

AGAPE *recollections*

Love From Above To Our Community



Daniel Pray Team members Shirley Moskovich and Ginger Hock look over client lists between offering spiritual guidance and prayer based on Daniel 9:18.

Because of your great mercy

“O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy.” Daniel 9:18

AGAPE’s staff and counselors are always ready to help with our clients’ physical needs. But as men, women, and families arrive, one of the twelve current Daniel Prayer Group members is likely to walk over and ask if they also need help “filling a spiritual need.” Each offer to talk includes the reassurance that AGAPE cares about their spiritual lives as much as food, clothing, and shelter.

Daniel volunteer Ginger Hock says that this offer usually begins with reading scripture so clients can make peace with God. “God is the power; he gives us the power,” she said. And many clients accept the offer.

Each volunteer has a life-changing story from a Daniel experience. Hock remembers a mother with young children who just needed some hope. “We never pressure anyone to pray with us. We always ask if we can pray with them, and most times they say yes.”

Hock was able to work with a caseworker who provided food, paper supplies, and

a lead on an apartment, but what she remembers most is what happened as the family was leaving. “She stopped and gave me a hug,” said Hock, a testament to God’s saving grace and mercy.

Shirley Moskovich is another Daniel volunteer who has witnessed the power of this ministry. “Most always, clients just want someone to hear what they have to say. They need people to listen, a chance to share their story. When we talk to them, they learn things about themselves. Our clients have to deal with significant issues that include jobs, money, family, and we strive to give them hope, the faith that life will improve,” she said.

“Personally, I work with them to start thinking about what the Lord wants me to do with the rest of my life,” she added.

Hock encourages clients to think of their own choices and “where they want to be.” I remind myself that we have all made mistakes,” she said.

Moskovich agrees that clients have to start somewhere, and the Daniel volunteers never judge their pasts. “I always remember my parents telling me to ‘put yourself in their shoes,’” she said. She often suggests to clients that belonging to a church family is a good start for personal stability.

Weekly Calendar

- **AA Meetings:**
Wednesdays and Fridays
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- **AL ANON Meetings:**
Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
- **NA and NAR ANON Meetings:**
Thursdays at 7 p.m.
- **Daily Bread Meal for Community:**
Thursdays 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- **Celebrate Recovery Gathering:**
Saturday evenings at 7:00 p.m.
Journeymate Ministries, Main Street, Lightstreet
- **Adult Clothing Giveaway:**
4th Thursday of each month
1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Food Pantry,** Columbia County
3rd Friday of each month
9 a.m. to 12 noon

Upcoming Calendar of Events 2013

- Wednesday, Nov. 6. Columbia-Montour Chamber of Commerce Community Expo, Bloomsburg Fairgrounds
- Saturday/Sunday, Nov. 15 & 16 Bon-Ton Community Days, Columbia Mall. Coupon books available at AGAPE
- Saturday, Nov. 16. Mission Mall, First English Baptist Church. 10 a.m. until 3 p.m.

AGAPE Celebrates Advent

Come join our celebration as we sing the Carols of Christmas on Sunday, Dec. 1., from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church, 3rd and Market Streets, Bloomsburg. Share in fellowship with the unity and love Christmas brings to all and raise the rafters with the Alleluia Chorus. A love offering will be taken to help support AGAPE’s Heating Assistance Fund.

Go to www.agapelovefromabove.org for more calendar listings and updates.

Simplify your Gift Card Shopping

Over 100 participating retailers give back to AGAPE

Buy your Christmas gift cards through AGAPE and as much as 16 percent of the face value will go to help your neighbors in need, at no extra cost to you. Does your teenager shop at Old Navy? For every \$25 gift card you buy, AGAPE receives \$4. Does your spouse love to



read? Buy a \$25 Barnes and Noble gift card and AGAPE gets \$2.25. Taking your in-laws out to dinner? Go to Applebee's, pay with a \$100 gift card purchased through AGAPE and you automatically donate \$10. See how easy it is!

The participating businesses range from everyday shopping stops like Giant, Walmart and CVS to specialty stores like Bass Pro and Bath & Body Works. The amount donated to AGAPE ranges from 2 percent to a whopping

16 percent. Some offers are available year round; some are special for this holiday season. See the order form elsewhere in this newsletter for a complete list of merchants, card denominations available and the percentage donated to AGAPE.

Use the order form to purchase your gift cards, and include a check for the total amount. Orders placed by November 15 will be available for pick-up November 25. Order by November 29 and get your gift cards December 9. Order as late as December 6 and you can still get your cards December 16 in time for Christmas. Please be sure to include a telephone number including area code on your order form.

You don't have to forgo gifts to your loved ones in order to help us as with many other charities. Remember, while some of these offers are special for the holidays, you can purchase some cards year-round and help AGAPE every time you shop.

AGAPE Volunteer Recognition

Deb Franssen is our new Extended Services Coordinator. Deb came to AGAPE in January of 2013, and began volunteering a couple of days a week at the front desk. Deb is from Conestoga, where she was an active volunteer. As the mother of four boys, one of her volunteer activities was that of Boy Scout leader. She also helped another mother coordinate the building of Daniel's Den, a playground fully accessible to children with disabilities. This project was designed to allow children with disabilities to play together with other children. Deb had a busy summer as two of her sons were married. She and her husband have two grandchildren and another on the way. Deb enjoys flower gardening and reading. We are



thankful to have Deb in the role of Extended Services Coordinator. She has eagerly jumped into her new role, and we appreciate her enthusiasm, her efficiency, and her caring attitude toward others.

Carlie Lewis (right), a 10th grader at Columbia County Christian School, volunteered at AGAPE this past summer, working in the kitchen helping to prepare and serve food and with the cleanup afterwards. She also helped in Joseph's Storehouse with food distribution. One day, she had the privilege of meeting a United Nations Ambassador from Nigeria who happened to be touring the AGAPE facility. Carlie has memories to treasure from the time she spent with us last summer, and her volunteer experience will be helpful when she begins filling out college applications.



From our Clients

We do what we do because it is the right thing to do. Still, hearing from clients that they appreciate our services reassures us and inspires us to do even more. Here is another one we recently received.

Dear AGAPE, This card is being sent to you as my way of showing my gratitude for your kindness. It was a pleasure meeting everyone and having the opportunity to partake in your wonderful projects such as your DailyBread meal. AGAPE is definitely an amazing organization, and I hope that things continue to go well. Thank you for everything once again. God bless you all.

Feeding the Thousands needs support

According to Feeding America (2013), 13.2% of residents within Columbia County suffer from food insecurity. A struggling economy and spiraling unemployment have left over 8,000 people without access to nutritionally adequate foods. Each week AGAPE is helping to fill in the gaps, by delivering nutritious meals to over 90 members of our community. Recently, AGAPE had its largest meal to date with over 130 individuals in attendance.

For us to continue to meet this basic need, we have reached out to local businesses to participate in our Feeding the Thousands campaign. Community-minded organizations will have the opportunity to stomp out hunger by sponsoring weekly meals. Our goal is to add an evening meal to serve our low income working families and promote healthier eating.

AGAPE needs your support through donations, volunteering your time and spreading the word by helping us fulfill our mission of ending hunger throughout Columbia County. For more information on Feeding the Thousands, contact AGAPE at (570) 317-2210 or email us at info@agapelovefromabove.org.

Heartfelt thank you

AGAPE received over \$1,000 through collection jars that 15 merchants put at their Bloomsburg Fair stands.

On Aug. 17, AGAPE held its first kayaking fundraiser with thirty people participating in the float from Espy to the Bloomsburg Town Park. A good time was had by all, and the event raised over \$700. Many thanks to Chris Ehmer of Susquehanna Outdoor Adventures for his generous contribution of kayaks, transportation, and time.

Reflecting on our blessings

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Unbelievably, we are in our last quarter of 2013. Young or old, we find the passing of time is fast. We have come to the jolting awareness that a "bitter" winter may be upon us, and we at AGAPE are concerned about the winter. Generally summers at AGAPE are slower than the rest of the year because our clients' bills are more manageable, giving them less financial stress. We use that slow time to save money for the winter months.

This summer has been very different, and we were not able to save as much. Comparing our third quarter status of 2012 with 2013's third quarter, we found a wonderful 256% increase of in-kind donations; however, financial donations have decreased 11.55%. We are concerned, particularly for our ability to help with heating bills.

Because of amazing 2011 donations, last year AGAPE was able to set aside \$20,000 for heating assistance. Between November 2012 and March 2013 we helped 73 clients, expending \$18,860.86 for heating assistance. Depending on individual circumstances, each client approved last winter received \$100-\$500 with the average being \$250. That assistance did not cover minimum delivery. LIHEAP assisted with some funding, but that will be lower this year.

When LIHEAP was combined with what little the client had and what AGAPE provided, the cost of minimum delivery was generally met. Although the cost of heating oil this year is lower than last, our experience suggests a significant need will still exist. Our estimate for a minimum delivery of 125 gallons of heating oil is \$448. That doesn't provide a month of heat at 58 degrees F. You now understand why we at AGAPE are concerned.

We have designated recent fundraisers for heating assistance and currently have \$3,000 in such funds. We have received annual grants from The Berwick Health and Wellness Foundation, the Bloomsburg Area Community Fund, Central Susquehanna Community Foundation, The Community of Christ and The Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church. All have been generous financial supporters,

even advising us about additional grant opportunities. We compile, track and report the statistics for all the programs administered by AGAPE needed to secure grants, and now have an efficient database, and a newly formed, talented and active grant team is diligently searching for those grant opportunities.

"We continue to pray that God will help us bring our community together to support our neighbors. We appreciate so much all of your support, prayers, service, and contributions."

We continue to pray that God will help us bring our community together to support our neighbors. We appreciate so much all of your support, prayers, service, and contributions. God has truly blessed AGAPE. We continue to trust Him and have

turned everything over to Him for we

know "all things are possible through Christ who strengthens {us}. Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in {our} distress." Phil 4: 11-14. May God bless you and our community, particularly those in need.

In His Service,

Eileen Chapman

FINANCIAL REPORT - (July-September, 2013)

Income:	
Churches	\$ 7,768.48
Community Organization	\$ 1,597.63
Corporate Donations	\$ 354.46
Individual Donations	\$ 4,582.00
Grants	\$ 3,000.00
Income from Stock	\$ 689.65
Other	\$ 4,837.44
Total	\$22,829.66

Financial Assistance Given: \$ 9,839.21

SERVICES - (July-September, 2013)

StoreMore	
In-Kind Donations	\$76,930.00
In-Kind Distribution	\$54,324.25
NetWorks (regular clients)	279
RoadHome (homeless)	24
HelpMates (ex-offenders)	19
Disaster Survivors Helped	1
Total Clients Served	323

DailyBread Meals Served 1,094

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Staff Volunteer Hours	2,793.75
Community Service Hours	407.25
Other Volunteer Hours	667.00
Total Volunteer Hours	3,868.00



"Be not among drunkards, or among gluttonous eaters of meat, for the drunkards and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags" Proverbs 23: 20-21

Wow, these words are packed with wisdom! Today's society can benefit from what is written in Proverbs! God tells us how to save money by being green in these verses, speaking of moderation, and moderation helps us to be green. By following His ways, we can all save money and be better earthly stewards.

Let's talk of bulk foods! By purchasing foods in bulk, but consuming them in moderation, we make fewer trips to the grocery store, save money and reduce our greenhouse foot print.

Purchasing locally grown fruits and veggies can also help moderate our greenhouse footprint. By purchasing locally we obey God in three ways: 1. We save money vs. making the same purchase from the grocery store (more money for us to tithe). 2. We help our friends and neighbors (local economy) by purchasing from them. 3. Fewer food miles, the distance food travels from field to table, are produced.

Since not all locally grown foods are available year round, consider home canning local foods to take your green stewardship further. Home canning also reduces exposure to chemicals added to commercially processed foods. Having a garden is a great way to keep it green with God!

"...and slumber will clothe them with rags"

God is telling us to move our bodies. Saving money and going green can help us be healthier. Having our own home garden gives us a chance to heed God's word and a healthier lifestyle. A healthier lifestyle-- exercising, purchasing locally grown foods, keeping things in moderation--means fewer doctor's bills!

By Megan Fernsler

On Thursday 10/17 at 10:17 a.m. AGAPE participated in the Shake Out Drill for the Northeastern United States. Shake Out is an emergency preparedness drill in case of an earthquake. Employees experienced a Drop, Cover, Hold On Drill. For more information about this plan, go to www.ShakeOut.org.



Love From Above To Our Community

19 East 7th Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

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Case Manager: Karen Heaps
Volunteer Coordinator: Barbara White
Joseph's Storehouse Coordinators:
Amber Lee and Matt Korol
Office Coordinator: Donna Houser
IT Coordinator: Michael DeMarco
Extended Services Coordinator:
Deb Franssen
Daily Bread Meal Coordinator:
Mary Ridgway
Addictions Coordinator: Betty Brown
PR Coordinator: Kathy Lowe
Disaster Relief Coordinator:
Victoria Wilcox
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Eileen Chapman: Ex-officio member

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Marketing Coordinator
- Caseworker
- Prayer Warriors
- Standby Electricians, Plumbers and
Carpenters for small home projects

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



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



Financial Donation & Contribution Form

Name: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____ Apt #: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____
Check Enclosed Donation Amount: \$ _____ Dedication (If any): _____

Financial Donations May Be Mailed To: AGAPE, P.O. Box 424, Bloomsburg, PA 17815

The official registration and financial information of AGAPE Love From Above to Our Community may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania (1-800-732-0999). Registration does not imply endorsement. AGAPE is a 501(C) 3 organization.