



Good Works, Inc.

A Community of HOPE
Since 1981

"I made the widow's heart sing, I took up the case of the stranger, I was a father to the fatherless."
-Job 29:12-17

THE VISION OF GOOD WORKS

is to create and sustain a community of hope with and for people who are struggling with poverty, exclusion and homelessness in rural Appalachian Ohio. As a Christian community, we are seeking to grow in our love for God and for our neighbors through many different expressions of hospitality and service.

The Community of HOPE known as Good Works began in 1981. Founded by a then 22-year-old Keith Wasserman, the ministry God trusted us with began primarily as a personal project of hospitality. Keith invited people to stay in the remodeled basement of his home in Athens, Ohio during his last year at Ohio University. Like many other organizations, the vision, mission, and faith-in-action came long before the language. It was not until 1984 that we began to realize that the people we provided care and community to were called the homeless. Good Works is faith-based, and Christ is the center of our community. Governed by a voluntary board, our mission is to "connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the kingdom of God can be experienced."



We create contexts through which people from all walks of life can serve and build authentic relationships with their neighbors through hands-on and heart-felt service, which we understand as worship. Because we have experienced the transformation of God's love in our lives, we believe this is possible for others as well.

We work to build trust through creating contexts characterized by mutuality and reciprocity. The Timothy House, Sign of HOPE, The Transformation Station, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Friday Night Life, Work Retreats, and Summer Kids' Discovery Club and Summer Lunch are a few initiatives which reflect our mission.

This community has been sustained by the faithfulness of God, and the generosity of countless people over many years. Come along with us as we reach back into our history to celebrate God's faithfulness.

Space does not permit us to talk about all the fruitful initiatives that we have been trusted with over the years, but we look back with joy at the origins of these initiatives that we are still carrying out!





→ 1981 Good Works is Founded

With a vision motivated by the experience of transformation that occurred when he became a Christian, Keith Wasserman began providing shelter to those struggling with homelessness and poverty in rural Appalachian Ohio in early 1981. During his last year at Ohio University, Keith remodeled the basement of his home in Athens, Ohio into a two-bedroom apartment. He opened the shelter with the help of friends and supporters to serve what we then were calling "displaced persons." It was this initiative that we began to call Good Works, Inc..



→ 1984 Purchase of the Timothy House

In 1982, a board of directors was formed, and in 1984 the organization was incorporated with tax-exempt 501(c)3 status. In 1984, the Good Works Emergency Shelter moved out of the home of the Wasserman's and into its present facility on Central Avenue, which was named The Timothy House in 1999. Today, the Timothy House is the only home for men, women, and families with children who experience homelessness in eight southeast Ohio counties.



→ 1989 Internships

Since the late 1980's, Good Works has been facilitating internship opportunities. Today, residential and academic interns come to learn and serve with us. These opportunities for people to test out their gifts and sense of calling also infuse new life and energy into the community. Our hope continues that these would be mutual experiences in which staff and interns can learn from one another and grow together.



→ 1993 Friday Night Life

As people transitioned from our shelter and out of the situation of homelessness, the need to continue to facilitate the sense of community enjoyed there became apparent. Friday Night Life (FNL) was created as a way for former residents to form healthy friendship networks and stay connected with each other and to the staff and volunteers. FNL gathered in the basement of Central United Methodist Church until 2002, and now takes place at the Good Works Property on Luhrig Rd from April through September and The Plains UMC from October through March.



→ 1994 Luhrig Road Property

In 1989, we began our Lorene project as a long-term transitional house for residents after they left The Timothy House. In 1994 we re-developed this aspect of our ministry to offer a "live-with" approach in the Transitional House on the Good Works Luhrig Road property. The Transitional House was named Hannah House in 1997. In recent years we have constructed a picnic shelter, the Carter Cabin, the Administrative Office (including our Bed & Breakfast), the Transformation Station, Amphitheater, Hope Center, and two miles of trails on this beautiful 35-acre property.

Good Works Gardens 1995

As early as 1995, Good Works began using some of the land available on the Good Works Property to grow food. The purpose of the Good Works Gardens today is to empower people, especially those experiencing poverty, disability, and decreased physical ability due to aging, to provide nutritious food for themselves, their families, and neighbors. In doing this, we create a platform for generosity. We help plant and maintain gardens at the homes of 15 to 20 neighbors and continue to grow food in the garden at Good Works. In 2008 we launched a summer internship employing local teens to work alongside us in this initiative.



Work Retreats 1996

Originally called "Short-Term Mission Teams," our Work Retreat initiative began over 25 years ago with a vision to bring together groups of youth and adults to serve both on our properties and in our community, providing practical help to older adults, especially widows, and people with disabilities who often live in isolated rural areas of Appalachia. Each year, we welcome roughly 30 to 35 different groups who come to serve for a day, a weekend, or a whole week.



Neighbors Helping Neighbors 1998

Originally called "Samaritan Projects," we changed the name of this initiative to Neighbors Helping Neighbors a few years ago. We welcome groups of volunteers to visit our neighbors in Athens County, spend time with them, and do labor-intensive projects at their homes. Each year, nearly 400 volunteers participate. Since the program began, we have established relationships with more than 60 families, which include older adults or people with disabilities who find it difficult to care for their own homes.



The Good Works WALK 2003-2019

Originally called the "Walk for the Homeless," the Good Works WALK began in 2003. Our vision was to create an experience for adults and children of all ages which would help them deepen their understanding of the issues which affect people experiencing poverty, grow in compassion, and see ways they could love and care for their neighbors. The WALK turned out to be a very meaningful experience for many people and was a vital source of funding for the Timothy House. Our new fundraising initiative -DAY IN THE LIFE- began in 2020 and is designed to invite individuals and families to sponsor one-day of the Timothy House each year which is about \$500.00.



Transformation Station 2004

The Transformation Station is both a building (being constructed in this photo) and an opportunity for people who live in Athens County to obtain resources they need. By volunteering their time and using their skills and abilities to help other people, participants in the TS earn points they can "cash in" for a vehicle, appliance, bicycle, or box of food. In this way, it is our hope that participants experience an identity transformation leaving the identity of "needy" and entering a new identity of "volunteer." People who come to us with a need often discover how much they have to offer.



SIGN OF HOPE ←

Construction on our new home began in 2019 and was completed in 2023. SOH is located across the street from the Timothy House on the west side of Athens. This new expression of hospitality is focused primarily on people the Timothy House is unable to serve, especially anyone in a housing crisis who cannot climb steps due to a disability. The house also has a small laundromat to serve people in the Athens area who don't have access to a washer/dryer.



WE FEEL SO GRATEFUL that we've been invited to demonstrate God's love to people who often feel excluded and overlooked. Truly, it is our joy to walk with our neighbors here in rural Appalachia through good seasons and bad. To offer hospitality through the Timothy House, Sign of HOPE, The Transformation Station, and Friday Night Life, and likewise, to receive hospitality as we visit neighbors' homes—this brings us closer to living in the kind of community that we all long for—a community characterized by the justice, mercy, and love of God

Over and over as so many people come to serve with Good Works, to donate food and supplies, or to give financially, they discover that giving not only meets a need in the lives of our neighbors, but it also meets a need in the giver as well. Those of us on the board and staff of Good Works feel the same way. We may have come with some notion of what we have to offer but are continually in a process of discovering what we still need to receive. We are so grateful for everyone who has partnered with us—the faithfulness of our supporters is humbling. This is a trust as well, and what we can do together is so much more meaningful than what we could hope to accomplish on our own.



→ Invitation

Good Works exists to connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the kingdom of God can be experienced.

WE INVITE YOU to walk with us and support us as we extend our lives together in love and service through community. Good Works exists as a testimony of what a community can do when we intentionally work together and support one another. Join us as we experience innovation, creativity, and risk as we find new and sustainable ways to love people. You can contribute financially to the mission of Good Works by:

- Mailing a check made out to "Good Works, Inc."
- Contacting us to set up automated giving via your bank
- Making a secure online donation via our website
- Giving a gift in honor of a relative or friend via our website
- Consider making an in-kind donation from our Needs list or Wish list

Thank you for joining us as we extend our lives to embrace our neighbors. Our long journey continues to be filled with HOPE as we experience the goodness and faithfulness of God. We look forward to sharing a future together of what scripture calls "life that is truly life!" (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

Contact Us

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