

**Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love**

**January 2017**

**BY THE NUMBERS  
SERVED**

**December 2016**  
**992 Families**  
**3324 Individuals**

**December 2015**  
**925 Families**  
**3071 Individuals**

**WELCOME NEW  
VOLUNTEERS**

Cassidy Chambers—Christmas Store  
Michelle Chambers—Pantry, Store  
Janet Fieder—Christmas Store, Toy Factory  
Lee Nelson—Furniture Pick-up  
Sharon Matney—Christmas Store  
Ryan Miller—Pantry  
Lee Nelson—Furniture Pick-up  
Autumn Nichols—Toy Factory, runner  
Timothy Serlis—Pantry  
Trevor Smith—Runner, Christmas Shop

**SPECIAL DONATIONS**

\$958.55 from Kroger Cards  
Please update your Kroger  
cards—this must be done every  
year!

# Volunteer Appreciation Banquet

Keep your calendars open on March 17th at 5:30 pm for an evening of laughs and entertainment. The Volunteer Appreciation Banquet will be at Palestine Baptist Church, and the committee is promising a fun night, full of surprises! Karen Jones is chairing the event and everyone with their spouse/significant other is encouraged to attend.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**February**—Construction Workers needed for interior finishing—Annex, and Remodeling of Center (Contact Sue or Jack Lipscomb)

**February 6-March 29**—New **Getting Ahead** Class  
Food hosts needed—Contact [karenbaker015@gmail.com](mailto:karenbaker015@gmail.com)

**March 17** —Volunteer Appreciation Banquet

**May 20**—Agape Annual Golf Tournament at  
Mariners Landing

**October 7-9**—Charity Home Tour

## Kroger and Amazon Provide Dollars to Agape

Your purchases at Kroger and Amazon provide needed income for Agape. When you register your Kroger Card and your Amazon Smile Account, a portion of your spending will be donated to Agape at no expense to you! You must renew your designated charity with Kroger every year. If you need information on how to register with either Amazon or Kroger, please call Sue Lipscomb. This is a painless way to help Agape with needed funds for client services.

## New Names in the Book of Life



**Mentor Bill Horvath with client Cole Follin , who has become a follower of Christ and is checking out churches in his area.**



**Client Charles Stump made the decision to follow Christ with his mentor Bill Horvath.**

## Responding to God's Voice

# Shadow Volunteers

Sam Going is one of Agape's early volunteers, since 2006. He began in the pantry, where he still works once a month.

About five years ago, he acquired the additional responsibility of purchasing toiletries (hand soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper and toothpaste) several times a week from the local Dollar General Stores. He says, "Agape is an incredible ministry offered totally through the efforts of volunteers doing so many different tasks, under excellent leadership of Sue and Jack Lipscomb. It is always a joy to be around other volunteers who never see their jobs as a chore, but as an opportunity to serve."



**Sam Going has worked in the pantry for over ten years, and is from EastLake Community Church.**

## Getting Ahead Grads Hold Reunion: Support for the Journey

### Community Representatives Offer Support to Help GA Grads Achieve Goals



From left: Ron Cordell, developer of the resource guide for Agape mentors; Alvin Jones, Manager, Lori Cumbo, Operations Coordinator, and Debbie Steen, Career Counselor, all from the Workforce Development Center in Lynchburg; and Denny Huff, Executive Director of the Bedford Community Health Foundation, which has funded several initiatives at Agape, including the Getting Ahead program.

Experts provided “Support for the Journey” as the Getting Ahead graduates gathered to hear from community professionals who provide resources to help support and achieve their goals. The Graduates shared how they were progressing on their goals, including a paid-off car, exercising more, eating better, losing weight, enrolling in classes and taking more control of their lives and the aspects they can impact. Several of the grads were unable to make the meeting because they had started new jobs! Each grad has been assigned a mentor who has had specific training in the GA program, the goal-setting, and how to encourage and hold their clients accountable. “Providing ongoing support for each graduate is a significant aspect of the program, and we are thrilled with the mentors who have taken on this additional responsibility and training to walk along-side our grads and help them to continue to pursue their goals and support them in their new or renewed relationship with Jesus,” said Jan Hogle, Co-Facilitator of the GA program.

## Agape Clients Make Presentations to Community Groups



**Judy Caldwell shared her testimony with about 40 members of the Roanoke Valley Gideons in December.**

Judy Caldwell's story in the October issue of the *Agape Newsletter* came to the attention of Peggy Overstreet, program chair for the Roanoke Valley Gideons, an organization that provides Bibles throughout the world. Judy had shared with readers how after an attempted suicide, she was in the hospital and found a Bible in her bed-side stand, placed there by the Gideons. Though Judy had grown up knowing Jesus, she had allowed her life to be consumed by other things, putting Him on the back burner. Through various circumstances, she was ready to come back to God's family and the Bible she found showed her the way. In her story, she had said, "I'll tell my story to anyone, anywhere", and now she has been able to make good on that commitment as she thanked the Gideons personally for their often unseen work of keeping Bibles in the hands of people all over the world. Congratulations Judy!

Kim Wright grew up in Bedford County, and started drinking and using drugs at age 14. Married for 26 years, her husband passed away in 2005, leaving her feeling alone and hopeless. "Over the years, I became depressed about my own medical issues and felt I had nothing to live for. I was admitted to the mental health unit at UVA in April 2015."

It was while she was in the hospital that Kim had a spiritual awakening. Though she had been raised in a church-going home, she had never believed she was worthy of the God she heard about. One night, "I awoke and my room was glowing. An angel was telling me that everything was going to be ok. It was the first time I felt such calm. I was overcome with a sense that I was indeed safe and secure and that God was present, even though I was wasted. I realized God still had a purpose for my life, and now I was ready to follow Him."

She continued, "After 44 years of dependence, God took away my desire for alcohol and drugs. I have been clean for one year and eight months, and I haven't had the desire one time. I truly feel that He has been with me every step of this journey."

Kim was able to get disability for fibromyalgia, but couldn't afford to continue living in Charlottesville; she decided to return to Bedford and the mountain views! "I feel like this is where God wants me to be, and for the first time in my life I feel happy. It is a wonderful feeling. And after taking the Getting Ahead program, I am beginning to see how God might be able to use me! I want to talk to as many people as I can, share my story, and if I talk to enough people, perhaps I can influence one to turn, or return, to God."

Kim has been coming to Agape almost a year, and just graduated from the Getting Ahead program. She says, "It is the best thing that I've done. I now have several friends who are like family to me. It is so great to have friends who understand what I'm going through. I was able to attend every single class, except for one, which I made up. Getting up and keeping a commitment was a big step for me, as I never know when I wake up how my body will feel that day. But God kept me involved."

She continued, "I am very uncomfortable asking for help. I was one who made donations to food banks, and I never dreamed that I might need help someday myself. From the time I walked into Agape, I have felt lots of love, and acceptance. The volunteers make it very easy and comfortable to be here. I am so grateful and blessed that I want to others by giving back. I hope to become a volunteer at Agape myself. I love my life, and I could never say that before! Every day I praise God for where I am in my life right now."



**Kim spoke to over 75 people in her Twelve-Step home group in Charlottesville in December.**



**Bedrock Community Church** provided volunteers to help Agape during our busy Christmas season, in the Pantry, clothing, and Christmas Gift Shop. Back row from left: Chassity (13) and Krissy Alphin, Brad (16) and Josh Grohs. Middle row from left: Cara (7) Alphin, Anna (11) and Caleb (14) Grohs. Front row Zach Grohs (10) and Jack Davis (12).



**Diane Davis**  
**Agape Book Reviewer**

Two sisters, Gillian and Allie, chose two different lifestyles. Gillian, an executive in New York; Allie, a wife, mother and caregiver for their mother. When Mom has a slight

## *On Hummingbird Wings*

By Lauraine Snelling

stroke, Gillian heads home to California and walks into a hornets' nest of troubles. Mom has decided she is dying and has given up trying to live.

Gillian and Mom's neighbor, Adam, meet and fall in love as her executive job in New York suffers a buy-out and she moves home.

The two sisters and Mom face their problems head-on and with a lot of prayers and love they become what they all have wanted and needed all along—a family.



Staff from **American National Bank** at Westlake volunteered for an evening, preparing Christmas gift baskets. Amanda Gilbert, bank manager, said, "The American National Bank & Trust Co. employees wanted to share in the Christmas spirit with the Agape Center to prepare gifts for their clients. We recognize Agape's value to the community and wanted to be a part of it. It was truly touching to see what the Agape Center does and the atmosphere of dignity in which they operate."

## Halesford Baptist Church Becomes 15th Agape Church Sponsor



**Halesford Baptist Church's Pastor Melvin Harris (left), with Agape Member Church Representative Ken Swain.**

Ken Swain has been an Agape volunteer for five years. He began as a volunteer to pick up goods at God's Pit Crew in Danville once a month, then became a mentor; but he's always willing to help wherever needed, and this past Christmas season, he worked in the Christmas Shoppe as a greeter welcoming clients as they entered. He said, "That was the biggest blessing, as I got to talk with every client we served on the days I worked." His wife Carol serves as a mentor for Agape.

Long-time member of Halesford Baptist Church, Ken felt the Agape ministry is very important to serving the needs of the community and wanted his church to be a part of this effort. Pastor Melvin Harris, agreed that becoming a member church was an important step for Halesford Baptist. He noted, "We have supported Agape behind the scenes in a number of ways over the years, with volunteers, youth group service projects, and financially. We understand how deeply Agape has reached into the Franklin County community and felt it is important for us to be involved in that outreach."

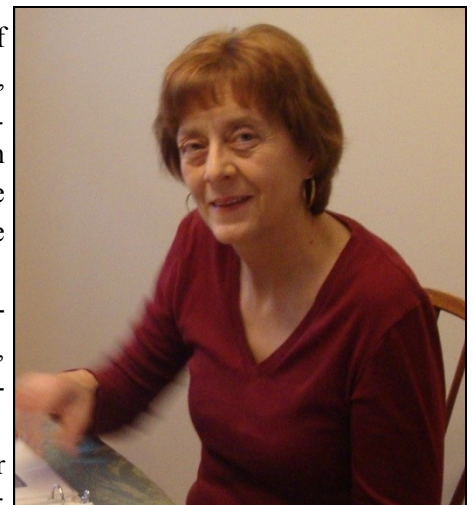
Swain says, "I have seen the Lord work in peoples' lives in so many ways, accepting Christ, getting back to the Lord, getting back involved in church, seeing their lives turn around. It is a joy that our church is getting involved more directly." Harris agreed, noting, "This broadens our outreach and gives us a greater attachment to the needs of the community we also serve. We are glad to be a partner in this ministry."

## Agape Creates Liaison for Member Churches

Carol Moyer has been appointed Member Church Liaison by the Board of the Agape Center. In making the announcement, Sue Lipscomb, Executive Director, said, "Carol has been a long-time volunteer, working in nearly every department. She is a compelling and unwavering advocate for Agape, and will be a great liaison to strengthen communication between us and our member churches. Having one contact to coordinate communication with our fifteen members will greatly enhance our efforts."

The position was suggested at a forum held in June, 2016 as part of the strategic planning process for Agape. There are several new initiatives in the works, beginning with quarterly meetings for face time for churches and enhancing the referral process.

Moyer says, "I am passionate about connecting people and building up our clients in their spiritual journey. I am very excited to have a part in the transition for our clients. I remember how hard it is to be a new Christian and how to go about connecting with a church. I also have experienced moving to this area and trying to get involved in local ministries. One of the things I love about Agape is the broad range of volunteers we have, coming from so many different backgrounds; yet all are united in their desire to serve our clients as representatives of Christ. I hope to carry this enthusiasm to our member churches in this new role."

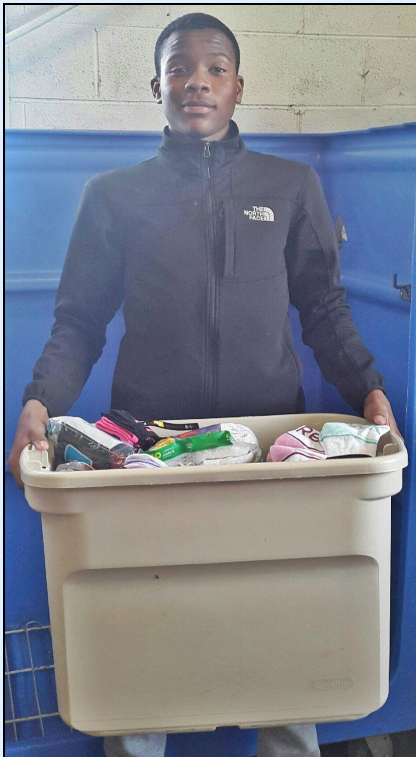


**Carol Moyer, Agape's Member Church Liaison**

## A HUGE THANK YOU!

To all of the scores of individuals and groups who helped prepare, stock, and deliver over 3100 Christmas Baskets for Agape clients and their households.

### Fifteen year old Leads Socks for Souls Campaign



Christian Toney toured Agape with his class from Smith Mountain lake Christian Academy two years ago. He came away with a burden to provide Socks for Souls for Agape youth. He spear-headed the campaign among his youth group at Inner-Faith Fellowship Ministries in Rocky Mount for their second year, col-



**IMPACT Student Ministry from CrossPointe Church**  
helped Agape during the Christmas season,  
led by Eric and Stephanie Smith.

### January 2017 Volume 8 Issue 1

*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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### Member Churches

Bedrock Community Church  
Covenant Fellowship  
CrossPointe/Franklin Heights Baptist Church  
Dwelling Place Christian Fellowship  
EastLake Community Church  
Flint Hills 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

Westlake Baptist Church

Published by The Agape Center, 1159 Promised Land Road (PO Box 573), Moneta, VA 24121 (Phone: 540/296-0609) [www.agapecentersml.org](http://www.agapecentersml.org)