



## Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

February 2020

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR! SET A REMINDER!!

#### AGAPE MEMBER CHURCHES

Bedrock Church –  
Franklin County

Bedrock Community Church

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

**March 18 is the day,  
3:00-4:00 p.m. is the  
best time to give**

Roanoke Valley Gives (RVG) is the annual 24-hour online giving event for local non-profits and is the Agape Center's largest fundraiser for individual donors. Last year the \$12,000 we raised went to the purchase of a forklift; the year before the donations enabled us to purchase the walk-in refrigeration unit. This year our goal is **\$16,500** and will be used to complete our security system (including intercom capability throughout the building) and to finish the heating and air conditioning in the Household, Linen and Book departments.

Please mark your calendar for March 18 to make your donation that day. You can donate from 12:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. There are several incentive contests throughout the day. We would like to win the **Coffee Break Power Hour Award**. To do so, we will need to raise the most dollars for our category in the **3:00-4:00 p.m.** hour.

RVG donations can only be made online and must be done via a credit card. Go to Agape's website [agapecentersml.org/](http://agapecentersml.org/) and click on the **Roanoke Valley Gives** button. Complete the donor information, including your credit card number. If you'd like to donate early, you can set up your donation any time after March 9. Just be sure to set the donation date as **March 18, 2020**, which is when your card will be charged.

If you are uncomfortable or unable to use a computer, you may come to the Agape office between 12 noon and 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 18, and someone will gladly assist you in making your donation.



#### KEY DATES

**Annual Agape Linen Shower:** ends February 29

**Roanoke Valley Gives:** March 18

**Season Change-Over Day, Clothing & Store:** March 27

**Agape Open Golf Tournament:** May 30

## Vinton-Roanoke Area Agape Center...

The Vinton-Roanoke Area Agape Center is moving right along in its efforts to open its doors to the public this spring. The building God has provided at 1568 Granby St. in Roanoke is being transformed into a clean, bright facility with a welcoming reception area, some offices, 6 mentoring rooms, and space partitioned off for the various departments that provide the items clients will take home with them.

Department heads have been assigned and a core group of volunteers has spent hours training at the Agape Center in Moneta. They are all eager to put what they've learned into use.

An invitation was recently extended to local people interested in volunteering to come out and see what opportunities there are for them in the new Agape Center. The 69 folks who came were warmly welcomed and given a tour of the facility. The place was a buzz with enthusiasm as small groups proceeded through the building and learned the purpose and operation of each department.

There is still work to be done and volunteers to be recruited and trained, but Vinton-Roanoke is becoming a reality. It won't be long now before clients are listened to, prayed with, and burdens lightened by the agape love poured out in this new center.

*Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children. And walk in love, as the Messiah also loved us and gave Himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.*



Charlie Turner  
greeting guests



Ed Wyatt & a  
guest sharing  
a laugh



Shirley Lester  
in the center,  
with Gina Brown,  
her mother  
Virginia Sowers  
& Gina's daughters  
Madison &  
Nataleigh

more Vinton-Roanoke Area Agape  
Center photos at end of newsletter

### Welcome New Volunteers!

**Suzanne Abercombi** – Runner  
**Clay Beaulieu** – Pantry,  
Transportation (food)  
**Gale Beaulieu** – Clerk, Baskets  
**Shelby Brown** – Pantry, Clerk  
**Sharon Cordell** – Runner, Pantry  
**Rodney Dellis** – Pantry, Furniture  
**Tiffany Dotson** – Pantry, Stocker  
**Stephanie East** – Runner

**Bill Galeota** – Transportation, Runner  
**Brenda Gardner** – Clerk, Clothing  
**Bobby Kirk** – Furniture  
**Carol Mills** – Gift Shop  
**Wayne Powers** – Transportation  
**Russell Quesenberry** – Pantry  
**April Slocum-Reed** – Baskets,  
Gift Factory  
**Derick Williamsen** – Pantry

### By the Numbers...

**January 2020**  
Families 863  
Individuals 2,942

**January 2019**  
Families 837  
Individuals 2,961

### Month 2020 Volume 12 Issue x

*The Agape Newsletter* is a monthly publication produced by The Agape Center for volunteers, member churches and other interested individuals and organizations.

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## Let God Take the Wheel



### David Byers

David Byers' voice has a slow melodic Southern accent. We could have been rocking away on a big old porch with tall glasses of sweet tea, just shooting the breeze as he told me his story. What a sweet story it is.

David moved to the Lynchburg two and a half years ago while still working at the Georgia Pacific Papermill in Big Island. It wasn't long before he began to think that Lynchburg wasn't a good fit. He didn't like where he was living and he didn't feel he could get plugged into the church he was attending. He heard a couple of sermons about totally committing to God and just letting the Holy Spirit lead your life. And he realized it meant surrendering it ALL to the Lord — something he had never done even though he had become a Christian at a young age. David had had his struggles, but he'd always been in church and he'd never, never given up on

God. He described his relationship with the Lord as both of them being in control — the Lord holding the big wheel, but with David's hands on it too and him saying, "I'm gonna do this part, God, I'm gonna do this part."

### LEARNING TO BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

So... David had some property in Bedford and said, "Lord, you know I'm not happy here in Lynchburg. I'm gonna pray this prayer. I want to sell this house and move to Bedford and then when I get there I'm gonna pray for a church and I'm gonna let you have control, total control. I don't know where I'll be, but I'm gonna let you do that."

He sold the house, moved to Bedford and began looking for a church. He tried several, but the Holy Spirit kept telling him it wasn't the one. He googled 30 churches within 30 miles and decided to try the three that were up 122. Long story short, he ended up at EastLake, liked the energy of the pastor, thought the people were very friendly and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit, but wasn't sure it was the church for him because he didn't know anybody. He went home and the Holy Spirit kept telling him he needed to go back. He visited EastLake again that Wednesday and that was when he met Bob Stouffer. David also started attending a PDF group (Prayer, Discipleship & Fellowship), where he's met a very special lady and is starting a new chapter of his life

Bob took David under his wing and when he found out that David was feeling a little bored, he introduced him to the Agape Center. David serves in the pantry and when asked what his favorite thing about volunteering is, he said he enjoys speaking with the people. His words: "I pray with some people out there when God leads me. And, you know, I like it because not only can I witness and serve these people, the clients, then I have other people inside the pantry to talk to and be in fellowship with. You get to minister and be ministered to. I always go home feeling blessed."

So that's how David got here — he surrendered it all to the Lord, he let go of the wheel and he let God just totally direct him. David ended our time together with the following prayer:

Father God, we just thank you for Agape and how we able to serve the community. We thank you, Father, for the wonderful people here that volunteer and give their heart and who love You, Lord, so much. And Father, I thank you for Bob Stouffer, who brought me here. And I thank you, Father, for Salvation number one and the Holy Spirit number two which, God, if we just listen to you and let your Holy Spirit lead us how good life is. Thank you for all the wonderful Christian folks that are here ... Father, for just, just being here. God, you've given me a whole new life with new friends. And now, I'm so blessed and have a wonderful lady. Thank you for everyone here, Father. Bless the rest of our day and may we minister to others daily. In Jesus's name. Amen



## Serving with Heartfelt Love

## A new day dawning for two members of our Agape family

**Gini (Virginia) Lohmeyer**

March 3, 1941 – February 3, 2020

Gini Lohmeyer, wife of Bob Lohmeyer and sister of Grace Cooper, started volunteering at the Agape Center in 2007 and, if you were to glance at the many client folders that pass through our hands, you'd see her name listed as a mentor over and over again through the years.

Gini was loved by clients and volunteers alike. 65 members of our Agape family attended her funeral service and what a blessed event it was. Pastor Bill Griggs of The Dwelling Place and Rev. Salvador Anonuevo of Resurrection Church, co-celebrated the service, which was a testimony that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, something that deeply touched our hearts that day.

Gini loved sunrises and even tried to paint them. The morning after her death, God painted an absolutely beautiful sky and Gini's loved ones saw it and rejoiced in knowing she's at home in heaven. Today when we were talking about Gini and the sunrise, somebody commented, "If He can put something that beautiful here on earth, what it will be like in heaven?!" We can only imagine.

Bob is back volunteering in the Furniture Dept., Grace continues to mentor and, thanks to Bob, we'll all be reminded of God's goodness when we glimpse the print of Gini and the sunrise that's hanging in the Mentor Room.



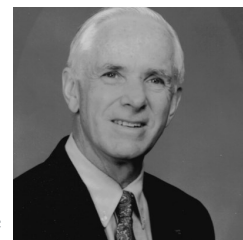
Photo taken April 6, 2006. Volunteers from each of the departments at that time, including Frank and Betty Hummel. This was upstairs in the original Agape building in Old Town Moneta.

**Frank Hummel**

March 24, 1932 - January 22, 2020

Frank & Betty Hummel began volunteering at the Agape Center in January 2006 where they mentored as a team until 2010 — and what a team they were — blessing so many of our Agape volunteers and clients. Frank's Godly wisdom and dedicated service will be missed.

A memorial service was held Saturday, February 8 at Radford Baptist Church. The family requested that donations be made to The Agape Center in lieu of flowers.



## SHADOW VOLUNTEERS

**February 10: HANG DAY**

Mt. Praisemore had once again reached its peak and a request was put out for volunteers to come hang. And just like that Mt. Praisemore was reduced to nothingness.

Many thanks to the great crew who looked the items over and then sorted and hung the clothing by gender, size and season.



Anastasia Newman, Joyce Nunn, Leslie Burynski and Carol Suggs (Linda Arthur not present)



from **THIS** to **THAT** →



Peggy Beech, Patti Irvin and Paul Rodden



Monica Burger, Leslie Burzynski and Kris McKenzie

**NEXT BIG DAY:**  
SEASON CHANGE-OVER  
FRIDAY, MARCH 27  
STARTING AT 9:00 A.M.

**Work for God: The Retirement Benefits Are Great !**

Don MacMillan, lovingly known by his fellow volunteers as "Donald Duck McWatermelon," moved here from Pine Hill NY early last year to be close to family members.

Don lives alone and isn't one to sit still. He missed being active in New York, where he often visited nursing homes and volunteered in other ministries. He started attending Staunton Baptist Church, where he learned about the Agape Center from Bill Parker (Mentor). Don was interested and took a tour of the Agape Center, which led to him volunteering in the Clothing Dept. Many shoes are donated and need to be checked over, sorted and sized. It wasn't long before Kris McKenzie recognized that Don could be her "shoeman" and Don willingly accepted the assignment. We now have a finely organized shoe room thanks to Don's perseverance and dedication.



At first he came in one day a week and now he comes in six times a week. Not only to keep things running smoothly in his area., but to get him out and about. He loves being at Agape. "Nobody complains, there's no bad language and I'm among believers who are quick to pray for each other. If somebody coughs, somebody prays!" And that's the kind of people Don wants to be around. If you get a chance, stop in the Shoe Room to say "hi" to him — you will be blessed.



## Baskets Galore!



Pictured are: Susan Dorr, Karen Fusaro, Darby Smith & Rob Whinney. These and many other volunteers help out with the gift baskets throughout the year. It's a fun department whose aim is to make our clients feel special.

It seems like we just celebrated Christmas and the Gift Basket Dept. is already collecting items for next Christmas. You see, Christmas is on their calendar year-round — as well as Birthday baskets and Nursery baskets. This past year they put together 1,085 Christmas baskets, about the same number of client Birthday baskets, and at least 50 Nursery baskets.

Karen Fusaro, said her team, especially the “shoppers,” are always on the look out for special bargains. And somehow God has a way of providing just what they need at just the right time. Just recently, Walmart had a special on flannel shirts, a particularly nice gift item for a man, and the Gift Dept. was able to buy quite a few at a very good price.

Some gift items are gleaned from other Agape Center areas. For example, the Pantry occasionally “donates” candy, cookies, jerky, etc. Clothing, Linen, Books, and Intake keep an eye out for new or “nearly new” items they think might make good gifts. And, once in a while, unusual donations come in like 1,000 packages of lavender napkins. Nothing that can possibly be used as a gift goes to waste. If something isn't quite basket worthy, it goes on the “free” bookcase in the Gift Shop.

Please check the suggestions below to see if you can help brighten someone's special day.

**Women's Birthday:** new or slightly used purses (which can be stuffed with smaller gift items such as perfume, jewelry, gloves), “kitcheny” things (dishtowels, potholders, gadgets), any kind of toiletry (shampoo, soap, body spray), spa items, pretty throw or lapghan

**Men's Birthday:** shaving cream, flannel shirt, good razor, candy, jerky, games, books, puzzles, cards

**Christmas:** liquid hand soap, dishtowels, candles (3-1/2 oz), small tins of cookies, hot chocolate packets, mugs (any theme, need 400), flashlights (not more than \$1), dvds, candy canes, Christmas ornaments

## Gift Shop Blessings

Here are just a few:

- ♦ A client came into the Gift Shop for a Christmas basket. She had a tree, but felt bad that she didn't have any gift for a grandchild who was coming to visit. The “Christmas elf” went to the Toy Dept. and brought back some toys for the grandma to give to her little one. Both were blessed. *Note: If a client asks a mentor for a gift for a child in her household, note the request on the Household list – only if the client asks.*
- ♦ A client mentioned to her mentor that she had nothing to give her son for Christmas. The boy is autistic and badly wanted one of the books from the Chronicles of Narnia. The mentor checked in Books and, lo & behold, there was a complete set ready for the giving.
- ♦ A client who is eight months pregnant comes into the Nursery room, expecting to get a baby basket and leaves with a big bundle of much needed baby items.



Do you know what this is?  
Answer: A bottle drying rack!



Ashley Williams is expecting little Kinsley Rayne March 25

## Bits & Pieces



Diane Davis  
Agape Book Reviewer

### From the Book Shelf

#### A Shelter of Hope

Tracie Peterson

Simone Dumas is running away from home. She has to escape from the abuse of her father. Her mother and baby brother had left never to return. With the help of many good people she moves and finds a good job waiting tables.

When her father finds here, she is terrified. He kidnaps her and tells of his plans to sell her for money to live on himself. However, a dear friend, Jeffrey o'Donnell and the sheriff save her from being sold.

Jeffrey asks her to be his wife and Simone accepts. Due to Jeffrey's kindness and his love, Simone finally learns a beautiful lesson. She says, "I know I can trust God! I won't give in to my fears. I've allowed fear to run my life in the past and it's time to put it to an end!" God had given Simone a shelter of hope.

*Psalm 27:5 For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.*

## WHY I SERVE ...



*I can do whatever God asks me to do — no excuses — because He is with me.*

Power Thought based on Gideon's interaction with God in Judges 6.

"I didn't choose Agape; Agape chose me. I get so much more from this work than I give. This is my local family since I moved from New York. Each gift basket is made with a lot of love, and that is what keeps me motivated. I am so passionate about what we do and how important it is to provide something really nice for our clients, who need a bit of sunshine every day."

**Karen Fusaro**  
**Gift Baskets Manager**  
**Moneta VA**  
**Volunteer since 2014**

## Nice Surprises that Brightened the Day



### Little Caesars Visited with a Truckload of Free Pizza

On Thursday, January 23, the Agape Center teamed up with Feeding America and Little Caesars Pizza to

provide free pizza to Agape clients and volunteers. Little Caesars parked their bright orange 18-wheeler truck in the front of the Agape Center. Then their three chefs cooked and distributed 200 pizzas. Feeding America's Director of Agency Partnerships Rita Pruitt and Allen Davis notified and served pizza to our clients and volunteers throughout the day.

The Agape Center appreciates Feeding America and Little Caesars for joining us in celebrating and serving our clients!

### A Little Leftover Love

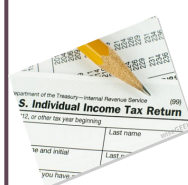
Mantana enjoys bringing gifts to Agape. Sometimes it's her freshly baked bread, this time it was flowers. Mantana took advantage of the day-after sale of Valentines flowers at Krogers and arranged 12 vases of flowers for the Agape Center volunteers and clients.



Mantana Heim and two clients

## REMINDER

### FREE TAX PREPARATION



Free income tax assistance is available locally through the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Tax-Aide is a free income tax preparation and electronic filing system provided to older and low income taxpayers. Check the January newsletter for dates and locations.



## Karen's Catch-all

### REMINDER: LINEN SHOWER ENDS FEBRUARY 29

#### 4th Annual Linen Shower



The Agape Center needs your help  
with linens for our clients

**Gently used or New Linens**

**Towels – Washcloths – Sheets**

**Date: Jan – Feb '20**

**Drop Off at Agape**

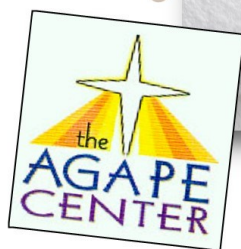
**Tues & Thurs 10-4**

**1st & 3rd Sat. 9-12**

**Agape Center, Inc.**

1159 Promised Land Road

Moneta VA 24121



**Donate online:**

**Agapecentersml.org**

**Cash Donations to purchase Linens**

**P.O. Box 573, Moneta VA 24121**

#### Additional DROP-OFF Locations:

**SM Building Supply**

13080 Booker T. Washington Hwy., Hardy VA

**EastLake Community Church**

1118 Hendricks Store Rd., Moneta VA

**LuLu's Closet**

17980 Forest Rd., Forest VA

## Give Where YOU LIVE

In 24 hours of online giving you can support nonprofit organizations  
serving the Roanoke Valley through **Roanoke Valley Gives** day.

It's as easy as point-click-give, for as little as \$10  
Only on March 18, 2020

**rvgives.org**



**03.18.20**

An initiative of the Community Foundation  
Serving Western Virginia

## 16th Annual Agape Open

**Golf Tournament**

**Saturday, May 30, 2020**

*The Westlake*

These cookies were a big  
hit at Vinton-Roanoke's  
volunteer night. A big  
Agape thanks to Christina  
Haggerty for the cookies  
and the recipe!



### Sweet & Saltines

**Ingredients:**

Cooking spray

35 to 40 saltine crackers

2 sticks (1 cup) butter

1 cup light brown sugar

8 ounces semisweet chocolate chips  
(about 1-1/3 cups)

Preheat the oven to 425°. Line one large or  
two small jelly-roll pans with aluminum foil,  
spray with nonstick spray and arrange the  
saltines salt-side down in a single layer.

In a medium saucepan, melt the butter and  
brown sugar together and boil until it turns a  
caramel color, a few minutes. Remove from  
the heat and pour over the crackers, covering  
them evenly.

Put the jelly-roll pan into the oven and bake for  
3 to 5 minutes, or until just bubbly, watching  
carefully. Remove from the oven and pour the  
chocolate chips over the crackers. When the  
chips melt a bit, spread them over the crackers  
with a knife.

Transfer the pan to the freezer for 15 to 20  
minutes, or until completely cold. They will  
form one big sheet. Break up into pieces.  
Store in an airtight container.

**From:**

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/trisha-yearwood/sweet-and-saltines-recipe-2107651>



...Becoming a Reality



Left: Clay Walker & Charlie Turner greeting guests



Right: Cliff Owens, Dot Owens, Bonnie Walston  
Raymond Akers, Cheryl Turner &  
Dolores Hogan learning the ropes in Moneta



Christina Haggerty,  
whose yummy cookie  
recipe can be found  
on the previous page



Mac & Sallie Godwin  
dropping off a donation

...Becoming a Reality



A tour group with Kathy Walker, Pantry, in the photo on the left and with Cliff Owens, Furniture in the photo on the right



Charlie Turner seeking donations



**We love our building!**



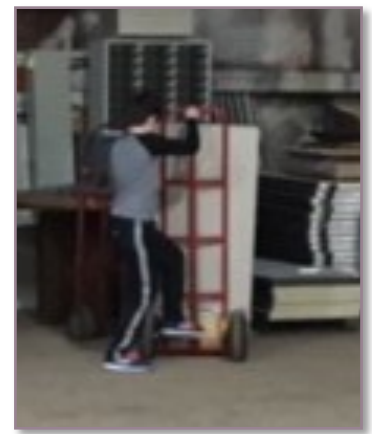
Cliff Owens focused on what's before him



Charlie Turner and Clay & Kathy Walker working on shelving



Tour group taking in the clothing area



Volunteers come in all ages!