



Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

April 2020

AGAPE MEMBER CHURCHES

Bedrock Church
Franklin County

Bedrock Community Church,
Bedford

Covenant Fellowship

Franklin Heights Church —
Rocky Mount, CrossPointe
and Union Hall

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

AN AGAPE CENTER CORONAVIRUS HERO: Lisa Floyd is currently holding a Silent Auction of her paintings to benefit the Agape Center. (page 2)

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

A Note from Sue:

It has been a month since we have been on "Limited Services" at Agape and we pray that the light at the end of the tunnel is the end of it. It will be a day of rejoicing when we can all be back together and once again offer "Full Service" at the Agape Center.

A huge shout-out to all of our volunteers who have continued faithfully in the pantry, super's, receptionist's, data, telephone, truck drivers and a few folks that have stopped by from time to time to see if they can help. I thank God for each of you and our clients are so appreciative!



We have added a few things while you were away: We now have an additional volunteer bathroom located back in the toy area. The current bathroom in back of the book area is now the men's room and the new bathroom is designated as the ladies bathroom. A huge thank you to Jack L, Rich M, Chris F for doing an amazing job installing the new facility.

Also, Agape now has an intercom system which plays music throughout the day, announces the prayer circle and any other immediate announcements. Also, we will be using the system when there is an emergency and we will be sending you more info concerning that as soon as all of the super's are trained and ready to go. Thank you, Bill Parker, for heading up the department who made this system happen.

Please send me a text or an email if you know of anyone at Agape who has gone beyond the call of duty during COVID-19 crisis.

Thanks and God bless each of you! Sue

KEY DATES

Agape Open Golf Tournament: August 29, 2020

Register at <https://www.agapecentersml.org/golf>

Silent Auction to Benefit Agape Center You Can Own a Lisa Floyd Sea Turtle Painting

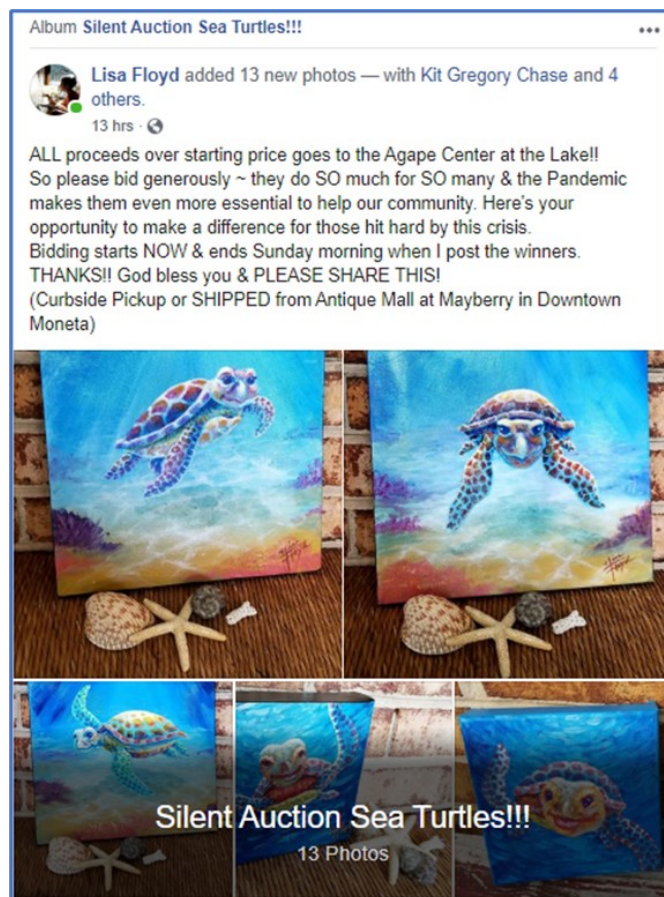
Lisa Floyd, well-known Smith Mountain Lake artist, has a great imagination AND a big heart, especially for her community. A few weeks ago, Tactfully Teamed, a local charity that provides therapeutic riding to persons of all ages with disabilities (physical, developmental, emotional, and learning disabled) reached out to Lisa and asked if she'd be willing to help them raise some money for feed during this coronavirus crisis. Horses need to be fed! Lisa painted seven pictures and has offered them to the public via a silent auction that ends April 30.

So what does this have to do with Agape? Well, Lisa took her generosity a step further. After learning that the Agape Center has remained open and is providing food to our clients during this crisis, she recognized that our client number is going to grow once we're back in full operation and, likewise, the needs of our clients. And she wondered how she could help.

Lisa shared that early that morning, she had read Psalm 112:2-5:

*Their children will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.
Wealth and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.
Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,
for those who are gracious and compassionate
and righteous.
Good will come to those who are generous and
lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice.*

Later that day Lisa received a call from a person who attends EastLake, just checking to see if she needed anything, and, in the course of the conversation, they got talking about the Agape Center and what we are doing. A short time later, a lightbulb went off in Lisa's head. Lisa has recently done some [awesome] paintings of sea turtles and now she knew what she was going to do with those pictures — put them out on Facebook in a silent auction to benefit the Agape Center. God at work!



Lisa Floyd's Facebook posting, Thursday evening, April 24

To get to the auction, click on the following link: [Silent Auction Sea Turtles](#). That will take you to the auction's Facebook posting. (You may be prompted to "Allow your computer/device to access Facebook"). Click on the individual painting, to see its name, size and description. Scroll to the bottom of the Comments to see the current bid. You can then enter your bid in the blank Comment box. All proceeds above the Starting Bid for each painting will go the Agape Center.

If you do not use Facebook, you can always ask a friend to enter a bid for you or you can contact me (knikicsml1@gmail.com or text 330 858-7175) and I will enter the bid under my name and keep you posted on how the bidding goes.

Initially, the auction was going to be live until Sunday, April 26. Lisa is extending the auction period a few more days depending on the interest shown. She will announce the closing date in the auction posting when it draws near.

Our Dedicated Volunteers Continue to Keep the Agape Center Open

As it has wrecked havoc on everyone's "normal" routine throughout our community, the COVID-19 has reduced the Agape Center's operation to prayer and food. We want our clients to know we are praying for them and we don't want them to go hungry.

The Agape Center has been able to stay open our normal days of operation. The number of volunteers needed is being kept to a minimum — a couple of administrative people to welcome the clients and keep our records straight, a few truck drivers to pick up food, and a small pantry crew to package and load the clients' allotment into their vehicles. We have not seen a significant increase in the number of families served but expect that to change in the weeks and months ahead.

The biggest challenges we face are keeping our volunteers and clients safe and being able to provide a good amount of food. We are closely following the coronavirus precautionary guidelines and are keeping minimal interaction between volunteers, clients and each other. The amount of food received from local sources has been reduced and we are dependent on Feeding Southwest Virginia for much of it. We expect the need for food to be greater in the weeks ahead as more and more of our local people are impacted by the effects of this pandemic.

How can you help? Pray for those in need and pray for our volunteers that they are willing and able to continue to serve. Monetary donations are always appreciated. Even more so now as we expect more people to need food, financial assistance and prayer as we trudge through this difficult time. If you are able to help or want to know more, call our office at (540) 296-0609.

The COVID-19 Process



Client signs in



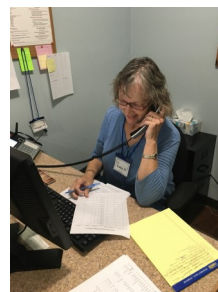
Client is greeted; data is updated



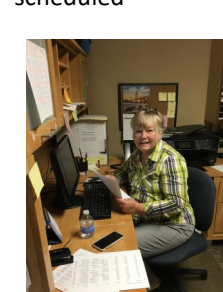
USDA record updated; next appointment is scheduled



Client record is filed



Telephone person handles cancellations & reschedules



Ensures everything is running smoothly



Food order is processed



Food is loaded & client is sent on his/her way

Welcome New Volunteers!

No new volunteers in March – NEED MORE MENTORS

By the Numbers...

March 2020

Families 756
Individuals 2,589

March 2019

Families 755
Individuals 2,553

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What to do with a 1,000+ cans of food?!

A couple new to the area purchased a home here at the lake and had the unique dilemma of what to do with more than a thousand cans of food. The home has what is called a "met wood" room under the garage — sort of a heavy duty storm shelter — and in it the previous owner had collected cans and cans of food.

Alan and Carolee Fischer had taken a tour of the Agape Center some time ago and thought we might be able to use the food. They contacted

their friend Ron Cordell, who told them the Agape Center could accept cans within the allotted time expiration. The Fischers sorted the cans and brought two full carloads of food to us. They were still left with hundreds of cans. Ron suggested they contact a local pig farmer and Judy Harper gave them the farmer's name. The fellow was more than happy to take the cans off their hands. He filled his pickup truck and off he went to feed his pigs.

Come to find out, this particular farmer slaughters his pigs and donates a lot of the meat to the Agape Center. So, the Lord not only blessed us with cans of food but also loads of pork as well! And it couldn't have happened at a better time as the Coronavirus has impacted our food supply. This blessing of unexpected food will feed many in the weeks to come.



Paula Lynn Hodges' Story, Part 2: The Saving of Steve



In last month's newsletter I shared Paula Lynn Hodges' excitement that she was going to soon be baptized. She had been saved just a few days earlier and attributed it to her husband's insisting she attend church that Sunday. The following is a continuation of her story and goes

back to about four months earlier when her husband came to know the Lord.

Your Reporter [Kn]: So, let's go back to the beginning. You're husband Steve was very sick a few months ago...

Paula: Last fall Steve was really sick. We had had a mold problem in our home and every time he'd go in the house he'd get sick. We were forced to stay in a tent outside the house, me, my husband and my youngest son. Steve's back hurt, his feet were swollen and he was breaking out in bumps of infection. Then he got a bad infection in his face and he just didn't know what was going on.

The doctors couldn't help him and it just seemed like everywhere we turned there was turmoil and no help. It was like the devil was really working hard — he really wanted something bad to happen. It finally got to the point where he was really really sick. I was like, "Steve, you've got to go to the hospital," and he was saying he didn't want to go. He told me he was going to start praying.

I mean he really thought he was dying. His body was just so worn down. And I had no doubt in my mind he thought he was. I've been with him for 23 years, married for 22, and he's never lied to me. I've never doubted anything he's told me healthwise or faithwise.

Steve asked me to come over and lay with him. And he started to pray. He told the Lord that he thought it was his time to go. He said, "My body's dying. You know I know that if it's your will, I'm ready to accept punishment for the sins that I have done. I'm aware of that." He went on to say. "I just ask for your love. Okay. "Please let me stay on this earth just a little longer. I'm not worried about myself or the punishment for my sins, but I'm worried about my wife's and my son's faith. I don't think it's as great as it should be. It needs work and I still need to

make sure they're safe and coming to you, Lord." And he says, "I know you'll answer my prayer and give me guidance."

After he said his prayer, we went to sleep. The next day we went up to the house and Steve was able to stay in the house longer. Within the next few days, we were able to gradually start going back into the house. We did end up taking him to the ER. They looked at his face and told him it was a skin infection and gave him some antibiotics. He didn't take but two doses of it and just prayed on it. The infection came out of his face and the swelling went down in his feet and his skin started to heal. He wasn't getting sick anymore and we were able to leave the tent and move back into our home. That was good because it was beginning to get cold.



Steve wasn't really concerned for himself. Most people pray for themselves but he was more concerned with Jesus's love for me, my faith and my son's faith. He knew that our faith wasn't strong at that time. He believes the Lord blessed him and my son since then with the gift of discernment — a gift that allows them to not only see evil but also to know if what is being preached is true — that it's from the Bible and that it's being preached the way the Lord wants it. Steve really feels the gift of the Holy Spirit and he's trying to put it to good use.

Which brings us back around to Paula's God Story and how Steve's faith and trust in the Lord has brought Paula to the Lord. It was four months later. Paula had just gotten out of the hospital and was still in a lot of pain due to a kidney stone. God told Steve to bring Paula to church that Sunday and Steve wasn't going to take "no" for an answer. Steve knew that Paula needed to go to the Lord. The Holy Spirit moved in Paula's heart that day. She accepted Christ and was full of joy as she told me she was going to be baptized in just a few days. Now Paula shares her story with the lady sitting across from her in the USDA office and anyone else she meets.

Bits & Pieces

The Saturday Pantry Crew

Laura Flight, Ron Johnson, Gerald Tuck, Linda Radgowsky and the crew from Bedford Bedrock Church (Jackie, Mykyla, Brianna, Avery and Sarah)

Romans 7:9 "For He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." (NIV)



WHY I SERVE ...



"My son, who is the pastor at Radford Baptist Church, said it's a good way to serve and he's so right! Plus it gets me out of the house."

Pat Hofheinz
Data, Phone, Reception
Moneta VA
Volunteer since 2014

Romans 12:7 "If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well." (NLT)



Hosea 10:12 "Plant the good seeds of righteousness and you will harvest a crop of love. (paraphrase)

What It Really Means to Be Saved



COVID-19 isn't going to stop Jan from leading her Wednesday morning Agape Bible Study! Here she is studying with the ladies via her phone.

From the Book Shelf

Only Jesus: What It Really Means to Be Saved

John MacArthur

Diane Davis, our Book Reviewer, has graciously yielded this space to Jan Hogle this month. The following is from an email that Jan sent out to the Agape mentors a few weeks ago.

Gang, I hope and pray that you are all safe and not going stir-crazy. This enforced downtime has been a challenge for me. I have been trying to not just endure but take advantage of this time to read some books that have been sitting in a pile on my desk for a long time. There is one by John MacArthur entitled Only Jesus that has made a huge impression on me as an Agape mentor.

I often ask my clients if they remember a time when they intentionally surrendered their life to Christ as their Lord and Savior and often hear: "Yes, I did that when I was a child...or young adult...etc." I usually leave it at that, thinking that I need say no more about what it truly means to be saved by Christ. I think now, after reading Only Jesus, that I need to ask more questions and dig a little deeper, always keeping in mind to focus on really listening rather than immediately "preaching."

So here's some excerpts from the book that I hope will be helpful for you. Of course, you most likely are totally aware of these things, but maybe a reminder would be good as we seek His wisdom and guidance in achieving our mission to help our clients "turn or return to a Christ-centered life."

- Not everyone who claims to be a Christian really is. Jesus said He came "to seek and to save that which was lost," but He never encouraged a quick, easy or shallow response.
- Many Christians (and perhaps some of our clients) have the idea that salvation is only the granting of eternal life, not necessarily the liberation of a sinner from the bondage of his iniquity.
- We tell people that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their lives which is TRUE. But any "salvation" that does not result in an altering of a lifestyle of sin and a transformation of the heart of the sinner is not the salvation God's Word speaks of.
- The distinctive element of the Christian message is the power of Jesus to forgive and conquer our sin. "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt 9:13) Why did Jesus come into the world? To call sinners — those who know they have a terminal disease, those who are hopeless and desperate, those who are hurting, those who

are hungry and thirsty, those who are weak and weary, those who are broken, those whose lives are shattered, those who are desperate.

Note from Jan: Jesus drew me to Himself, not because I thought of myself as a sinner, but because I hungered for "something more." Over time I came to realize that not only did I need the purpose and meaning for my life that only He could give, but I also needed a Savior as I was indeed a sinner. I desperately needed (and need) Him to work in me a transformation as my outward actions may have been OK by the world's standards, but my inner motivations were (and often are) far from what they should be.

"Salvation is wonderful but don't put any demands on my life." But the Word of God tells us of the ultimate demand: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself." It is NOT that we must first obey this demand in order to be saved. Salvation is a gift of grace and not by works. But when we surrender to Him, we are enabled and indeed called upon to trust and obey, to turn from our old way of life to follow His way.

A Christian is not one who simply buys "fire insurance," who "accepts Christ" just to escape hell. A true believer's faith expresses itself in submission and obedience. Christians follow Christ. They are committed unquestionably to Christ as Lord and Savior. They desire to please God. When they fail, they seek forgiveness and move forward.

So what does this all mean to us as mentors? For me, it means that when I ask the question "Do you remember a time when you intentionally surrendered your life to Christ as your Lord and Savior?" and they answer, "Yes," I need to follow up with perhaps one or more of these questions:

- When you accepted Jesus, what did that mean to you? Who is Jesus to you?
- What do you think it means to have Him be your Savior? Saving you from what?
- What do you think it means to have Him be your Lord? What does it look like in your life to have Him "calling the shots"?
- How do you think He guides and directs you? Could you give an example?
- What's the hardest thing about living your life with Jesus as Lord?

Please feel free to share your thoughts and your suggestions with us all.

It is an honor and a GREAT joy to serve with you all.

Blessings,

Jan