

Terrell's Story, by Sonya Tyler, Director of Operations

He told me of his past. A past filled with violence – drugs, shootings, robberies. Plotting at how to hurt someone, angry outburst at people he barely knew. It seemed a completely different person than the quiet young man before me.



I met Terrell at Interfaith, sitting on one of the benches in front of our building. I had watched him come and go, and wondered what his story was. One day, I broke out of my comfort zone, and asked.

Terrell spoke of how he had thoughts of going back to the streets and selling dope again. How easy it would be to give in to temptation, but he wants to be a role model for his younger brother.

Raised by an aunt and uncle, Terrell's mother died when he was very young. His father, who he also hasn't seen in many years, is in prison with a life sentence. "Sometimes I feel like there's this tiny voice, telling me to turn away, to do something different," he said. "I hear people

talk about God, but what's He going to do for me?"

As I sat looking at this young man, I thought about all the dark paths that lay ahead of him; all the darkness that pulls at him from a broken past. Would he see the light in his life – the road that Jesus promised, not a perfect life, but a life of grace and acceptance? I felt like I was in over my head, but I knew that the simple truth that Jesus loved him would be a good start.

I sat and prayed with Terrell. I prayed that God would protect him and keep him on a path of hope and lead him from the darkness gripping at him. I prayed that Terrell would break the cycle in his family and become an amazing example for his younger brother – to become a man of God his brother would be proud of. I prayed that he would find work and a chance at life. And that continues to be my prayer each time I see Terrell.

His story, is one of many at Interfaith. Stories of those that cross our paths briefly, who's struggles we are not even aware of most of the time. But God uses Interfaith to make connections with the hurting – to give hope to the hopeless. He uses a volunteer that loads groceries into a client's car, a backpack of food so a child doesn't go hungry, and prayer warriors that lift our clients up each day. And most importantly – God uses you, our donors, to keep Interfaith going. A financial gift today can meet the basic needs of those that reach our doors. Won't you consider making a donation today?

Donations can be mailed to PO Box 992, Ocala FL 34478, or online at www.IESmarion.org.

Clients Served Jan - July 2017

Food (Ocala)	4,730
Outreach (food):	
Reddick	786
Fellowship	278
Ft McCoy	723
Marion Oaks	495
TOTAL FOOD:	7,012.00
Hygiene items	3,661
<i>(Totals above are per household)</i>	

Clothing	6,681
ID Cards	120
Homeless ID Cards	245
"Reader" Glasses	209
Gas Vouchers (medical)	129
RX Clients	555
RX Cost	\$67,874.85

Food 4 Kids (Jan -May)	
Children served	1,650
Meals provided	104,412

Shelter	
Women	22
Children	12
Men	6

How to Donate

Want to help support Interfaith in the work that we do? Please send a check payable to "Interfaith Emergency Services" at PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478, or give securely online at www.IESmarion.org. Thank your for your support!

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



We are honored to announce that the IES Foundation honorees for the 2018 Legacies of Love are Mrs. Beth McCall and Mr. Whit Palmer. These two individuals have both impacted this local community in significant ways for many years. We are thrilled that they are willing to accept this honor. If you would like to attend the luncheon on February 14th please consider hosting a table and inviting some friends to join you. Information on how to purchase tickets is forthcoming so stay tuned! This event is a fundraiser to help

LEGACIES
-of- **LOVE**



pay off the Center for Life building that we purchased last summer.

If you haven't seen our Center for Life we welcome you to drop in for a quick tour. I am amazed daily at all that God is doing in this facility. On an average of 3-4 times each week local physicians come and offer free medical care to people who are suffering without the financial means or insurance to get help. We also have a dental clinic once each month that relieves the suffering of homeless and others experiencing pain from tooth aches. Mental health counseling is also up and running now with two partner agencies that come and provide Christian based counseling every week. As if that's not enough we are still providing assistance with prescription medications and so far this year have purchased over \$67,000 worth of prescription medications for people who would have otherwise gone without. When you add to that the diabetes and other health education we are offering along with our patient advocacy program which is helping people to get benefits for which they qualify, we are helping a large number of people who just a year ago had nowhere to turn for assistance. It's truly amazing what God has put in place here for the sake of people in Marion County who are struggling. It's just a wonderful example of how much He loves each and every one of us. I remain humbled and grateful that He gives me a view from the sidelines to see His love in action.

If you're as impressed with all of this as I am, please consider supporting this ministry financially. We still need to pay off the building and keep the lights on so any gift is appreciated. For more information please feel free to contact me at 629-8868 ext. 219.

Filling Tummies with the Food 4 Kids Backpack Program

by Karen Fant, Food 4 Kids Manager

Interfaith's Food 4 Kids program is preparing for their 2017 - 2018 season. Each year we provide backpacks of food for over 1,650 kids during the school year – that's over 9,900 meals every weekend! This summer, we purchased brand new durable, rolling backpacks that the children will use to take home food for the weekend.

Did you know, thanks to YOU, our donors, we were able to provide a total of 220,016 meals to students during the last school year? Think of all the little tummies you filled!

During this time of year, we are purchasing food, reconnecting with our volunteers that took the summer off, and touching base with the 34 schools that participate in our program. As always, donations are always appreciated. A list of our most needed items are below. If you would like to volunteer to help this year, or would like more information about donating, please contact our Food 4 Kids Manager, Karen Fant at 620-8239.

- Macaroni and Cheese** (boxed)
- Instant Oatmeal** (single serving)
- Ramen Dry Noodle Soup packets**
- Snack Bars** (cereal bars, granola bars, etc.)
- Crackers** (filled with peanut butter or cheese)
- Canned Pasta** (Spaghettios, Ravioli, Beefaroni, etc.)
- Canned Meat** (ham, Vienna sausages, chicken, etc.)
- Snacks** (pretzels, cookies, raisins – all single servings)
- Peanut Butter & Jelly** (separate, plastic containers)
- Pudding Cups**
- Pop Tarts**
- Fruit Cups**



Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Cinder K Weber

By: Kay Kelly

Mack Dunwoody

By: Ana Dunwoody

Mable and Bill Staplin

By: Jane and Dave Staplin

Catherine Meyer

Jerry and Linda Mack

Lottie George

By: George and Ruth King

Colleen Braden

By: Charles and Mary Lee Reed

Margone Moxon

By: Carol and Dennis Wicklein

Jimmy Barrington

By: Roger and Marilyn Laible

Jim Kirk

Jim Jernigan

Bill Fish

George Albright, Sr

By: Keith and Jan Knorr

Give a gift to someone special - an honorary or memorial donation in their name to Interfaith! The person honored (or their family) will receive a letter of acknowledgement.

Please contact Kayla for more info at 629-8868 x202 or by email Kayla@IESmarion.org.

Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

Many Thanks to...



Thanks to Beverly and the folks at First Baptist Church and their collection of 500 pounds of food! Volunteer and Board Member, Andrew Vanover is pictured left.

One of our clients, Auntie, wanted the opportunity to say thank you to the community for the help she receives from Interfaith. "God bless to everyone reading this newsletter!" Auntie is pictured right.



Fresh Produce Wins the Day

Thanks to Second Harvest, Interfaith receives food from local grocery stores such as Publix, Winn Dixie, Walmart and Sam's Club. We are so grateful for these donations, because they allow us to provide more than just canned goods to our clients. Each week, we pick up items such as meat, dairy products, fruit and vegetables.

Recently, we started receiving quite a bit of fruit and veggies on Friday afternoons from Sams Club, and sometimes, it's more than we can pass out at our pantry. But Steve Clem, Warehouse Manager, quickly found a way to get it to those in need. Right next to our food warehouse, we have a small homeless park, where folks that have nowhere else to go, can enjoy the shade of a large oak tree and talk with friends at one of the picnic tables. On Friday afternoons, when the truck returns from Sam's Club, Steve sets out a watermelon bin of produce for our homeless friends. And it's a huge hit.

It's easy to sometimes forget that these folks rarely get fresh veggies or even something that has been kept cold by refrigeration. Many living in homeless camps or out of the way places, barely have a place to lay their head. The idea of fresh veggies is really special, and greatly appreciated.

So on behalf of our homeless friends, and our clients we serve at our food pantry, we cannot say 'thank you' enough to Second Harvest and the grocery store we pick up from. They are an incredible blessing!



Meet the Amazing Koya, by Jessica Rodriguez, Director of Ministries

When we started to look for someone to take over as Intake Manager, I prayed that I would be open and obedient to whomever God would choose for the position. We reviewed a lot of qualified folks, but one in particular blew us away!

It is with joy that I would like to introduce Koya Harris, our new Intake Manager. Koya comes to us from Lowell Prison, where she worked for 5 years with the female inmates who had substance abuse issues. Prior to working at Lowell, Koya worked at the Domestic Violence Shelter for two years. Koya is also a minister at House of God Church.

Koya's cheerful personality and work training are a perfect fit and we know she will be able to provide support and prayer to our clients each day. We are excited to have Koya on our team! I have no doubt she will be an asset. Please pray for her that this will be a smooth transition, and that God would continue to bless her with wisdom, discernment, joy and peace. Welcome Aboard Koya!



Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground. Psalm 143:10



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Check out our website at
www.IESmarion.org



MISSION STATEMENT

Interfaith Emergency Services is a community of faith called by God to offer emergency assistance without judgment to all persons in Marion County.

Answering the Call...
by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator

Interfaith answers a lot of calls from the community. Calls for food, calls for shelter, calls for medicine, calls for a listening ear and a prayer...the list goes on and on. All day long, we take these calls and yet the phone calls never stop. The calls continue to come in day after day. The bottom line? There are a lot of people out there needing and calling for help! It is our goal to answer those calls and to help in any way we possibly can. But we need more people to partner with us and help us answer those calls! Do you feel God "calling" you? Think you might be able to answer a few calls yourself? If so, we'd love to have you! We have training and easy resources that make answering all those questions a breeze. Like more information – that's a phone call away too – give me a call at (352) 629-8868 x210 or email me at Tina.Reid@IESmarion.org .

In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, for You will answer me." Psalm 86:7

Incredible Blessing,
by Judi Lowther, Shelter Case Manager

God is alive and well, and is active in the lives of our residents. Laura Raffield, a former resident of Interfaith has worked very hard to move back to the mainstream of life.

After spending time at our homeless shelter, where she found a job in the community and worked to get her life back to normal, she recently moved into an apartment of her very own.

This past week, Meadowbrook Church donated a car to Laura which now gives her transportation. We are praising God for His goodness and the generosity of Meadowbrook. Our special thanks to Sean Forte at Meadowbrook, for all the work he put into this very special gift.

