

DECEMBER 2023, ISSUE 7



THE AGAPE MONETA NEWSLETTER

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



“GOD IS NOT UNJUST; HE WILL NOT FORGET YOUR WORK AND THE LOVE YOU HAVE SHOWN HIM AS YOU HAVE HELPED HIS PEOPLE AND CONTINUE TO HELP THEM.”

HEBREWS 6:10

Welcome to the Agape SML monthly newsletter!
We're glad you're here.

Thanks for subscribing to our newsletter, where you can stay up-to-date on everything happening at Agape Center SML!

The Agape Center at Smith Mountain Lake provides mentoring, food, clothing, household goods and more to those in our community who need help through difficult times.

Over 300 volunteers serve an average of 600 families per month from Bedford & Franklin counties.



“When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. ‘Do you understand what I have done for you?’ he asked them. ‘You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.” John 13: 12-14

Kicks for Keith

IN HONOR OF KEITH ANDERSON

Agape clients seeking that elusive perfect Christmas present for their teens are able to choose from loads of trendy new tennis shoes thanks to a generous donation by **Kicks for Keith**.

Taken for granted by some of us, a single new pair of shoes is a blessing not taken lightly by many.

Kicks for Keith was created as a way to honor Keith Anderson, a Smith Mountain Lake resident who went home to Jesus in May at the age of 25. Friends and family donated over 200 pairs of new sneakers, which in turn were donated to the Agape Center for distribution to clients.

Keith, described by loved ones as a jokester with a generous heart, was a gifted athlete and avid sports fan. He was also a talented songwriter and artist who was always willing to help others, even strangers.





A HUGE THANK YOU SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

On November 16, Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy (SMLCA) students put their commitment to service into action, helping the Agape Center in its mission to serve those in need in our community. Fourteen students from SMLCA's Elliot House joined the Agape Woodchuckers on their "House Service Project Day" to split and stack wood. The Woodchuckers assist Agape clients who depend on wood as their sole source of heat. Clients receive enough wood to meet most of their heating needs every winter. Another 14 students from Elliot house spent that same afternoon sorting and shelving food, hanging clothes, sorting linens, and bagging toiletries. In addition to all the student help, SMLCA's FFA chapter sponsored a canned food drive at both the middle and high schools, collecting and delivering over 1100 pounds of food to the Agape Center on the same day. It took two pallets to hold it all! Pantry Leader Judy Harper said that all the young volunteers were a tremendous help that day and the food delivery was just in time to help the Agape Center provide a little extra to families for Thanksgiving. Is your group or organization seeking volunteer opportunities? We believe Agape Center is an outstanding choice! Contact beckyblackman@agapecentersml.org for more information.





When we feel the hand of God impacting our lives, we want to share the experience. Only God could have orchestrated this encounter between an Agape mentor and client...

A Client's Timely Request

AN AGAPE CLIENT CAME IN FOR HER MONTHLY APPOINTMENT ON TUESDAY NOV. 14, AND HAD A SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL REQUEST...

Michaela came into her November monthly appointment with Agape on a Tuesday and approached Floor Supervisor Debbie Griggs with a somewhat unusual request. She asked Debbie if she knew of a volunteer Santa for an upcoming Christmas party for 10 homeless children. Michaela writes personalized children's books and was hosting the party at the Family Promise of Greater Roanoke Center in Salem on December 18th.

Lo & behold, Karen Nikic, who usually volunteers Thursday mornings, just happened to be mentoring that Tuesday afternoon. And it also turned out that Karen and her husband Frank, our very own Santa and Mrs. Claus, were available that day.

Only God could have orchestrated that!

Michaela shared with Karen and Debbie a story about a little girl's journey with Santa to see Jesus and to learn the real meaning of Christmas. "Christmas is not just about getting presents. It's about love, family, and the joy of giving and helping others. The birth of Jesus reminds us of the greatest gift of all – the very first Christmas gift – God's love."

Michaela also shared with her mentor that she is a bit shy and had asked for prayer at her previous Agape session to have the courage to promote her books. Her boldness in asking for a volunteer Santa is just one sign that her prayer is being answered.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!

"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 A HOPE AND A FUTURE. '"

Jeremiah 29:11

Visit the Agape facility on any open day, and you'll probably see around 50 volunteers serving clients in one capacity or another. But there are many other volunteers that you may never see.

Our Food Truck Drivers are a great example. Agape is blessed to receive donations from four different retail stores, in addition to the food we pick up from Feeding Southwest Virginia in Salem. There is at least one driver on the road six days a week, often unloading pallets of food on their return.

This summer we were happy to thank this dedicated team of over 20 people, and even managed to snap a photo or two. If you are interested in serving with this team, contact [Robbie at robbiehallock@gmail.com](mailto:Robbie@robbiehallock@gmail.com)



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

From Karen Jones

AGAPE SML DIRECTOR

As 2023 comes to a close, I want to personally thank you all for your heart to serve at the Agape Center. By your obedience to the Lord you have blessed so many of our clients in need. The Thanksgiving gift cards helped provide a Thanksgiving meal to feed over 2300 people. Thank you everyone who helped to contribute during this special time of year!

These are challenging times for our clients and with your help we make their lives a little brighter. During this Christmas season let's remember the scripture: Jesus spoke to them saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12).

In Matthew 5:16, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Words can hardly express what you all mean to me. Whenever we have a need, you are there! When a client needs a hug, you are there! When a client needs hope and is looking for a relationship with Christ, you are there to share God and His yearning for a relationship with them. I am so honored to be on the same team as you, with Christ in the center of our lives and at the helm of Agape.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!