't have to do this alone, that we can depend on you to be your source of joy and peace and of provision and so many things. Lord, we just thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, who has changed our lives forever. And Lord, we are so thankful that we get to be a part of growing your kingdom in these days. You tell us to put on the whole armor of God... Lord, just give us the strength we need, and continue to show us your love and how to share that love with others, Lord, as we seek Your will for this community in this environment, Lord, teach us to love as you have loved us and teach us to give of ourselves as you give of yourself that the kingdom of God might be made present to all men. Amen