



TRANSFORMING FROM INSIDE OUT

Love In the Name of Christ

Fall 2019
VOLUME 27 ISSUE III

Love INC links people in need to volunteers from a network of area churches. Our mission is to transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ.

When God Intervenes

Even in a Christian organization where we pray every day for God to use us, we can be surprised when He suddenly shows up in one of our cases. Last month we had a request from northern Virginia for a motel stay. I told the woman that Love INC does not “do” motel stays, even here in Charlottesville. But I asked questions and talked about options and finally prayed with the woman in need. I then sent an email to her home church on her behalf.

An hour later she called back to tell me that God had

answered our prayers. Her church had responded wonderfully and was going to provide assistance for a whole week, which was what she had needed—exactly. I reminded her to stay close to the Lord and to trust Him to care for her and for her family.

I then bowed my head in amazement that God would intervene in our lives in such direct and practical ways. We know, of course, that He is constantly working behind the scenes, but it was a delight to see this immediate answer to prayer.

The Big Eight

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“Is there anyone who can help me clean my rug?”

“I still need some help fixing the sink in my bathroom.”

“My mother needs her yard mowed.”

“My daughter is disabled and needs her lawn mowed, but I can’t do that for her anymore.”

“I need my kitchen repainted.”

“I need paint for my client who wants to feel better about herself and her environment.”

“Is there anyone who can rake my yard and cut my grass?”

“She needs paint for her apartment”

Here at Love INC, our business is mobilizing the local church to provide help for the needy. We do this in many ways, usually finding one or two people for individual chores, but sometimes we hit the jackpot in volunteers. In this case, all eight of these small project requests—or maybe we should think of them as prayers—have been answered!

One of our wonderful partner churches is having a “Community Day” in September, and they’re pitching in to help our neighbors in need. Volunteers from that church have already contacted our people in need to coordinate the work. They all know that while there, each volunteer will have the opportunity to begin a relationship with a needy neighbor. Connections will be made. Burdens lifted. Witnessing can take root. Faith is strengthened. And through Christ, lives can be transformed for all those involved!

# I Thought No One Cared

Love INC provides churches and church volunteers with numerous opportunities for Christian service that they might not otherwise have. No need to travel to the mission field—service to those in need can begin in their own backyard!

All that said, finding volunteers to help with the simple needs of our neighbors can be a difficult task. It is even harder to get a group to help clients move. And those who do volunteer may not find what they had bargained for.

We have sometimes had willing movers show up to load furniture into trucks only to find that the client had done *nothing* by way of packing—belongings scattered all over, no boxes or packing materials in sight. Having dealt with those experiences, Love INC rarely agrees to take on a client move, and it is with trepidation that we put a move on the Needs List. Nevertheless, two clients requested moves recently. Both were disabled persons with no other assistance available. So we gave it a shot and put out a general call for volunteers.

To our great relief, one of our partner churches answered the call and worked its magic for *both* clients, with volunteers Sarah and her husband John heading things up. The first client had to be moved from a remote part of the county into a handicapped-accessible apartment in town. Moving into Charlottesville would enable her regular access to JAUNT as well as many additional services. Both her doctor and her social worker had called Love INC to request assistance.

The other woman we have known for years. We'll call her "Ms. Ethyl." Well, she was finally eligible for a newly built apartment complex designed specifically for disa-

bled elderly folks. She had telephoned Love INC in tears saying that none of her family members were willing to "lift a finger" for her. Her kindly home-health aide actually packed up most everything in the apartment, but Ms. Ethyl wasn't strong enough to move any furniture.



In both cases, Sarah and John gathered a team of movers and packers (the first woman required a good amount of packing and the second needed disposal of broken furniture) and tackled each project with what can only be described as the love and compassion of Christ. It took the teams more than a day for each move, so the work was spread out over a week or more.

After the move Love INC staff heard from Ms. Ethyl. She said that she had been so distraught by her family's refusal to help that she "felt like going out in the middle of Route 29 and letting a car run over me." But Sarah and her husband were so caring and had treated her with such kindness that she felt like someone loved her after all! She described her new apartment in glowing terms (the appliances all matched, much to her amazement!). She went on for another 15 minutes telling us about how nice Sarah and all the helpers had been.

Our Ms. Ethyl added that every single person, including herself, was "too *stout*" to get behind the washing machine to plug it in at her new place. We had to laugh as we envisioned the tight space in these new apartments, space that no one was ever meant to climb behind.

We thank Sarah and John and all the team from their church for not only the very difficult moves, but for the love and tenderness with which they accomplished all they did. Ms. Ethyl was blessed by their love, and we can see Jesus in it.

## Looking Forward to the Holidays...

This is a story from my own life: Years ago my family was having some financial issues as the holidays approached. The ladies from my workplace were sitting around in an idle moment discussing what they would cook for the holidays. One planned a turkey with grandmother's special dressing. Another preferred a ham with collards and lasagna. As each

chimed in, I said nothing. Finally, one of the ladies turned to me and asked, "Susan, what are you going to fix?"

"I don't know," I replied. Later she asked me if things were OK with me. "Truth is," I replied, "there really isn't enough money for me to shop for a holiday meal. I had to pay an overdue bill."

# Looking forward to the Holidays...

Time passed. Then just before the holidays, my supervisor came to me with a \$75 gift card for Food Lion.

“We all got this together for you,” he said. “We all pitched in a little bit.”

That memory has stuck with me all these years and the gratitude I felt still overflows. This is what motivates me to procure holiday meals for the area folks in need. Each time we are able to help someone with a holiday meal, I remember what it was like to be unable to afford that shopping trip and I am grateful.



You and your family can also experience the joy of sponsoring a family for the holidays. We have many testimonies from donor families who told us how glad they were that they decided to provide holiday meals for another family. Some donor families have even taken a cooked meal to the elderly or disabled who are unable to cook for themselves.

Every year, two lovely women bring us \$50 gift cards for those in need. Providing holiday meals is rewarding! You may choose to visit with your family, bring gifts, bring a Bible, a Christian CD—the limit is only your imagination! Our donors tell us frequently that they themselves were blessed, richly blessed, by serving others in this way. To help, please email [office@loveincville.org](mailto:office@loveincville.org) or call us at (434)977-7777.

## Unless the church does the ministry...

For years, folks have been bringing donations to our office because we GIVE AWAY large amounts of clothing and other items free of charge. To be sure, there are a number of local establishments where our clients may obtain clothing and our donors may bring clothing, but often these may be open inconveniently, require a voucher for clients to get a set amount of clothing, or charge a small amount per item. We began giving away clothing ourselves when we discovered that many of our clients could not even afford the small dollar amount required elsewhere.

The problem with our giving away clothing is that Love in the Name of Christ is really not supposed to “be” the giving ministry itself! The whole point of Love in the Name of Christ is to support our local churches so that they can run their own ministry rather than Love INC being the center of the work, much as we love to shower free clothing on anyone in need!

How delighted we were to discover that a centrally located Charlottesville church, Hinton Avenue United Methodist Church, has a large clothing closet in their basement! Clothing is given away twice a week to anyone in need - no money and no voucher necessary. Each Tuesday and Thursday morning, steady streams of people we know and care about come to the basement closet. They leave with large bags of clothing and big smiles. No cost clothing and all each person needs! They



certainly have more room than our tiny front space, so twice a week a Love INC volunteer loads up all the pre-sorted clothing that has come in to our office and heads off to Hinton Avenue where they are given away just as we would do – free of charge! Thank you to Diane and Patricia, our dear Love INC friends, and all the good folks at the church! What a wonderful ministry you have!

The Personal Care Closet at Connect Church has a similar no cost ministry of cleaning supplies and toiletries given monthly to Love INC clients who have signed up with Love INC prior to going to Connect Church. Since SNAP benefits do not cover these items, folks on a low income can stretch their meager funds a little further and experience the love of Christ from the folks at the church in the process! To support this marvelous ministry, laundry and cleaning supplies and toiletries can be brought to Love INC or directly to Connect Church.

Olivet Presbyterian Church gives diapers and wipes free of charge each month to single moms in need (sign up necessary) and they, too, could benefit from donations directly to the church or brought to Love INC. Olivet’s mentoring ministry is vital for these moms. Belmont Baptist Church runs a thriving laundry ministry (sign up necessary) and would very much appreciate Liquid HD laundry detergent by the gallon! Bring to the church or to the Love INC office!

Now, what about your church? What ministry of your very own could you run locally?

# From The Desk of the ED: Mission, Mission, Mission!

**L**ove INC's mission is "to mobilize local churches to transform lives and communities In the Name of Christ." To mobilize is to marshal for action. In other words, identify people in need for the church to assist. Churches sometimes think our mission is to find volunteers or to meet needs, which leads them to misunderstand their relationship to the ministry. Our mission is not to seek volunteer's from the church or to do the work but simply to give the church opportunities for Christian service...what they are called to do. Isn't the role of the church to respond with the love of Christ to the neighbors that Love In the Name of Christ connects them with?

Love INC should be a tool in the church's toolbox to help them fulfill their mission, which, should be the same as ours; "to transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ?"

Without the churches Love INC does not exist. Love INC is churches working together to reach out to people in need. Our neighbors in need. The Church is the hands and feet of Christ, not Love INC. We are supposed to stay in the background with the church being front and center in the community.

Romans 12:3-8 lists the gifts we are given. The question is, are we willing to use the gifts and talents God has given us to help our neighbors in need? Simply meeting a material need doesn't transform anyone

which is why Love INC does not focus on the requested need as most other organizations do. Love INC focuses on the *person!* How do you transform a life without having a relationship with that person?

Love INC is a bridge that connects neighbors in need with the people, resources (relational, emotional, spiritual and material) and the love of God in local Christian churches.

Love INC is a strategy to help congregations help their neighbors in need.

Love INC is a cooperative effort between churches and community agencies to provide effective help for people in the community...

**To transform lives and communities, In the Name of Christ!**



Blessings,  
INSERT SIGNATURE  
Raymond Klein  
Executive Director



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And the small army of wonderful  
volunteers that get our mailings out  
on time!