

Agape Center SML – November 2022 Newsletter



Give thanks and make a difference by helping 800 families, from Bedford to Rocky Mount, enjoy Thanksgiving dinner! For more information, [Feed A Family \(agapecentersml.org\)](http://Feed A Family (agapecentersml.org))



Charity Home Tour was a Huge Success!

The SML Charity Home Tour took place between 10/7-10/9. The attendance was the 5th highest turnout in 31 years! The beautiful MacKenzie Home was paired with the Agape Center. There were 8 houses on the tour and 8 charities will share in the proceeds.

We want to thank those that purchased tickets, all who volunteered and especially our generous sponsors.



MY LIFE CHANGING STORY

By Donna Line

I am from Costa Rica and met my husband, Charles (an American) there. We were married in 2010. In 2013, we moved to the US where he began to have health issues. After 6 years of dialysis and fighting his illness, my husband succumbed in November 2021. A few months after my husband passed away, I remember the feeling of utter devastation. As the days, weeks and months passed, I fell deeper into depression. The grief I was experiencing grew into feelings of abandonment and fear; fear of the unknown that lay ahead and fear of living life alone.

I had begun attending a “Grief Share” class at Eastlake Community Church. The leader of the group, Karen N., told me about the Agape Center. She suggested I try volunteering to provide me with new friends and allow me to find my “purpose” that would give me a solid ground to stand on during this trying time in my life.

As I went through the different stages of grief and trauma, Karen provided a stable influence for me by showing the love and care of Jesus Christ. She has dedicated herself to the service of helping hurting people with her encouragement and connecting them with others who can help lift them up and improve their lives. The first time I went to volunteer at Agape, a bilingual woman who was serving Spanish speaking clients was moving to a different Agape location. While volunteering in the clothing department, I was called on to interpret for a client who spoke only Spanish. I interpreted the things the mentor was saying and then prayed in Spanish with this woman in need. Working that day with the mentor, Karen J., and seeing her compassion and love for the client, I found a real sense of peace and a rest from the grief that I had been experiencing. We were giving of ourselves in service, but God was giving much more back to me. After this encounter with this Spanish-speaking woman, I realized that mentoring and helping others in the service of God was the answer to what I had been searching for to fill the void in my life. Some would call this a coincidence, but we know that God’s timing is always perfect! Karen J. informed me that there was a class for mentoring available. I inquired and was privileged to be accepted to attend the mentoring class sessions. The class was taught by Tracy D., who has always conducted herself with grace, dignity and in the reverence of the Holy Spirit. During the class sessions Tracy D. had us watch a video made by Pastor Troy Keaton about what the mentoring process really meant. As I watched and listened to Pastor Troy speak and then to Tracy teach, I began to realize how important this was and that it was a calling, not simply something good to do. I sat there in amazement and with thankfulness that God would see fit to use someone like me to help in this godly endeavor.

My life has change significantly since the day I began mentoring. Each day I spend in this service I see the Holy Spirit working through me and the other mentors. I have found joy and the peace that only God can give as I work. I have been experiencing firsthand, that “we walk by faith, not by sight”. Though our fears and anxieties may try to control us, if we act each day as God would have us act and get up and be about our Father’s business, God has promised us His peace. Most days I just feel humbled and grateful that God would allow me to be a part of this ministry. Bad things happen in this sinful world, we lose people we love, and life can take some unexpected turns, but God has promised us that He will take that which was meant for our destruction and turn it to our good.

Each day I am at Agape, I am surrounded by like-minded people who are all there for one and the same purpose, to do the work of God. We pray together, meditate in God’s word and we have wonderful moments of fellowship together. I have witnessed many Godly, supernatural events and transformations in the lives of the hurting people we serve. I thank God each day for the support we receive from the community and surrounding areas that allows us to continue to serve in this way. The community around us provides physical support, and God provides spiritual support. Before this, I had never volunteered in this way; it has been a life changing experience!

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Towels
Dressers
Baby wipes
Large appliances
Men's clothing in large sizes (3x, 4x)

Mattresses
Pots and pans
Large children's diapers,
Portable heaters

With a challenging economy we are seeing an increase in clients that are homeless. To help with their physical needs, we are making BLESSING BAGS with the following items:

Adult Backpacks	Batteries
Bottled Water	Can Opener (non-electric)
Chapstick / Lip Balm	Comb / Brush
Fingernail Clippers	Flashlight
Hand Warmers	Ladies Hygiene Products
Shaving Cream	Razors
Rain Poncho	Trial Size Shampoo
Trial Size Conditioner	Trial Size Deodorant
Trial Size Hand Lotion	Winter Hats, Gloves & Mittens

ADDITIONAL Needs for Homeless:

Grills – small
Lanterns
Portable Toilet
Sleeping Bags

If you can provide any of these items, please bring them to Agape (1159 Promised Land Rd., Moneta) on the first 4 Tuesdays or Thursdays of the month, 10 AM -2 PM, or the 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 9 AM - 12 PM. (We can also arrange for large appliances to be picked up.)

HERITAGE DAY AT AGAPE

Agape was blessed by 20 seventh graders with youthful energy from Christian Heritage Academy. They helped in the Toy Dept., Clothing Dept., and Pantry. On *Heritage Day*, the school sends out their young adults to perform community service at area non-profits.

When the boys were asked what they learned from their visit, they were impressed that all the workers were volunteers. Also, they were amazed with the "tons" of items that people have donated to make our clients' lives better!



Louis R. Lester Foundation Grant

LRF representatives (Suzanne Robertson, Barry Robertson, Elaine R. Zopp and Lolly Robertson) present a check to Agape representatives (Bob Winters, Rick Cocrane, Susan English, Sue Lipscomb and Susan Frase).

LRF seeks to effect positive change in communities through their philanthropic support. LRF awarded the Agape Center a generous grant based on our shared desire to improve lives from Bedford to Rocky Mount. Thanks to equipment provided by LRF's generosity, Agape volunteers will be better able to serve clients as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ!

Thanks Be To God

- by Alyssa P

My journey with Agape began in 2016 when I started volunteering in the Gift Department. It was a wonderful experience as I enjoyed working with the volunteers and helping the clients.

A few years later, I became pregnant. During that same time, my husband had an alcohol addiction. The situation became dire to the point that my husband spent most of our income on his addiction and we couldn't get government assistance due to income restrictions. I thought about seeking help from Agape. This was a very difficult decision for me because I felt guilty taking resources from others who needed it more than me. However, I had to put food on the table and became a client to meet this need.

About 3 months after my daughter was born, I separated from my husband and moved in with my parents. That change provided a stable home for my daughter and me. I wouldn't say my situation improved, but my housing was better, and I felt confident that we wouldn't go hungry. During the two years we were separated he never tried to get sober. However, God was telling me not to leave my husband, that He would work on my husband's heart. I would tell my husband that "you can't do this on your own; you need God to help you get through this!"

In the fall of 2020, my husband finally accepted that he needed help and things started to improve. My husband did seek God, and he has been sober for almost 2 years! My husband truly wants to give God all the glory for his recovery. God told me during my separation that He promised to bring my husband back. I never would have thought in a million years that my prayer would come true. Gratefully, we are a family again and back in a house on our own.

Our finances have also improved to a point that we wanted to give back. A few weeks ago, my husband and I made a small donation of appreciation to Agape. I also want to thank all those who supported me and my family at Agape, especially Debbie, Karen and Eileen, for being there every step of the way!

P.S. I have started painting watercolors to help express myself. If you would like to see some of my work, please check out this link: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/PeaksStudio>

WOULD YOU CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING?

We are looking for volunteers every Tuesday (10-4), Thursday (10-4) and every other Saturday (9-12:30). Departments in need of assistance include:

- *Supervisor*
- *USDA / Data Collection*
- *Furniture Pick up*
- *Mentors (especially Saturdays)*
- *Store Clerks (especially Saturdays)*
- *Telephone Support*
- *Maintenance*

The Woodchuckers could also use additional muscle to chop wood for those in need that use wood for their primary heat source. Join our team, have fun, and be the hands and feet of Christ!

A Sweet Blessing

The White House Market sent 168 boxes of Graham Crackers to the Agape Center last week! What a blessing it is to have strong support from our local businesses!