

## Motivation, Hard Work and Donors = Blessed Success

In the late fall of 2020, a sweet young lady and her little baby boy came to Interfaith in need of shelter. She had been through a very difficult time and had become displaced. She stated she was willing to do whatever it takes to have a safe place for herself and her son. After her intake interview and prayer, her little family was accepted into our program.

Elizabeth was a model resident. She gained stable employment with the Humane Society of Marion County working with abandoned and abused animals. She had reliable transportation, so all that was missing was daycare for baby Alex. Within a week we were able to get her assistance through the ELC program so Elizabeth could work to support her family.

Their time was short lived here at the shelter because Elizabeth learned about budgeting, kept to the budget set by her Case Manager and proved self-sustainable. She was able to find an apartment that was in her means and with the blessed donation of an anonymous donor, all move in costs were covered.

I still contact Liz and baby Alex regularly. She still is gainfully employed and loves their new home. She continues to thank the staff of Interfaith and the Lord above, for the opportunity to start their new life through our Shelter Program.

*By Michelle Collier, Shelter Case Manager*



**Elizabeth and Baby Alex**

## Client Services Preservers Through Challenging Year, by Koya Harris-Beard

Since the woes of the pandemic, we've had to make some big adjustments in the Intake Department. Although we've shortened our intake process, our clients still miss that face to face interaction and knowledge that our volunteers brought to the table. Prior to March, we had 2 counselors, 2 data persons, and 1 receptionist for 2 shifts a day. Over the last 11 months, it's been down to me and 1 other person, often wearing multiple hats. I really miss our volunteers!

We saw a massive increase in newcomers, and with COVID precautions, often clients would have to stand outside and brave the weather for their spot in line. It's been a challenge, but we made it happen! It was always a huge joy when Tina, our Volunteer Coordinator, would come through the office with a tour because that meant I could possibly be getting a new volunteer!



**Sharon, Koya & Sharon**

The Free Clothing Boutique took a hit as well. We went from 2 volunteers per shift, down to 4 total all week! They too often had to do double duties to help me sort clothes and get them ready to be distributed. To say I am truly grateful for the help we've been receiving is an understatement. My A-team for the boutique is Angela and Sharon (pictured). They have been life savers for our boutique. Whenever I need them they are right there.

In the middle of this pandemic, I asked God what were we going to do? This community needed help. He told me, "Keep going!" For me, it wasn't about job security - I believe Philippians 4:19: "For my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." It was about my love for all of God's children; from the least to the greatest. I am so proud to say we served this community all of 2020 and God has proven that His seal is upon us and we're here to stay. Thank you to every person who has prayed, sent letters of encouragement, made financial contributions as well as other forms of donations. With God, we did it!

## From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



I'm happy to welcome three new board members to Interfaith. We are so honored to have John Bradish, Kent Adams and Alejandra Arango join our Board of Directors. Each of these individuals have a heart-felt connection to our mission and we will benefit from the wisdom, knowledge and connections each of them bring. If you are interested in a position on our board, it starts with a tour. Each potential candidate spends an hour or so with me and visits each ministry in order to get an overall picture of Interfaith Emergency Services. Some of the key facts that they learn is that we typically utilize over 300 volunteers over the course of the year to accomplish all of the work of Interfaith. The majority of those volunteers come on a weekly basis, while some come only once a month or less. Boy have we missed our volunteers since the pandemic hit! Many of our volunteers have been faithful helpers here for as many as 18 years! So to say it's been strange not having them here since March, is an understatement. We hope and pray for a safe return to duty in the next few months.

Other fun facts about Interfaith you'll learn on a tour is that we generally serve as many as 30,000 individuals each year in one or more of our various ministries. We do that with 19 full-time staff and another 15 part-timers. Due to the vacancies left by our volunteers, we've had to temporarily hire 10 additional staff just to keep the operations going. We are so grateful to the James H. Cox Foundation for a gift to help us with the additional funding to make this possible, as well as many of you who have shared your stimulus checks with us.

Finally we are very excited about a new program dedicated to working with the chronically homeless. This program, funded through our City/County Joint Office of Homelessness, employs 4 of our full-time staff who work specifically with that population and we are changing lives like never before! It's an exciting time to be at Interfaith! If you're interested in joining us, just reach out to me and start with a tour at [karla@iesmarion.org](mailto:karla@iesmarion.org) or 629-8868 ext. 219.

To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: Ecclesiastes 3:1

## Mom of Twins Shares Grateful Message for Backpack of Food, by Karen Fant

At Food 4 Kids we rarely know the families we serve. The schools give us the information without using the student's name. We like it this way to keep everything confidential. One day Daphne, my co-worker was outside loading cars with the food bags and a lady walked up and asked, "Is this where the backpacks are filled?" Daphne said yes it is! The young woman was volunteering for us at the time. She said, "A few years ago I received the backpack for my twins and it was so helpful to my family. I really appreciated it." She is now employed by Interfaith and is such a blessing to this organization. Here is her story...

*Testimonials are easy, the road to giving one is hard. As a single mother of twin kindergarteners and starting over after an unhealthy relationship at best, the struggle was hard and real. I had no income and barely enough food for the month and no support group. To my surprise at my twins' school one day, I am offered "a backpack." It was explained to me that on every Friday, I may pick up a backpack full of food for the twins for the weekend. What a blessing this was and let me tell you this "backpack" was "PACKED"! There was a breakfast, a lunch and snack for each child for both days of the weekend. Full size peanut butter and jellies too! Thankfully it was on wheels because it was so heavy and we were walkers. My twins came to see this as a gift every Friday. You'd never think peanut butter and jelly could make two kids so happy, but it did. Best part is, it was offered again the next year. The twins are in second grade now and I am working full time, and I look back and am so grateful for Food 4 Kids for their generosity and commitment. I am extremely happy to have been given the chance to say thanks.*

## Thrift Store Wants You to Visit, and They Can Visit You!

Were you aware that the Thrift Store does in-home pick ups? Our driver, Richard, and assistant, Josh, are able to come to your home and pick up gently used furniture and appliances! The Interfaith Thrift Store accepts all sellable items to be brought directly to the showroom floor. We can also accommodate contactless pick-ups. Call us today at 352-351-3541 to schedule with our team!

If you haven't been by lately, stop in at 718 North Pine to see what 'new to you' items we have for sale! And you'd be surprised at some of the new items we're getting in – it's exciting! Also, in this time of uncertainty, our employees are masked for safety and work hard to keep us sanitized! Our hours are Monday – Saturday, 9am – 4pm.

*Shannon Pickering, Thrift Store Manager*



## Special Gifts

### In MEMORY of:

Sally Williams  
Joe Simmons  
By: Keith and Janet Knorr

Nick Nikkinen  
By: R Thad Boyd  
Ann Robinson

Ken Van DeWettering  
By: Carolyn Varner

Becky Nation  
By: Trusty & Charlene Drake  
Ann Richardson  
Michael Finn  
Elizabeth Kutz

Carl Ellsperman  
By: Harold & Nancy Jones  
Charlotte & Carswell Ponder

Pattie Roberts  
Mary Hershberger  
By: Charlotte & Carswell Ponder

Kurt & Susan J  
By: Timothy Shanahan

Herbert Gossett  
By: Anita Gossett

Dr Ed Updike  
By: Lillian Updike

Harmon Lewis  
Peg Wallace  
By: Larry & Rhonda Mack

Steve Roudebush  
LaVerne Stinson  
By: Dr James & Virginia Gamble

Greg Graham  
By: Bradley & Cindy Fleetwood

Our Mother  
By: Elizabeth Robinson's family

Jackie Young  
Chandler Brown  
By: Susan Greiner

Maureen Carter  
By: Ben & Michele MacKay  
The Gordons, the Reynolds  
& Uncle "D"  
Anne & Buddy MacKay

Lynn Foster  
By: Carswell & Charlotte Ponder  
Trusty & Charline Drake

### In MEMORY of continued:

Wade Maxwell  
By: Alpha Delta Kappa  
Fidelis Kappa Chapter

Lee McGehee  
By: Kay Love

Pat Birkenmeyer  
Dick Hancock  
Dr Tomas Fuller  
By: Frank & Pamela Stafford

Bill Downes  
By: Bruce Hutchinson

Greg Philpott  
By: Irene Reilly

Martin Luther King, Jr  
By: Jo Anne Dyson

### In HONOR of:

Celine Mack  
By: Keith and Janet Knorr  
Larry & Rhonda Mack

Wilma Andrews  
By: Cynthia Andrews

David Ellsperman  
Villie Smith  
By: Harold & Nancy Jones

Dr R Asokan  
By: Ann Richardson

Lynne Lehman  
By: Clayton & Kelly Lehman

Melissa Kaster  
Brian Kaster  
By: Bruce Kaster

Matt Smith  
By: James & Marcia Grapes

Eugene Martin  
By: Charles & Loretta Sandy

Keith Knorr  
By: Larry & Ronda Mack

Susan Moehling  
By: Caroline Blessing

Gail & Bill Tuck, Sr  
By: Marie & Bill Tuck, Jr

Toby Cargin's 85th Birthday  
By: Denise Dahlberg

## Many Thanks to...

Thank you to all who participated in January to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a food drive! We received over 6,240 pounds of food and \$2,205 in donations. God bless you all! Special thanks to the organizers from Second Bethlehem Baptist Association, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Commission and the Marion County Alumni National Pan Hellenic Council. Donors dropping off food are pictured below.



Thank you for these recent donations (in pounds): First Assembly of God: 268; Hospice of Marion County: 303; Countryside Presbyterian Church: 85; First Presbyterian Church: 152; Narvella Haynes: 104; Spruce Creek North: 358; Twilight Cruisers: 304; Ocala West United Methodist: 115 and South Ocala Elementary School: 425 pounds!

**We are looking for a qualified Christian mental health counselor. If you are called to ministry and are certified to offer mental health counseling we could use your gifts to help our clients. For more information contact Dawn Lovell at [Dawn.Lovell@iesmarion.org](mailto:Dawn.Lovell@iesmarion.org).**

### In HONOR of continued:

Lisa Sheilley  
By: Jeanne & James Henningsen  
Melissa Brackett

Lee Medema  
By: Karen Medema



### A Special Gift

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 at 629-8868 x202 or by email [Kayla.Hess@IESmarion.org](mailto:Kayla.Hess@IESmarion.org). Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

**IES BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Check out our website at  
**[www.IESmarion.org](http://www.IESmarion.org)**



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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

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

### **Community Partners are Awesome, by Sonya Tyler**

Our community partners are such a blessing – they provide so much to us when we have a need (and sometimes before we even know we need something). Timing is everything! These partners often donate both financially and in-kind items – food, clothing, hygiene and more. Sometimes the donations are so bountiful, we get to share with other partners!

This week we received 20,000 brand new masks for both adults and kids! It was such a blessing to get so many of these to share with our clients. But because there were so many – we got to share even more! Steve Clem, Food Distribution Manager, called Tools 4 Teaching to see if they would like some. Their program, part of the Public Education Foundation of Marion County, allows teachers to shop once a month for free school supplies



for students in their classroom. Whenever we get an excess of supplies (sometimes from businesses that are closing or moving and are spring cleaning) it may not be stuff we can use – but the teachers are so grateful! Steve loves calling the ladies at Tools 4 Teaching because they are so excited to get donations that they're nearly knocking on his door to pick them up before he hangs up the phone! And once again – a community partnership brings joy to others!

### **Needing Volunteers!**

We never know how our needs may differ from day to day. Right now, we have a good amount of watches that have been donated to our Thrift Store but need to be repaired, or maybe just a battery change. So, if you have a knack for watches, call us! You never know what talents we need!

We are still in desperate need for clothing sorters. This position can be super flexible, Monday through Saturday between 9 am and 4 pm. No matter how small the amount of time you can give, we will take it! Please contact Tina at 352-629-8868 x210 or [Tina.Reid@iesmarion.org](mailto:Tina.Reid@iesmarion.org).