

MANNA MATTERS

APRIL 2020



L: Volunteers Keoni and Gloribel



SEARCH & RESCUE

Inside the Manna Café emergency warming center in January, a demonstration of unity unfolded even as the weather turned frigid. Together, a

collection of organizations labored for one purpose: to take care of homeless Clarksvillians. Tanya Johnson and Shelly Cooper of Hands & Feet 4 Christ, a partner of Manna Café, watched it all play out.

On Sunday afternoon, as soon as Kenny determined that the warming center needed to open, Tanya and Shelly reached out to others. Shelly says, "The responses came immediately —Where can we plug in? How can we help?" Among those willing to assist were R41, YAIPaks, and Sheepdog Initiative. Volunteers to man the center

"The responses came immediately: Where can we plug in? How can we help?"



Volunteers (front to back) Scarlett, Gabriel, & dad Cody.

were rallied as YAIPaks and Sheepdog launched into Search & Rescue, which means they searched for everyone who needed a warm place to sleep and brought them to the center.

Says Tanya, "R41 was having their Sunday service (a weekly event geared toward the homeless) but cut it short and started shuttling people to us. Then they joined Search & Rescue."



MISSION STATEMENT:

"Manna Cafe serves people in need in Clarksville/Montgomery County through a soup kitchen on wheels, food box distribution, and other vital resources. Propelled chiefly by volunteers, Manna Café strives to restore hope, dignity, self-reliance, community, and the love of God through Jesus Christ."

RESCUE, CONT'D.

Each day, explains Shelly, "R41 ministered one-on-one with folks. They talked and prayed with people. They also brought crock pot dinners." Regarding Sheepdog, she says, "They've refined the warming center process each time we've opened, making it super-efficient. At least one of their volunteers stayed every night until lights out, if not longer. And they're always instrumental in tearing down when we close."

All four organizations collaborated to meet people's basic needs such as clothing. "We'd send a message if we lacked something," says Shelly, "like men's boots size 12, and they'd happily bring it." As guests left on the final day, each received a sleeping bag in addition to other essentials.

Many more individuals and groups got involved as well. For example, the Women in Transition Bible



L: Shelly Cooper R: Tanya Johnson

study group manned the kitchen hour after hour. Vineyard Church supplied a taco bar one evening. And Delectable Sweets closed their doors for a full day, posting a

sign that encouraged people to join their employees in volunteering at the center.

As Tanya points out, the teamwork between Hands & Feet, R41, YAIPaks, and Sheepdog "proved that it's possible for nonprofits to work together to take care of people. We can be very diverse but still collaborate." Shelly adds, "The organizations that we've built these relationships with — we all have the same mindset. It's not *my clients*, it's not *your clients* — it's *our community*. We all have something to provide to make our city a better place."

"Like I heard on WAY-FM today," concludes Tanya: "The world is full of kind people; if you can't find one, be one."

Hands & Feet: Directors – Tanya Johnson and Shelly Cooper *

facebook.com/handsandfeet4christ

YAIPaks: Founder – Sherry Nicholson *
facebook.com/YAIPaks

R41 Ministries: Pastor – Jeremiah Simms
* facebook.com/R41Clarksville

Sheepdog Initiative: Founder – Dustin Maxfield * facebook.com/SDI0625 *
www.sheepdoginitiative.org

Women in Transition: Group leader – Minister Zoyie Jackson

Vineyard Church: Lead Pastor – Landon Meadows * www.clarksvillevineyard.com

thank you

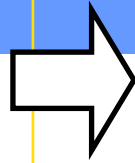
Late last summer, as Manna Cafe moved from the Franklin St. location to the Manna Village, we were without a kitchen as our new one was being constructed. Living Hope Church



stepped up, letting us use theirs for six months — free of charge. They have sown into Manna repeatedly, both monetarily and otherwise, even hosting Mobile Pantries on Fridays (a difficult day to fill).

Therefore, this month we'd like to extend our thanks to Pastor Derek Smith and the amazing Living Hope church family. We appreciate you!

A WORD FROM KENNY



A MATTER OF MIND-SET



How can YOU make an enormous impact in Clarksville? Become a "specialty volunteer" at Manna Cafe.

Currently, we need someone to **oversee vehicle maintenance**. This person should have knowledge of commercial vehicles and a knack for organization.

We also need a few more **intake office workers**.

Requirements include basic computer knowledge and excellent people skills.

Do you qualify? If so, contact our volunteer coordinator at hope@mannacafeministries.com or 931-237-0525.

Image by [Robin Higgins](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Sitting here in a coffee shop on a rainy day, it's hard to believe that a month ago I was halfway around the world in Cape Town, South Africa, in the middle of a 7-day mission trip — immediately *after* 8 days of ministry in Cambodia! Vicki and I came back from our excursion (18 days in all) with many stories and great memories, things that have changed our lives forever. I personally came back with a lot of thoughts on poverty, ideas about how to do ministry differently ... and plenty of questions.

"I came back with a lot of thoughts on poverty ... and plenty of questions."

One observation that was like a neon sign to me was the amount of trash everywhere, especially Cambodia. I saw that there's a strong parallel between trash and poverty. In the slums, where the poverty was greatest, the trash was visibly worse, especially plastic items. There were plastic bags and bottles everywhere. We've all heard about people who are forced to live in trash dumps, but I've never heard anyone talk about the areas where people live that gradually *turn into* trash dumps. But it was obvious that this had been happening for years. In South Africa the problem wasn't quite as drastic, but it was there.

It dawned on me that we have the same issues here in the States — for instance,



A passageway between shanty town dwellings. Phenom Phen, Cambodia.

WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE DEVASTATING TORNADOES OF LAST MONTH, MANNA CAFE WAS AT GROUND ZERO, DISTRIBUTING HOT MEALS AND LOVING ON DISASTER VICTIMS AND VOLUNTEERS. AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, DISASTER RELIEF INVOLVED MANY UNEXPECTED COSTS. FINANCIAL GIFTS TO HELP OFFSET THOSE EXPENSES WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED. THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO GIVE:



MANNACAFEMINISTRIES.COM/DONATE

TEXT "GIVE" TO 931-542-4772

SEND CHECKS TO 1960-J MADISON ST. #312 * CLARKSVILLE, TN * 37043



"HOW DO WE CHANGE MIND-SETS AND REEDUCATE PEOPLE SO THEY THINK BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT?"

in poorer communities like projects and trailer parks the trash is much more noticeable than in the suburbs. It's also apparent in the homeless community. In fact, one of the things that gets homeless camps into trouble is when there's trash everywhere.

Without getting into a conversation about the evils of plastic, I'll say that I was left with way more questions than answers. *What is it about poverty that makes someone not care about their surroundings, community, or even home? ... Is it that their mind is so focused on lack that they can't see or take pride in what they do have? ... Does a lack of self-worth alter how they see their community? ... Are some folks just lazy? ...* And so on.

At some level the answer to all these questions

might be yes. But maybe the real question is, What do we do about it? How do we change mind-sets and reeducate people so they think better about themselves and their environment (both of which are God's creation)?

Part of the poverty mentality is this: *Society tells me I'm trash and disregards me as though I'm trash; therefore, I must be trash.*

So I wonder if one way to fight poverty is to simply pick up trash? What if that's a key step in restoring a community? As we clean up and give the community a facelift, residents might start thinking better about not just the community but themselves. Maybe those

thought patterns instilled by poverty can be reversed. By taking a little more pride in their community, maybe people will take a little more pride in themselves. We're going to give it a try in the community that



Image by Anastasia Gepp from Pixabay

surrounds the Manna Village. We're putting a new emphasis on cleaning up by sending prayer teams out to pray and collect trash in our neighborhood. I'll let you know what happens. Peace out.

Happy Birthday!

On May 6, Manna Cafe will be 10 years old! Stay tuned for celebration plans!