

Upcoming Events in September and October



The 5th Annual **Walk a Mile in My Shoes** kicks off on September 18th this year and we would love for you to join us! This one-mile walk is like no other. Participants get to experience the conditions for just a few minutes that many of our homeless live with every day.

Help us reach our goal of \$25,000

- Register to become a walker (Individuals and Teams!)
- Support a walker by becoming their champion
- Be a volunteer

Thank you to our sponsor



GIVE4MARION On September 21st, Ocala/Marion County is taking part in an exciting adventure for local non-profits. GIVE4MARION is one unique 24-hour day of giving and an opportunity to unite our community around causes in which we truly believe and support.



Join our campaign and donate!

- Tell friends and family about us and ask them to give
- Connected on social media for special stories, videos and updates (and share them)
- Become a matching partner for donations during the 24 hour campaign
- Become a Champion and create your own support page to share with others!

There are many ways to help – join us as we work with the community to help our community!

Florida Feast will be on October 14th at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion. It's the perfect fall event with great food, silent auctions, raffles and an opportunity to socialize with friends and family. This event sells out quickly. Ticket and tables are available for purchase - call Sonya for details at (352) 644-9202. We also need silent auction donations! Funds from Florida Feast go to our food pantry, that provides for thousands of individuals and families in need.



**Auction Winner
Brittany Beall at
Florida Feast**

**Check out our website for information about
all of these awesome events at www.IESmarion.org**

Do you follow Interfaith on social media? There's lots of ways to stay connected - through Facebook, Twitter and even Instagram! It's a great way to catch all the latest news and happenings. God is so good - there's so many stories and pictures to share that they cannot all fit in our newsletter each month! You can keep up with special projects that are happening, volunteer opportunities and donation requests when we really have a need!

If you do follow us, make sure you give us a like, or even share the stories! You never know when one of your friends or neighbors needs to hear an inspirational story or may even need to know about our services. We appreciate it!

Serving Marion County Since 1983

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley-Greenway



Thank you all for the well-wishes and kind words regarding my June wedding. We had a small but lovely ceremony on Cocoa Beach with close friends and family. God was gracious and held back the rain for us so it was better than I could have hoped for. I look forward to introducing you all to my husband, Shane, at future events. He is an answer to prayer for me and is 100% in support of our ministry here at Interfaith.

One thing is for certain, though...change is going to happen! This month I want to share some of the current projects we are working on to expand our ministry. Thanks to new funding received through the County Community Services Department and our local Continuum of Care, we now have a team of 5 employees that are dedicated to the homeless population that can't get into shelter. Two of them are Engagement Specialists (boots on the ground) and engage with the chronically homeless and those living outdoors, many with disabilities and other difficult circumstances. We also have 2 Housing Specialists that take on cases once people have income and are ready to be housed. Then we have one person dedicated to preventing people from becoming homeless when facing evictions or another housing crisis. This group has diverted 75 homeless individuals by sending them back to their hometowns, once it's determined that they have support and housing opportunities there. They have also permanently housed 69 people that were previously living on the streets, in cars or in the woods. Overall they've served 814 homeless individuals in some way. Keep in mind that we added these staff members without adding any additional office space so they have managed to accomplish all of this with less than standard work accommodations. Therefore, we are in the process of building an Engagement Center behind our Center for Life building located on Pine Ave. This will become our central intake building for all of the services we offer including food, clothing, ID's, and hygiene items. This will also be where we offer the case-management and other related services to people experiencing homelessness. Once this building is in place and houses our current intake offices, we can expand our emergency shelter so that we can help more women and children in that ministry. Currently we can't accommodate families of 4 or more due to a lack of bedspace. With this expansion we will no longer have to leave moms with multiple children living in their cars (or worse). The most exciting part of our expansion plan, however, is the potential acquisition of a small apartment complex where we can offer permanent supportive housing to our homeless clients suffering from disabilities. All of these opportunities to serve this most vulnerable population are truly an answer to prayer. Not just our prayers, but those desperate prayers of those who live in a state of hopelessness without a home. I will keep you informed as we move forward and there will be invitations to help us in various ways. Rest assured we will need partners to make this all complete, so please be in prayer about where God may use you in this ministry. As always, we appreciate all of the support from this local community.

"He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God." Proverbs 14:31

Dillard's Surprises Shelter Ladies



Dawn and Michelle at Dillard's

felt like princesses! Driving home after one of the fittings, a newer resident hugged me and told me this was the first time she was able to get a new bra of her own.

We were so surprised to learn that each of our shelter ladies would receive 2 custom-fitted bras of their own and 2 pairs of panties! As they were handed out, the smiles were so uplifting and the gratitude was endless. Thank you to Dillard's and their staff for making our ladies feel so special!

by Michelle Collier, Shelter Case Manager

The Nose Knows

Introducing Big Bertha! The newest "employee" at Interfaith Thrift Store. We are so grateful to our board who approved the expenditure of a brand-new floor scrubber. Just one more way we are trying to upgrade the store and honor the many donations provided to us by providing a cleaner, friendlier experience. Floor scrubber is shown with volunteer, Champ Edelmann.

Stop by the store at 718 N Pine and shop today!



by Shannon Pickering, Manager

Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Russel Hogan

By: Barbara Schwartz

Bonnie Schulz

By: Mr & Mrs Ned Monaghan

Jim Senke

By: Patricia Gamble

James Whitson

By: Mary Barber MD

Carol Mammana

By: Meredith Martin

Tony Azevedo

By: Susan Azevedo

Scot Copeland

By: Thomas & Patricia Patrick

Robert Weech

By: Theresa Weech

Frank Tuck

By: Marie & Bill Tuck, Jr

Cindy Morse

Keith Duncan

By: Nathan & Patricia Gilman

Sandra Neel

By Carswell & Charlotte Ponder

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.

naturally my first thought was who God would send to help us tend to these showers. We knew we would need someone to help us with scheduled shower days to be able to offer the service. We started calling it a Shower Ministry knowing that this could very well be a ministry for whoever felt called to oversee the showers for that day. We have seen several attendants come and go and have largely relied on the population we serve to help one another by overseeing the showers. I have been praying for God to place this ministry on the heart of who He would choose to be sure this is a service we can provide on a consistent (even daily) basis. We have several areas of need such as this right now. If you feel God tugging on your heart as you read this, please reach out to me. Know that I will not lock you into a commitment but would love to give you a tour of all our services and what God is doing in our community. God will lead you to what it is He asks of you. If you have already made the decision to look into volunteering please go to our website, iesmarion.org/volunteer, to see what opportunities we have. Once there you have the option to sign up and I will reach out to you to schedule your tour. Feel free to call or email me with any questions. (352)629-8868 ext 210, tina.reid@iesmarion.org.

Special Thanks to...

Thank you for these food donations (in pounds): Ocala West United Methodist Church: 341; First Assembly of God Church: 200; Countryside Presbyterian Church: 439; First Presbyterian Church: 53; American Panel: 143; Spruce Creek North: 651; and College Park Church of God: 130 pounds of food. Also Marion Surgery Center: 197 servings of cereal and Paradise Ministries: 60 cases of food.

Thank you to the 4th and 5th graders from Ocala First United Methodist Church! They came for a tour and after their tour they went shopping together for food to donate and managed to brought back almost 300 pounds!

Thank you to Grace Episcopal Church Ocala and New Day Christian Fellowship, for collecting hygiene and towels for our shower ministry!

Meadowbrook's Summer of Serving blessed us with towels and shower supplies, and purged closets of goodies for our Thrift Store! They also collected 721 pounds of food for Food 4 Kids program! You guys are awesome! (pictured right)



Outreach Team Reunites Homeless Man with Family

The success of our Christian organization is in the quality of love and passion we give our clients. I have had the honor to get to know so many clients. I serve them as if they were the only client I have. I have come to realize that this one-on-one time is vital to our clients. It is how they can relax, and we can get to know each other. No judgements, no preconceived ideas. This builds trust between us.

One day I came across a young man who was struggling with health, addiction, and mental issues. Gaining his trust took quite some time. Over several months I was able to find out that he had been on the streets for over 7 years and he was from Tennessee. I also learned he has 2 kids, is married, and has a huge family there that love him. We talked more and were able to bring him to a place where he accepted our services. We contacted his family and they were so happy and excited to hear from him. They wanted him to come home. We were able to unite him with his family. On top of that, he is back in church, with his wife and kids. They were able to get him the help he needed to heal and be healthy again. He emails me periodically and I always enjoy his updates. God is so good.

by Chris Downing, Engagement Specialist

Where is your Heart Leading you?

When we received a grant 2 years ago to repurpose our public bathrooms we had the opportunity to include showers in the new design. Because of my job here at Interfaith, naturally my first thought was who God would send to help us tend to these showers. We knew we would need someone to help us with scheduled shower days to be able to offer the service. We started calling it a Shower Ministry knowing that this could very well be a ministry for whoever felt called to oversee the showers for that day. We have seen several attendants come and go and have largely relied on the population we serve to help one another by overseeing the showers. I have been praying for God to place this ministry on the heart of who He would choose to be sure this is a service we can provide on a consistent (even daily) basis. We have several areas of need such as this right now. If you feel God tugging on your heart as you read this, please reach out to me. Know that I will not lock you into a commitment but would love to give you a tour of all our services and what God is doing in our community. God will lead you to what it is He asks of you. If you have already made the decision to look into volunteering please go to our website, iesmarion.org/volunteer, to see what opportunities we have. Once there you have the option to sign up and I will reach out to you to schedule your tour. Feel free to call or email me with any questions. (352)629-8868 ext 210, tina.reid@iesmarion.org.

by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator

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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.

A Different Kind of Disciple, by Jody Schaible, Campus Pastor

As Christ followers we are all called to make disciples. But how do we do that? “Disciple” is a word that’s not generally considered a part of everyday vocabulary in contemporary society, but it gets tossed around a lot in Christian circles. You might hear “called to be disciples of Christ” and “make disciples of all nations.” The concept seems very intimidating, and to a person who hasn’t spent a lifetime in church and wants to know God, it can be confusing. At Interfaith I run a low-key bike shop on Fridays. Our homeless friends on the street bring in their bikes that need repair and our volunteers work side by side with them to show how to fix their bikes. Recently one of my homies Jose, expressed an interest in helping and of course I was much obliged to allow him to step in. Before I knew it, Jose was teaching our volunteer tips and tricks with repairing the bikes. Wow what an amazing example of discipleship that is! By stepping back and allowing Jose to step up and help where most people wouldn’t give him a chance, his self-value and self-worth were increased. He started coming out of his shell, and it was what he needed to start him off on his path to Jesus. Now he is a regular attendee on Fridays to help with the bikes. Common ground has been discovered and we can learn from each other. While it is true that when we become Christians, we’re called to make disciples of others, we have to remember that discipleship has to start somewhere. Nobody becomes a disciple-maker overnight. God knows our hearts; He understands that we’re going to have to take baby steps to get from point A to point B. So don’t let all that “make disciples” talk frighten you away from seeking Christ and becoming His disciple.



Jose and Johnny

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19