



Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

December, 2018

Merry Christmas to the AMAZING Team of Volunteers at the AGAPE CENTER

AGAPE MEMBER CHURCHES

- Bedrock Church—Franklin County
- Bedrock Community Church
- Covenant Fellowship
- CrossPointe/Franklin Heights Baptist Church
- 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

PRAYER FOR AGAPE

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

8:45 to 9:45 am
Tuesday—December 11
Tuesday—January 8
Thursday—January 24

In 2004 God revealed to two young ladies at Radford Baptist Church (Courtney Carr and Emily Mason) His plan for a ministry in the Smith Mountain Lake area. That plan began in a modest form in the basement of their church and became the Agape Center. Only eternity will reveal the enormity of what God has accomplished and the lives that have been changed through the Agape Center because of the obedience of Courtney and Emily.

Each time you walk into the Agape Center, you feel our Lord's presence. He is using each and every one of you to be His hands and feet and to reach out in a hundred different ways to show how much He loves every single client and volunteer. At one of our Volunteer Appreciation banquets we used the theme of 'Many Parts – One Mission' and that describes the Agape Center so well. You may be putting canned goods in the cart – cleaning the floors – making a gift basket – mentoring a client or any one of dozens of volunteer opportunities, but we are all there to show God's love to the Agape Center clients and help change their lives, physically and spiritually. Thank you for the role you play at the Agape Center and your willingness and your obedience to serve our Lord in making a difference to so many needy families in our area.

There are currently seventeen Member Churches who are a big part of the Agape Center, providing prayers, volunteers, financial support and many other ways, and we are ALL serving the same Lord. It is a joy to work in unity with all of our volunteers and Member Churches.



Jack & Sue Lipscomb keep God's vision at the forefront of the Agape Center.

See **MERRY CHRISTMAS**, 2

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

December – January Prayer for Agape — Join the Prayer Team in the Meeting Center to pray for the day at Agape.

December 14—Getting Ahead Graduation 6 pm—EastLake Community Church—Agape Volunteers WELCOME See p 5

Christmas Angels —NOW—December 17—Sue's office or Smith Mountain Building Supply See P 6

Festival of Trees—NOW — January 4, 2019—Bedford Welcome Center See p 5

Agape Volunteers "Have Made a Difference for My Family"

"It is humbling knowing everyone here is a volunteer. Everyone has been so kind and respectful, never making me feel self-conscious about asking for help. Christmas is the time I want to thank everyone at Agape. You have made a difference for my family," says Michele Darnell, a client for about a year and a half.

Michele was initially referred by Inner-Faith Fellowship Ministries. "I just called a local church because I didn't know where to turn, and they suggested I contact Agape. We had just taken in a friend and her child, who were escaping an abusive relationship. We could hardly take care of the five of us, but we couldn't leave her stranded. Agape provided food, which was a huge blessing. But there were so many other things that they provided, right when they were needed: a purse for me when mine literally fell apart at the seams. Work Shoes. Clothing and books for our kids. A lawn mower, so we could keep our yard mowed this summer. And then furniture and furnishings for my friend when she was able to begin living on her own.

"Everyone is so helpful and encouraging. They make us feel special and appreciated for being here."



Michele Darnell sends her appreciation to all the Agape volunteers!

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

FROM 1

Jack and I thank God for each of you and for the privilege of being a part of God's extraordinary team at the Agape Center. We continue to be amazed daily how God provides and brings in the most outstanding volunteers to fill specific needs. We look forward to 2019 – I know God has magnificent plans!

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:11-13 (ESV)

**God's Blessings on Each of You,
Jack & Sue Lipscomb
2018**

By the Numbers . . .

November 2018
Families 932
Individuals 3283

November 2017
Families 961
Individuals 3233

Welcome New Volunteers

- Kay Brown** — Gift Shop
- Ann Cole** — USDA
- Christine DeRaps**—Driver
- Emily Donnelly-Back** — Clothing, Clerk
- Ashley Dunman** — Toys
- Sara Etzles** — Gift Shop
- Bev Fogg** — Clothing, Gift Shop
- Kathleen Fox** — Data
- Carolyn Harney** — Clothing, Gift Shop
- Donald MacMillan** — Clothing
- Kandi Wilson** — Data, Clerk

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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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New Baby Room Open



Karen Fusaro shows off the unique elements of the new Baby Room, which has December birthday gifts, separate from the Gift Shop filled with Christmas gifts; Newborn gift baskets; resources for new moms; and special items for siblings.

The Baby Room has replaced the Tea Room in the Gift Shop, making way for all things newborn. Karen Fusaro, Gift Basket Manager, says, “We wanted a place for new mothers to select items for their newborns that was separate from the birthday gifts. There is a little library related to parenting, breast-feeding, etc and also space for items for siblings – coloring books and crayons. We wanted everyone in the family to feel special. We have gift baskets for the newborn filled with new items as much as possible, as we want to make sure every child has a special beginning.”

I’ve Never Had Such Joy in any Job until Agape!



Agape Mentor Tracy Dunn

Tracy Dunn worked her entire life, including owning her own business, but none of her prior roles gave her as much satisfaction as her volunteer job at Agape. She says, “For the first time in my life, I actually missed my work and couldn’t wait to get back from Thanksgiving holiday to Agape.”

Tracy began volunteering in April, 2018 and says she gets such joy every day she is here, which is every Thursday. “I have wanted to mentor women, and considered going to school to be trained. Then when I walked through the Mentor hall on my tour, I felt a tug on my heart that God was answering my prayer without going back to school. I had the most incredible training here at Agape with Jan

Hogle, and know that I am doing what God has called me to do—making a difference in people’s lives.”

Tracy lives in Goode, and goes to Elevation Church in Roanoke. “Volunteering at Agape allows me to serve people in my own community, and I’m so glad to be a part of this amazing ministry with so many like-minded servants of our Lord,” says Tracy Dunn.

Getting Ahead Update



The Agape Getting Ahead Class visited Healing Strides Barn in Boones Mill. There the participants experienced Equine Assisted Learning to help reinforce foundational Getting Ahead principles in a very unique and exciting way. Pictured at the horse's head is Tamika Felix and standing in front is Mary Jane Poor.

Couscous for a Cause

Early this summer the Agape Center received an unusual and very large donation of Israeli couscous. It came loose in a 500 pound bag. This versatile and nutritious food is packed with nutrition and few calories.

Rather than waste it or let the mice devour it, the creative Agape volunteers came up with the idea of filling two pound bags with the nutritional grain and offering it for a suggested donation of \$2.00. Aaron Cole and his attendant, Cassidy Prillaman, took on the job. They package the couscous in 2 pound cloth bags and place it on vintage store shelving in Reclaimed, LLC, located at 14190 Booker T Washington Highway in Moneta. Aaron's mom and owner of Reclaimed, Karen, placed the couscous display right by the checkout counter, where it is an eye catcher as people enter and leave the store. The display includes the cloth bags, an excellent chicken couscous recipe, the Agape brochure, and a jar for donations. All the donations go to the Agape Center. The ladies at Reclaimed periodically collect the money and drop it off at Agape while Aaron and Cassidy are responsible to keeping the bags filled and the display stocked. Drop by and pick up your bag(s) soon and cook couscous for a cause.



Aaron Cole and his attendant, Cassidy Prillaman, are responsible to keep the cloth bags filled with couscous and restock the display.

See **Couscous**, 9

How to Cook Israeli or Pearl Couscous

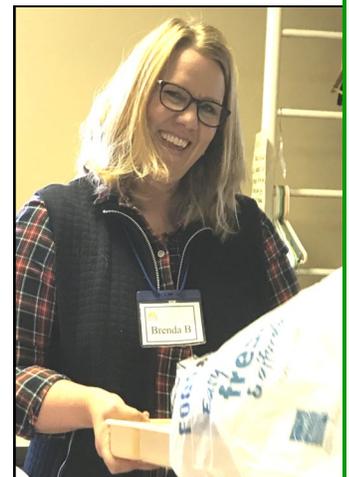
You can cook Israeli couscous any number of ways. It can be used much like pasta, rice, or any other whole grain. Add a handful to salads, add it to soup to add a more full-bodied texture, or top it with a saucy vegetable stir-fry or roasted vegetables. Try making a savory Israeli couscous pilaf instead of a rice pilaf, or use it to make a chilled grain salad, like a quinoa salad or a rice salad. To prepare Israeli or pearl couscous, you'll need about 1 1/4 cups of water or vegetable broth for every 1 cup of dry grain. Simmer the grains stovetop, covered, for about 10 minutes. The grains fluff up just slightly, and, like barley, they have more an "al dente" mouth feel when done cooking.

Kris McKenzie and Leslie Burzynski Co-Direct the Store

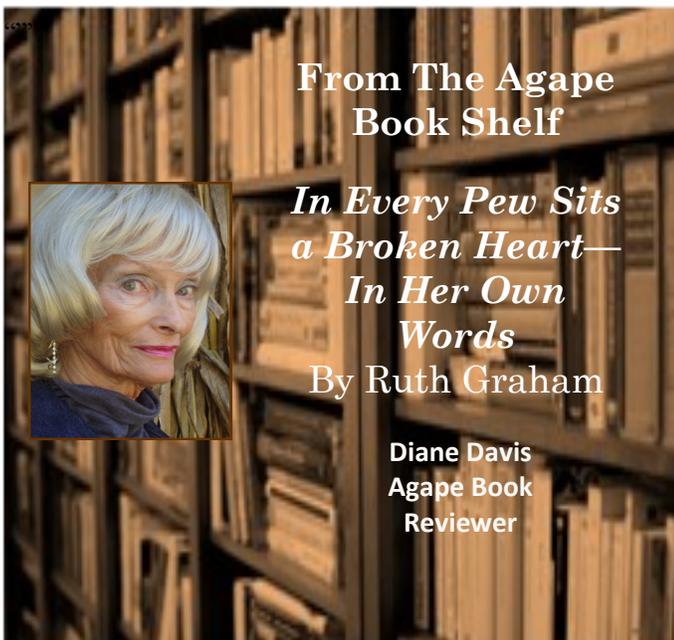


Leslie Burzynski and Kris McKenzie are teaming up as Co-Directors of the Store.

After about a year away from the Store, Kris McKenzie is back! She and Leslie Burzynski have agreed to provide leadership to the Store as Co-Directors. The Store has grown so significantly that the role has been redefined. As Store Director in the past, Kris was responsible for the Clothing Department/Shoe Department, as well as merchandising and staffing the store. Leslie now serves as Clothing Department Director, and Kris will focus on merchandising the Store, while Brenda Beisser will continue to do Store scheduling. Kris says, "Serving at Agape has always been one of my greatest joys, so I'm happy to help in the Store. I am most grateful to Leslie for coming alongside me."



Brenda Beisser continues as Store scheduler.



From The Agape Book Shelf

*In Every Pew Sits a Broken Heart—
In Her Own Words*
By Ruth Graham

Diane Davis
Agape Book Reviewer

“As the third child of Ruth and Billy Graham, you would expect my life to have been mapped out for me, and settled. This was not the case by a long shot!

“I suffered through a divorce due to an unfaithful husband, depression, shame, parental problems and attempts to make wise choices. In other words, just like everyone does.

“Having been raised in a Christian family with prayer, Bible studies and wonderful parents, I made the same mistakes and choices that everyone else has made.”

In her own words, Ruth Graham explains her isolation and breaking free from it, learning to forgive and to admit to her personal problems instead of hiding behind a smile. She has shown how God used her brokenness to create a blessing for her and her family.

As she says, “Failure is never final; God specializes in restoration — it is His best work. He creates order out of chaos. His desire is to bring us out of our devastation, healed and strengthened with a song in our hearts.”

The Bedford Area Welcome Center Presents The 10th Annual

Festival of Trees

Victorian Christmas

November 20, 2018 through January 4, 2019

The Bedford Area Welcome Center
816 Burks Hill Road
(Route 460 at Route 122 adjoining the National D-Day Memorial)

Trees Decorated by Community Organizations and Businesses. Vote for your favorites!

Open seven days a week from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM
Extended Hours until 9:00 PM - December 7, 14, 15, 16, 21
The Welcome Center will be closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

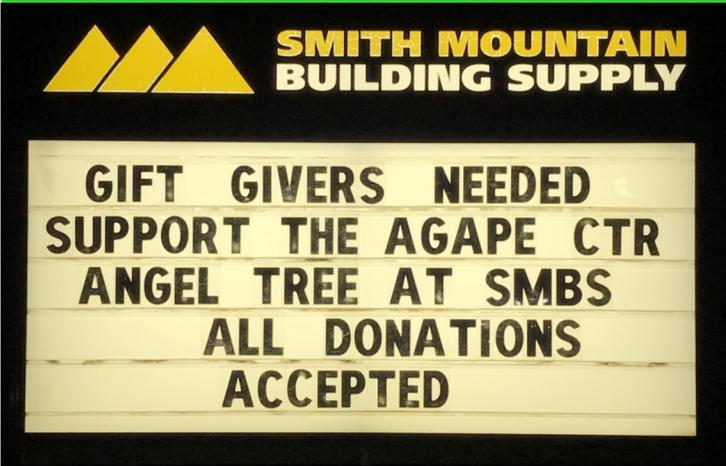
(540) 587-5681 | www.visitbedford.com

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE FESTIVAL OF TREES AND VOTE FOR AGAPE (#1) AS YOUR FAVORITE TO RAISE FUNDS!

YOU ARE INVITED
GETTING AHEAD GRADUATION
6 PM
December 14, 2018
EastLake Community Church

Agape Volunteers are welcome to come and support our clients who have graduated the Getting Ahead program!

SMITH MOUNTAIN BUILDING SUPPLY OFFERS ANGEL TREE TO COMMUNITY



with the blessing of the parent company. This is Richards' fortieth anniversary year, and we are thrilled to be a part of this community where SMBS has served for over thirty years."

Tina Ludwig, Inside Sales Coordinator for SMBS, says, "This is the first year we have done something like this and there is much excitement about it. I also volunteer at Agape, so when I was asked for suggestions, Agape was the top of my list because I know the great work that is done through the organization. We have had a good response, and feel it is important to have a place in the community where people can come who want to be a part of something significant like this. We are not only promoting the Christmas gifts, but also will accept non-perishable food, clothing, and other items, in addition to the Angel gifts. We will even provide shopping if people want to make a contribution but don't want to do the shopping themselves."

The Angel tree will be available through December 17 at the Smith Mountain Building Supply.

Now is the time to select an 'angel' from the Agape Angel trees located in local churches and at the Smith Mountain Building Supply. Toys are being collected for 1000 children in Bedford and Franklin Counties and distributed by the Agape Center during the month of December. The 'angels' provide the sex and age of a child and gifts can be returned to the Smith Mountain Building Supply, participating churches or directly to the Agape Center at 1159 Promised Land Road, Moneta, VA 24121.

This is the first year that Smith Mountain Building Supply (SMBS) has provided a tree for the community to participate. Tal Sexton, the Branch Manager, says, "It is a combination of personal conviction and the opportunity to serve the community that prompted us to offer this opportunity to the broader community. I have been to several third world countries and seen inexplicable poverty, and to realize how blessed we are in America. We want to support the community, to feed and clothe children in our neighborhoods."

Smith Mountain Building Supply was purchased by Richards Building Supply Co., an Illinois-based, family-owned wholesale distributor of building materials this past year. The company serves professional contractors, builders, remodelers and restoration companies across 12 states, with over seventy locations covering the East Coast to the Midwest. Sexton explained, "One of the core values of Richards is to give back to the community, and that gives local stores the opportunity to provide to local charities,



Mattie Maddox and Branch Manager Tal Sexton of Smith Mountain Building Supply display their Angel Tree, which will provide Christmas gifts for children in this area through the Agape Center.

Get your Angel now!

Now is the time to get your angel—in Sue's office, Member Churches, Smith Mountain Building Supply or Ships Ahoy at Bridgewater Plaza!

If you don't want to shop, you can make a donation and our shoppers will do the rest!

Community Volunteers Help Agape through the Christmas Season



Goodview Baptist Church

Goodview Baptist Church Youth Group and Friends stocked the Christmas Shop, and worked in the Toys and Clothing Departments.



From left: Volunteers from Goodview Baptist Church Joan Rood, Regina Pickard, Pastor Chris Walker, Lucia Willis, Pat Sutherland and Daniel Adkins worked in Clothing and stocked the Christmas Shop.

Staunton River High School

At right: Staunton River High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes volunteered at Agape, helping in Pantry, cutting firewood, and stocking the Baby Room and Christmas Shop.



Nineteen Staunton River High School students from the Key Club and National Honor Society spread throughout Agape to help in Pantry, outside yard work, Clothing, Toys, and re-stocking the Gift Shop.

From left: Evelina Guenther, 9th grade; Rachel Lloyd, 12th grade; Rachel Goode, 12th Grade; Kaitlynn Bratton, 11th Grade, and Hannah Adkins, 12th Grade, worked in the Toy Department, sorting, wrapping, and tagging toys by age for easy distribution in the Gift shop.

Agape-Lynchburg Volunteers help Agape-Moneta



Trinity Ecumenical Gleaners provided one ton (that's 2000 pounds!) of potatoes to Agape. Volunteers from Agape-Lynchburg sorted and bagged potatoes for clients of Agape-Moneta!



COOK Couscous for a Cause

Israeli Couscous with Chicken and Peas

FROM 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/3 cups (about 7 ounces) pearl (Israeli) couscous
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Zest of 2 large lemons
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice (from 1 large lemon)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 rotisserie chicken breast, chopped to yield 1 cup of meat or a can of chicken breast meat.

Directions

In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the couscous and cook until lightly toasted, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the broth, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer uncovered until the couscous is tender but still firm to the bite, about 8 minutes.

Stir in the cheese, green onions, peas and chicken. Spoon into bowls and serve. Makes four servings.

Recipe courtesy of Giada De Laurentiis

Couscous information provided by Rich Cole.

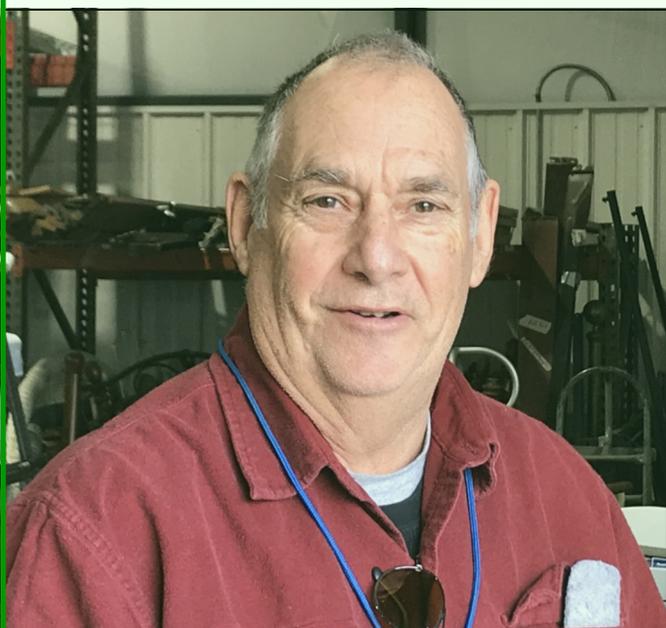
Nutritional Benefits of Couscous

One cup of couscous provides only 176 calories, far fewer calories than a cup of rice or quinoa. It also adds

6g of protein for muscle building after exercise, and sustaining energy.

Israeli couscous is low in carbs, totaling 38g per 1 cup serving. It provides 43 mcg of selenium, a trace mineral the body needs in small quantities, acting as an antioxidant and protecting healthy cells from the mutating effects of toxins that change the DNA and structural composition, leading to disease and premature aging. The potassium (91mg) in couscous provides important functions, such as regulating blood pressure and the heartbeat, helps control fluid balance, an important factor in blood pressure regulation. It also assists with muscle contractions, and because the heart is a muscle, it requires potassium to prevent arrhythmias, or irregularities of the heartbeat.

WHY I SERVE ...



Bob Lohmeyer recently had a couple who came to the Furniture Department to pick up an item. The wife mentioned the husband was about to have hip surgery, and Bob, who had had hip surgery a couple of years ago, was alert and began asking them if they had certain items that would be helpful as he recovered. They had none of the items he suggested; so he directed them to the Storage Shed, on the other side of the property, and met them there, where he outfitted them with everything he would need. The woman was so touched, she began to sing a song: “Jesus Loves Me, this I know” . . . at which point Bob joined in, and through tears they finished the so . . . “for the Bible tells me so.” Bob says, “It is moments like this that give me the motivation to come to Agape every time I’m scheduled.”

Bob Lohmeyer has served at Agape for over seven years.