



AGAPE Executive Director Eileen Chapman welcomes participants to the opening of a Poverty Seminar at Wesley United Methodist Church, a program designed to help clients become self-sufficient.

AGAPE programs fight poverty on two fronts

According to AGAPE Executive Director Eileen Chapman two of the biggest obstacles to eliminating poverty are that those who have not experienced it don't understand it, and there is no single cause. She says, "AGAPE is fighting poverty in this area by participating in national programs to educate about poverty and to provide programs and tools to enable those in poverty to become self-sufficient."

Gary Weaver, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church in Bloomsburg, was one of 40 area ministers, social service workers and interested community members who attended a Poverty Seminar and experienced getting an inside look at poverty. Read about his experience "One Long Hour on the Edge of Poverty" on page 4.

The Poverty Seminar has led to eleven low-income "investigators" participating in "Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin' by World" which demonstrates how to stabilize their situation, building resources and human capital to become self-sufficient. "We're on fire for it!" says Eileen. This is not a teaching course but a program in which participants talk about their experiences and learn to recognize and build on resources they may



John Korol discusses his role during the Poverty Seminar held at Wesley United Methodist Church.

not have realized they had. They meet one evening a week, beginning with a meal, for 16 weeks with childcare provided. Current sponsors are the Bloomsburg Area Community Fund, Wesley U. M. Church, Lightstreet U.M. Church and individuals. Jake Woodward is coordinator and lead facilitator of the program. Judy Ryan and Lesa Jarrett are co-facilitators and Ginny Herring is childcare chair.

A class is in the works for Berwick. Sponsors are needed for future classes. Please call AGAPE at 570-317-2210 for more information.

Weekly Calendar

- **AA Meetings:**
Wednesdays: 6:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
Fridays: 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- **AL ANON Meetings:**
Wednesdays: 6:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
- **NA and NAR ANON Meetings:**
Wednesdays: 6:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
- **Daily Bread Meal for Community:**
Thursdays 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- **Adult Clothing Giveaway:**
Thursday, October 23
Thursday, November 20
Thursday, December 18
12 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Food Pantry, Columbia County**
3rd Friday of each month
9 a.m. to 12 noon

Upcoming Calendar of Events 2014

- Saturday, November 8, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Fundraiser at Evansville United Methodist Church, all proceeds benefit AGAPE.
- Sunday, November 9, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Columbia Mall Night of Giving, all proceeds benefit AGAPE.
- November 14-15: Bon Ton Community Days, Columbia Mall - coupon books available at AGAPE.
- Sunday, December 7 and 14, 11:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Mission Mall, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mifflinville
- Sunday, November 30, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., Wesley United Methodist Church - AGAPE Celebrates Advent

Visit us @ agapelovefromabove.org for more calendar listings and updates.

NOTE: If you would like to receive *Recollections* as an email attachment, please contact us at agapenews@ptd.net.



Tabitha Swafford (standing) confers with Case Manager Karen Heaps. Swafford began volunteering at AGAPE in 2011, and those first experiences opened her eyes to the needs of our diverse community and her personal goals that include a Masters degree.

924 volunteer hours later..

In August of 2011, Tabitha Swafford was looking for an agency where she could do community service volunteer hours through the Treatment Core Program of Columbia/Montour Counties. A friend suggested she contact AGAPE. She did and began volunteering right before the Hurricane Lee Flood. She fulfilled 924 hours of community service over eighteen months.

Working under the supervision of Amber Lee and Matt Korol, new volunteers themselves, Tabitha helped in the Storehouse, worked on food drives, helped build flood kits, assisted with furniture distribution, participated in the Christmas toy distribution and anything else that came her way.

Tabitha says the biggest thing that struck her was how diverse the population is that AGAPE serves, with so many different needs. She sees the Storehouse as a crucial part of helping people. Volunteering at AGAPE "really opened my eyes to the needs of people," she says.

This "eye-opener" led her to begin studies at Bloomsburg University in the fall of 2012. In the spring of 2014 she completed an internship at AGAPE working under the supervision of Karen Heaps, our Client Services Manager. Tabitha says this

internship helped her see how demanding and stressful this type of career is, but at the same time how rewarding it can be, and how that keeps one going. This fall she was accepted into the Social Work Major at BU and inducted into the Phi Alpha Academic Honor Society with a 3.7 GPA. Her goal is to earn her undergraduate degree, get a job and begin work on her Master's degree.

Tabitha has not always been so focused. As a result of a ten-year addiction problem, she lost out on educational, job and family opportunities. She found the staff and volunteers at AGAPE accepting and supportive as she completed the Columbia/Montour 18-month Treatment Core Program. She now speaks on behalf of the program at middle and high schools on the dangers of addiction. She tries to impress upon students who think addiction problems can't happen to them the dangers of hanging with the wrong people and of making wrong choices.

Now a regular attendee at self-help meetings, Tabitha is thankful for her supportive family who helped her and encouraged her. She can't understate how important that is in recovery. She is a prime example of the people whose lives have been turned around at AGAPE.

AGAPE celebrates the Advent of Jesus Christ with music



Hosted by
Wesley United Methodist Church
Third and Market Streets
Bloomsburg, PA
Sunday November 30, 2014
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

It's ADVENT when Christians begin celebrating the coming of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Celebration and Worship are the means of proclaiming ADVENT.

AGAPE will celebrate our LORD's birth with thanksgiving for all the blessings He has given us as we serve as His hands and feet in our community. Come join our celebration! Come worship with us in music as we sing the carols of Christmas, listen to the God-given talented voices, instrumentalists, and comedy of our community. Come fellowship in the unity and love Christmas brings to all.

A love offering will be taken to help the AGAPE Heating Assistance Fund.



The Palooza Patriotic Theme winner was GAUDENZIA. They received a \$100 Gift card from AMAZON.

Respond to the tugging of Jesus

Letter from the Executive Director

Brothers and Sisters,

I cannot believe it's time to write to you again. Time passes so quickly. The busier you are, the faster time goes by, especially here at AGAPE. Although the news suggests times are getting better, we don't see it yet. Bills are increasing, jobs are still hard to get and keep, and rents are out of reach for the low income. Homelessness due to evictions and utility shut-offs are a reality. Many of your neighbors are struggling, and unlike the more fortunate public's stereotyping, their struggle comes not from being victims of self, but victims of circumstance. A cold winter does not help.

Winter is rapidly approaching. Heating assistance and shelter have always been major issues, but last year's long run of low temperatures became life threatening for those without shelter while increased heating bills further stressed those already financially strapped. The last two years we were able

to help with heating assistance from a designated fund of \$20,000.00 per year. This year our designated fund currently stands at \$5,016.49. Public assistance has decreased significantly; and now AGAPE's financial status is also diminished.

We want to repeat last year's Project Frozen: Sharing the Warmth to aid the homeless by extending our business hours to include 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. during nights when

the temperatures are 25 degrees or below. AGAPE serves as a "warming center" providing assistance including hot drinks, hospitality and a place to get warm. Those who come stay as long as they want.

The warming center is manned by volunteers, two people for each shift. Last year we had to close about two weeks too early because of volunteer burnout. This year we are scheduling volunteers in advance to man three shifts:

- (1) 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.;
- (2) 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

and (3) 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. We hope to implement Project Frozen: Sharing the Warmth in mid-January to go through mid-March, depending on temperatures. We will look at the 10-day forecast beginning the first of January and make a decision when to start and use the 10-day forecast to determine the length of time we will be open. Any week that has at least one day with a forecast of 25 degrees or below, the warming center will be open.

Anticipating being open 60 days, this makes 360 four-hour shifts to fill. Any volunteer wanting to do multiple shifts would be most welcome. To orient you to your volunteer responsibilities--not many--we will have a short training session (about 30 minutes) an early evening in January.

Please help meet the needs of our community. AGAPE will be stressed to meet the needs of our community unless our AGAPE friends, God's people, feel Jesus tugging them to be Matthew 25 people. Call us at 570-317-2210.

In His Service,
Eileen Chapman

“Winter is rapidly approaching. Heating assistance and shelter have always been major issues, but last year's long run of low temperatures became life threatening for those without shelter while increased heating bills further stressed those already financially strapped.”

Program Outreach

(July - September 2014)

Client Requests:

Ex-offenders	13
Homeless	30
Disaster Survivor	1
AGAPE Give-Away Events	197
Benevolence Clients	321
Total Clients Served	562
DailyBread Meals Served	1,429

Program Distributions:

	#Assisted	Expenditure
CleanLife	0	\$220.00
DailyBread	62	\$12,967.25
HeActs	169	\$252.00
HelpMates	13	-
KidsCare	15	\$1,076.75
NetWorks	56	\$8,659.82
RoadHome	5	\$597.60
SmartStart	4	\$15.00
StoreMore	460	\$37,463.25
TransPorts	24	\$1,308.20
FixerUpper	2	\$50.00
Total		\$62,609.87



Connecting God's Resources with Human Need

This past summer we had a productive and fun time putting kits together with BE GO DO. Some of the kits still have missing items: Layette Kit sweaters and receiving blankets, school bags, notebooks, individually packed toothbrushes, nail files and nail clippers. If you are interested in knitting a sweater or sewing a school bag, we can provide patterns for you.

Mission Central has put out an urgent UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) plea for EBOLA protection and prevention supplies as follows: Heavy duty hospital grade latex gloves, rubber boots, bleach, KleenGuard breathable liquid and particle protection coveralls, and hospital grade face masks.

Wesley United Methodist Women are having a morning of sewing layette gowns on Nov. 5. They are bringing their material and sewing machines for a time of fellowship and giving. All gowns will be included in kits going to UMCOR to assist new mothers.

If your group would like to have a time of fellowship and giving with UMCOR in mind, please contact Kelly Kocher-Ross at 570-441-0765 for details.

Financial Report

(July - September 2014)

Financial Income:

Churches	\$9,287.50
Community Organizations	\$599.09
Corporate Donations	\$1,505.29
Individual Donations	\$7,689.05
Grants	\$5,285.78
Other	\$4,420.25
Total Financial	\$28,786.96

In-Kind Donations:

Corporate/Business	\$49,587.00
Individual	\$23,782.17
Total In-Kind	\$73,369.17

Total Income \$102,156.13

Expenses:

Total Distributions	\$62,609.57
Operational Expenses	\$23,118.87
Total Expenses	\$85,728.74

AGAPE Staff:

Executive Director: Eileen Chapman
Treasurer: Brian Hornberger
Case Manager: Karen Heaps
Director of Human Resources and Programs: Amber Lee
Director of Operations and Facilities: Matt Korol
Volunteer Coordinator: Barbara White
Office Coordinator: Donna Houser
IT Coordinator: Michael DeMarco
Extended Services Coordinator: Deb Franssen
DailyBread Meal Coordinator: Mary Ridgway
Addictions Coordinator: Betty Brown
PR Coordinator: Kathy Lowe
Grant Coordinator and Cloth Diaper Program Coordinator: Megan Fernsler
Daniel's Prayer Team Coordinator: Ginger Hock
Webmaster: Sam Vetovich
Newsletter Production: Louise Naus, Ann Diserod, and Sam Bidleman

Board of Directors:

President: Pastor Susan Knorr
Vice-President: Vicky Burnside
Secretary: Sandie Yule
Lesa Angell
Frank Gehrig
Ginger Hock
Kathy Lowe
Pastor Greg Molter
Louise Naus
Chris Renninger
Michael Spangnuolo
Maxine Vandermark
Eileen Chapman: Ex-officio member



Donate On-Line using PayPal on our Website at: www.agapelovefromabove.org

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Joseph's Storehouse Coordinator
- Caseworker
- Extended Service Volunteers for: Nehemiah Card Project Fundraising Special Events
- Prayer Warriors
- FixerUpper Team
- Data Entry Volunteers

AGAPE INFORMATION

Monday – Tuesday – Friday
Open: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Thursday
Open: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Phone: 570-317-2210
FAX: 570-317-2213

Email: info@agapelovefromabove.org
Web: www.agapelovefromabove.org

One Long Hour on the Edge of Poverty

As I sat most of the hour by myself, I was faced with impossible decisions to make. My wife was at work, my three children were at school, and I had no transportation to run errands, care for the necessities of life, or simply to get out of the house. My inaction as the father, husband, and former provider for the family had me welling up with stress about doing the right thing, or more importantly, doing no harm to my family. I was anxious and embarrassed, and all this in one hour. For me the one-hour poverty simulation which is designed to create a month-long sense of poverty, was both daunting and authentically educational. As I reflect back on this event and the

moments of education, I feel physically, emotionally, and spiritually pulled. I am pulled between how our acts of charity as a community care for those around us, and the desperate need for the “privileged” of the community to put aside charity and invest ourselves in the justice issues that are at the root of poverty. I fully understand that charity cannot be fully put aside and yet how do we invest ourselves in the injustice of poverty in our neighborhood? I hope that this pulling between charity and justice stays with me so that I may spiritually struggle with what needs to be done for and with the neighborhood and community.

By Rev. Gary Wamser

Feeding the Thousands

AGAPE's Feeding the Thousands Sponsorship Campaign is starting its second annual registration. With the help of local businesses and organizations, AGAPE's DailyBread meal showed a 21% increase in attendance (close to a 900 meal increase) from January 1 through September 30, 2014 when compared to our attendance in the first half of 2013.

The following businesses sponsored meals during the last quarter:

July: Bloomsburg Carpet Industries, Inc., United Water
August: Marr Development, United Water
September: Bloomsburg Carpet Industries, Inc.