

Rest for the Weary, by Koya Harris-Beard, Social Services Manager

It was a Friday evening, all the staff had gone for the day. It was pouring outside when all of a sudden a knock came at our door. I opened it to find Michael, one of our clients who is experiencing homelessness, soaking wet and in distress. He asked if he could come in. Typically if I am alone late in the day, I don't let anyone in, but I could feel his despair. It's taking a team effort to get Michael the help he needs: birth certificate, social security card and then an ID so that we can move forward in trying to help him better his life. When you don't have that important information, and there's no family to help you, you're at a dead end. Michael is 19 years old and he resides at our open air shelter. He says he feels safe there. We are his family. Michael is finding it hard to come to grips with the fact that he is homeless. Michael asked if he could sit in my office with me. I could tell he really didn't want to be alone, so of course I said yes. I got back to work and when I took a moment to look up, he was asleep. As I stared at him, I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit say, "I will provide rest for the weary." My eyes filled with water because at that moment I realized that even in his state, God was still with Michael. And as he was resting, God was also providing rest for his soul and spirit. In the fire, it is hard for us to identify the presence of God. But just as the psalmist wrote in Psalm 139:8, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." God is everywhere and He is not oblivious to what we go through. Sometimes we think, "How could God be a part of this when it's causing me so much agony, so much pain?" Could He just be conditioning you for the days ahead? Could He be setting you up for the greatest testimony of your life that will save many souls? Could He just be building your character and strengthening your faith? Like Michael, when you are in a low place, I encourage you to seek help for your weary soul. Matthew 11:28-29 says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." I am praying for you.



Michael Sleeping Peacefully

Christmas in July Sales at the Thrift Store, by Shannon Pickering Manager

*Twas the night before Christmas
and all through the store
Angie was arranging
rare china on the floor.
The stockings were hung
by the front door with care
in the hopes that our shoppers
soon would be there.
The staff were all moving donations around
so when the doors open, customers abound!
With me in my office and everyone else
sorting linens and toys to put on the shelf.
When out of the warehouse came such a clatter,
I flew down the stairs to see what's the matter.*

*Joshua and Richard returned from the truck,
with items galore and no signs of junk!
Oh Kathy, Oh Randy, come help us unload
and move all the items to the front of the store.
April and Emilio pricing so quick,
to sell all the clothing and antiques to pick.
Shoppers' faces light up when they walk in the store,
And say, "What great savings, let's come back for more!"
Purchases were rung up with bags nearly popping
"Merry Christmas in July and to all happy shopping!"*

Come down to 718 North Pine and visit as we offer Christmas in July! Find great deals now and get in the holiday spirit while you shop at Interfaith!

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley



Our amazing and fearless CEO, Karla Grimsley, became Karla Greenway, on the weekend of June 5th. We are so happy to see Karla and Shane share their lives with one another, in the sight of God, friends, and family.

We are also so proud to announce that her gorgeous, princess-style dress was purchased at the Interfaith Thrift Store! There is no better feeling than when your boss and friend is so supportive of your ministry, as to wear a gently used wedding gown that was purchased from our resale store.

Congratulations Shane and Karla with many happy returns and blessings for your marriage.

Love, Shannon
Thrift Store Manager and Team



Karla is enjoying her honeymoon at newsletter press-time, but stay connected for more articles to come.

Trinity Baptist Community Day

We were extremely blessed to have Trinity Baptist Church in June! They were beautifying our campus, repairing benches in our park, and serving breakfast to our homeless friends. What an incredible group - we had all ages working side by side, and all said they were grateful to help their community!



Food 4 Kids Provides 211,884 meals this year, by Delores Bulgin, Food 4 Kids Manager

Even with the ongoing Pandemic, Food 4 Kids finished the school year strong. It is heartwarming to think of the students that were provided for this year due to the support of caring individuals, businesses, organizations, and churches.

Thanks to this support and to the many volunteers who gave more than **1,522 hours of their time**, Food 4 Kids provided food to a total of **1,363 students** enrolled in the program. Backpacks provided **211,884 meals**. Special thanks to all the Guidance Counselors at **37 schools in Marion County** for their hard work in making sure the backpacks got to the students. With the help of all the businesses, organizations, and churches and successful food drives, we were able to provide food for students for the school 2020 – 2021 school year! We are already planning for the upcoming school year, so if you would like to get involved here are ways you can help:

- \$25.00 will feed one student for a month
- \$35.00 will buy one backpack (we purchase 500 plus backpacks a year)
- \$100.00 will provide a months' worth of food for 4 students
- \$250.00 will buy one weeks' worth of Mac & Cheese
- \$700.00 will buy backpacks for one school
- \$1000.00 will feed 40 students for one month



If you would like to discuss other options for how you can make a difference in a student's life, please contact me at delores.bulgin@iesmarion.org or 352-620-8239. We are looking forward to the start of the new 2021 – 2022 school year and how God will bless Food 4 Kids and the students of Marion County.

Being a blessing to these school-aged children is easy to do. Donations can be made online at www.IESmarion.org and mailed to Post Office Box 992, Ocala FL 34478 (we can also provide donation envelopes). We are especially grateful for our supporters that provide monthly donations for this program - it helps to keep our budget going strong.

God bless each and every person, church, business, club and organization that has supported us throughout the year! Keep the blessings coming!

Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Nelwyn Yeary
By: Thomas & Evelyn Weaver
Bill & Jean Stinson
Woodrow & Rita Clymer
Gloria Ann Rogers
Beverly Byrne
Fred & Carolyn Roberts
Phillip & Mary Hanes
Jimmy & Patricia Chambers
George & Janice Eatmon
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Harv Soff
By: Alpha Delta Kappa
Brad Pease
By: Joyce & Calvin Wonders
J King "Butch" Owen
By: Charlotte & Carswell Ponder
Dr Thomas Fuller
By: Andy & Louann DeSantis
Rev George & Marty Smith
Lou Wallace
By: Margaret Vandenburgh
Lee Goodson
By: Alice Goodson

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 Kayla.Hess@IESmarion.org. Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

In MEMORY of: (continued)

Bernice Juergens
By: Edward & Beth Lewis
Carol Bailey
By: Carswell & Charlotte Ponder
Rose & Ray Negron
By: Mary Chang
Dr Jack Stechschulte
By: Benjamin & Helen Hayes
Rambo
By: Elite Equestrian LLC
Trudy Boone
Rick Goolsby
By: Susan Greiner
In HONOR of:
Pamela Parins-Fisher
By: The Spinosa Group
Wilma Andrews
By: Cynthia Andrews
Andy DeSantis, Jr
David DeSantis
By: Andy & Louann DeSantis

Special Thanks to...

Thank you for these donations (in pounds): Ocala West United Methodist Church: 801; Reddick Collier Elementary: 271; First Assembly Church of God: 292; Twilight Cruisers: 92; American Panel: 122; Grace Episcopal Church: 102; CEP: 653; College Park Church of God Women's Ministry: 151; Auto Zone Distributors: 427; Trinity Baptist: 144 pounds of food & hygiene items, First Presbyterian Church: 1,049 pounds of food & hygiene; Paradise Ministries: 44 cases & 6 bags of food and Countryside Presbyterian Crafty Christians: 11 bedmats w/fleece & 5 child crocheted afghans.

Thank you so much Becky and Glenn O'Connor for their generous donation of men's shirts and shoes! We



are so grateful! Not even 30 minutes after they donated these much needed items we had two friends living on the streets show up with no shoes or socks! This blessing was right on time.

Becky and her grandkids

Interfaith Saved Us in our Greatest Time of Need, Rose Lopez, Client and Volunteer

I'm not new to Interfaith, as I needed help when I first moved to Florida back in 2014. Interfaith provide me with healthcare when I needed a doctor. When I decided I wanted to give back, I did a tour of Interfaith with Tina, the Volunteer Coordinator. I told Tina to share my family's story and how God provided for us. His mercy and grace surrounds us always.

In 2020, when the pandemic hit, my husband was the food and bar manager at a local hotel property. At that time, almost all the employees were furloughed. The GM of the hotel told all employees to go and volunteer at Interfaith and that they would be helped at the same time. This was the most difficult time in our lives as my husband was the only one employed. We also met Maxi at the Warehouse, who is one of God's angels - she was so helpful to us. We also learned that we could get help with food. For several months we made that car-line and by the grace of God we were provided with what we needed until unemployment and food stamps would help sustain us. Interfaith also helped with our mortgage and a utility bill for us when we needed it. My husband was offered employment again that September and is back at work. It still is a long road, but God is good and always on time. We do share a vehicle now, but my spirit has been moved to pay it forward to our community. It is with such admiration and humility that I could give of myself as much as God can allow me. Now, I volunteer at the Warehouse, and I love helping others. It is my honor to serve God as his servant.

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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.

Special Donation Provides Beautiful New Smile by Diane Coleman, Center for Life Manager

Last month we were blessed to have a “blessing fund” available to use for clients needing things not normally covered. When Karla asked me if I had any clients who have a special need, I instantly knew who I felt needed a blessing!

Meet April who has a new wonderful smile! April is one of our clients at Center for Life and she had all her teeth extracted some time back using one of our partners, FreeDOM Dental. She could not afford a set of dentures, so she has been trying to adjust her diet since then.

Because she was not eating properly this led to stomach issues and visits to our local emergency rooms. All this prompted me to put in a blessing request for April to get a complete set of dentures!

We used a local company, Affordable Dentures, and within 10 days April was fitted, dentures made, and loving her new smile! Thank you to our donors that make these special blessings such a priceless gift to those in need.

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

