



Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

Sep-Oct 2021

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

It's That Time of Year!

Feed a Family for Thanksgiving

Let's give thanks by helping other families enjoy a nice meal!

There are approximately 900 families for Thanksgiving that will have a nice holiday dinner because we care about them. The families are from Bedford to Rocky Mount. The Agape Center not only helps with food but helps with clothing, toys, furniture & appliances. Each family is assigned a mentor to talk with them concerning their physical, emotional and spiritual needs and God's love for them. This year we hope you can make a difference and sponsor a family for Thanksgiving.

The cost for sponsoring a dinner for a family is \$20. Please consider sponsoring a family or families as God leads you. You can do this in two ways.

You can write a check, payable to "The Agape Center" and send it to:

The Agape Center
PO Box 573
Moneta, VA 24121

Or you can donate online at
agapecentersml.org/feedafamily



TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



This Thanksgiving the Agape Center is once again helping approximately 700 families in Franklin and Bedford Counties celebrate this special day. In their food pickup this month, clients in these communities will be receiving a Walmart Gift Card for the purchase of the turkey, ham or fresh vegetables for their family's holiday meal.

Please consider sponsoring one family (or more) with your donation. Thanksgiving Day is approaching quickly. Send your check to The Agape Center, P.O. Box 573, Moneta VA 24121 or donate online at www.agapecentersml.org/feedafamily.



Look inside for an Update & Photos of These Recent Events



(see page 3)



(see page 2)

SML Charity Home Tour

SML's 30th Charity Home Tour Highlighted the Columbus Day Weekend!

8 is great! Eight beautiful homes enchanted guests the weekend of October 8–10 as eight local residents opened their homes to raise money for eight worthy and hardworking charities in the area.

Greg and Susan English, masters in the art of creating beauty out of what most people might throw away or donate to rummage sales, offered their home to the Agape Center. Throughout the weekend, 973 people visited this interesting and very unique home.



As you can imagine, it takes an army to handle an event of this magnitude. The Home Tour Agape team manned five shifts with 25 volunteers each shift. They were led by Team Lead Carolyn Gordon, Co-hostess Leads Judy Harper and Betty Ann Allen, Dock Lead Ronnie Gordon, Traffic Lead Kal Kalenian, Recruitment Lead Susan English, Poster Distribution Bonnie Fiori, Ticket Lead Moira Bell and Sponsorship Co-leads Ron Cordell and Phyllis Johnson.

Along with other “as needed” assignments, the volunteers for this event transported guests from the parking lot and boat dock to the home, led them to entry points, sat under a popup tent during rain showers to sell and punch tickets, and served as hostesses throughout the home. Sue Frase and her team made and fed sandwiches and snacks to the workers all three days! And Susan English, besides opening their home for the tour, recruited over 100 volunteers.

Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation go out to all the volunteers who made the 30th Charity Home Tour another successful fundraiser. It certainly shows that Smith Mountain Lake is home to some of the most hard working and generous people in the world.



Home owners Susan and Greg English holding up our all important sponsor board.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



WHAT A CELEBRATION!



A very special “Happy Birthday” party honoring the Agape Center volunteers was held September 24th at EastLake Community Church. It was an evening of much laughter, moving testimonies, great food and heartfelt appreciation for all that we do. Nearly 250 people attended and most of them came dressed reminiscent of the decade they were born or their favorite era. We had Rosie the Riveter, quite a few Beatniks in tie-dye & beads, some teenie boppers in poodle skirts, a couple of WWII veterans, an astronaut — and, don’t tell anyone, but even Elvis was in the building!

Bob Winters, president of the Board of Directors, opened the evening with prayer, thanking the Lord for the volunteers and the many unique ways we serve and thanking Him for the individuals who have been helped by our Agape Centers, spiritually and physically. Sue Lipscomb, Executive Director, let us know how much we are appreciated and pointed out that there are now four Agape Centers (Moneta, Vinton, Lynchburg and New River Valley) with over 400 volunteers. Karen

Jones and her whole team did an amazing job planning and decorating for this event. Sue & Don Frase and their food team



set out a scrumptious salad and potato bar along with mouthwatering desserts. Mike Maxey and his crew took care of the sound and lights.

And the “Agapeteer hostesses” (Sharen, Mary Alice, Sheila, Cindy, Ginny and Karen) did their best to make the evening a fun and memorable time for all.

The evening’s program started and ended with music. Bill Parker (Board of Directors & Mentor) opened with “Less Like Me” and his wife, Vida, sang “My Jesus.”

Woven between these performances were some



powerful testimonies. Pamela Randolph (client) told of how 57 years ago her grandfather was in the water with her as she was baptized, showing her he’d be right beside her in her Christian walk. In much the same way, Pamela has found that love at the Agape Center, through mentoring sessions, the Getting Ahead Program and receiving a birthday gift just to let her know how special she is. Having seen agape love in action, she wants others to see Christ in the way she lives. Pamela ended her speech with this poem: “I only have a minute with 60 seconds in it, didn’t seek it, didn’t choose it, can’t refuse it. It’s up to me to use it. I must suffer if I lose it. Give an account if I abuse it. It’s a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it.” (continued)

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

WHAT A CELEBRATION! (continued)

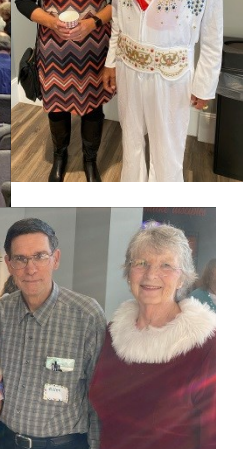
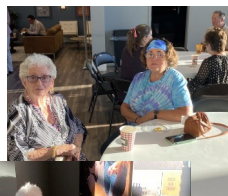


Savannah Anthony has been a client since Agape began. She has brought others to the Agape throughout the years and has brightened our days many times by spontaneously bursting out in song in our foyer or the hallway. The evening of the dinner she told of how God had saved her earlier this year and then, in her strong, powerful voice, with no accompaniment, sang "Walk Around Heaven." What a gift!

Next on the program were the guest speakers, Julia and Dave Keep. They shared the trauma of Dave's accident October 28, 2018 and the healing process that ensued. It was a testimony of how God showed up and did amazing things in their lives the past three years. Julia and David ended their amazing "God Story" singing "The City of Joy," a song Julia had written several years ago.

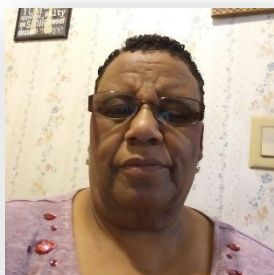


This evening of appreciation and love for what God has done, is doing and continues to do for the Agape Center and in our personal lives concluded with the Mark Dubbeld Family singing what could be fittingly dubbed our theme song: "My Answer Is Yes."



A God Story

Savannah Anthony – I'M GONNA WALK AROUND HEAVEN ALL DAY LONG!



At the Appreciation Dinner Savannah shared how God stepped in and saved her life one afternoon last spring. It was March 16th and Savannah and her husband were in Lynchburg running some errands. They were leaving the UPS store when her husband

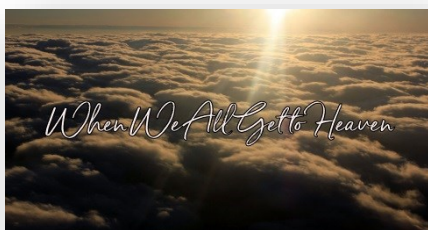
started across two lanes of traffic. They both looked, saw nothing coming and, about the time Savannah's husband stepped on the gas, a girl hit the side of the car Savannah was on.

Savannah said she knew she was gone and cried out to the Lord. She began to say, "Lord, don't let me die in this car. I'm not ready — and I don't think you're ready for me either!"

Savannah said that the girl hit their car so hard that she bent the right side tire all the way under the car and the airbags came out, hit Savannah in the face and burst open, spewing some kind of chemical in Savannah's face. All she could see was a fog in the air, like a halo around her. She told her husband to get out and then she somehow managed to squeeze her body through a small opening and got out of the car herself.

When she sat down, her husband asked her if she was alright. She said she couldn't hear him because God was talking to her. God told her, "Savannah, you are not leaving here," and she began to cry. Her husband said, "Why you crying, why you crying, you can get another car?!" She replied to him, "It's not about the car. It's what God said **TO ME!**"

God had told her she'd be okay and Savannah



wants everyone to know that "God will protect you when you ask. He will! He will! She is plenty thankful that she is in the land

of the living and knows that one of these mornings — and it won't be long — she'll be "walking around heaven all day long!"

Department Spotlight

Getting to Know Our Gift Shop Volunteers

from Barbara Roberts, Agape's Roving Reporter

Agape gift shop volunteers are as varied and delightful as a box of Russel Stover chocolates. I got to chat with some of them recently and met Charlotte Scotland, who has been making those lovely birthday and Christmas baskets for about 12 years. Our conversation started with Charlotte saying "I've always done baskets." To which I teasingly responded, "So, you always knew you were a basket case!" Charlotte says she loves all her co-workers — they are like one big family.

Eileen Hawkins's 6-year-old granddaughter Rose was happily helping the ladies assemble. Eileen is Rose's babysitter and is well qualified since she did plenty of that back in New Jersey where she raised four children and was caregiver for her aged parents. She came to SML in 2007.

Karen Fusaro worked in Long Island as an administrative assistant in the medical field before she came to SML. She was enjoying lake time with her two sons and daughters-in-law and three grandchildren when I interrupted her for this interview. She shared a story with me about a recent encounter at a dollar store where she was buying towels for Agape Christmas bags. A customer standing nearby noticed the large number of towels she was buying and asked what she was going to do with so many. Karen explained the Agape Christmas bags. The lady opened her purse and handed her a bill — a \$10 donation. The lady told Karen that she had a friend who had been helped and was treated so kindly by the people at Agape that she wanted to be a part of it.

I chatted with Susan Dorr as she finished lunch and resumed assembling the gift bags that are adding up impressively in preparation for Christmas gifts. Susan has been a volunteer for six years after retiring from her job as safety manager in Ohio. She lost her husband a year ago and looks forward to having her three children here next month for a memorial service for him.

It is such a pleasure to get to know these dedicated folks and there are more! Watch for profiles in later issues starring Carol & Jeff Francis, Russeta Wright, Becky the magic doll lady, Mandy Martin, and two of Santa's elves from New Jersey.

Snippets from the AECO* Meeting

Welcome New Volunteers!



Sandra Capach – Runner

Claudia Graff – Clothing

Virginia Lattig – USDA

Don Slice – Pantry

Pam Slice – USDA, Telephones

Paris Thomas – Clothing

By the Numbers...

August	2021	2020
Families	449	508
Individuals	1,562	1,767
September		
Families	491	686
Individuals	1,610	2,402

- One person shared a testimony of how God blessed her and a client she was mentoring recently. She commented that we call on the Holy Spirit to help us pray with a client because we know “we really have nothing, but He has everything.” She said most times we don’t know if our prayers for someone are answered, but every so often we hear that they are. One day last month a client of hers asked for prayer that the client’s son, who was in prison be moved, someplace else. They also prayed for the woman’s daughter, who had a drinking problem. The very next day the correction facility called the woman to let her know her son was being moved. And the client also reported that when she went to visit her daughter a couple of days after her Agape appointment, the daughter told her she hadn’t had a drink in two days! And we wonder if prayers are answered!
- Agape-Lynchburg shared how they see God at work all the time. He has gotten them through some recent organizational changes that have brought the leadership team closer together. And they were not planning to do a Christmas store this year, but somebody donated a bunch of toys and the Gift Shop at Moneta has an abundance of Christmas items that they are happy to share with Lynchburg.
- The number of clients at Vinton-Roanoke Agape is picking up to the tune of 247 clients. They have started a Thanksgiving meals program this year and have raised \$1200 to cover the cost of gift cards and some of the food they’ll be handing out for the holiday meal.
- New River Valley Agape continues to have salvations weekly. They recently had their largest food drive. The Corps of Engineers through Virginia Tech (1,032 kids in 3 days) raised 15,000 food items and almost \$3600 for their building fund. Those same students are on board to do an even larger fundraiser with other clubs at Virginia Tech and VComm to raise more for the building fund. Plus the NRV Agape has received several large pledges from other sources.
- Debbie Jenkins and Tracey Dunn have been conducting mentor training sessions the last couple of months as several new mentors have been added to the team. They also introduced the EvangeCube, a very useful evangelism tool, at a recent mentor meeting. If you missed the session and want to know more, there are several videos available on YouTube. Just google EvangeCube.
- The Gift Shop crew continues getting ready for our Christmas gift giving. They have put together 400 baskets so far and expect to add 200 more. A homeschool group is coming the first Tuesday in November to help decorate and stock the Christmas Store. Those young people will be a tremendous help pulling down the items stored in the loft and moving the items to the Gift Shop. By the way, plastic ornaments are needed for the baskets — new or old.
- Volunteers are needed in all areas, especially Runners, Mentors and USDA, the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month. Also, could sure use help with the newsletter.



We need to raise nearly \$12,000 to cover the cost of these gift cards. Can you help us reach this goal?

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