

from the December 14, 2011 Broadcast

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.." Romans 8:28



Yes, great things can be accomplished when God's people work together for good. This was clearly evident in the following stories that recently transpired within a two week period at our CityHeart Outreach Ministry. Working in partnership with others in the community we were able to resolve these situations.

Case # 1 Tanya

Tanya called one morning and spoke with CityHeart volunteer Carole looking for help with rent, she lost her job and unemployment has run out. Unless you are a veteran or have children in your home there is no place we can refer people who need money to pay the rent. We offered a small pledge and gave Tanya strategies for calling other churches. Since Tanya lived in Trotwood, Carole wondered if St. Margaret's in Trotwood might be willing to help also. Carole knows Fr. Ben there and made the call on behalf of Tanya. He agreed to partner with us, and we matched his pledge amount. This gave Tanya the hope she needed, and by lunchtime the same day she left a message that another church was also offering a matching pledge. Now that Tanya had half of the total needed, her friends and family came together to give her the other half. In a few short hour she had raised \$300.00!!

Case # 2 Jerry

I had been working with a man that same week, Jerry, who was trying to flee Dayton in fear of gang threats. He had been beaten up and taken to the hospital, a result of problems with the son of his girlfriend. Dayton detectives wanted him to press charges and testify; but could not offer any protection. Jerry stayed the night in the men's homeless shelter, where gang members came in and beat him again. Twice to the hospital in three days, all he wanted was to get out of town. Jerry had family in the Washington DC area, a brother and aunt. Jerry had lived there previously and thought he had enough connections to make the move, if he could just get there. Although we like to keep our funds local, this situation was approaching life or death for Jerry. I called a friend, one of the pastors at First Baptist Church, to see if he would be willing to help with what we would consider an emergency. He agreed and we split the cost of an \$86.00 Greyhound bus ticket to get Jerry on the 6:10 bus that same day. One last call to his aunt told Jerry that she would be awaiting his arrival with some extra clothes from his brother, a bed, and a hot meal!

Case # 3 Glenda

Glenda is one of our neighbors at the Biltmore Towers, a senior/disabled residential property. Glenda had an unusual situation. It began when her car got towed from the apartment parking lot because the tags had expired. She was just shy of the funds needed to pay the license costs at the time it was towed. Over a week later, and with a lot of help on the mounting fees she was able to get the car out of the impound. She lost her coveted parking space in the course of this time because the facility does not have ample parking, instead they have a waiting list for spaces. Because of all the extra expenses, Brenda could not afford to pay for monthly parking in an adjacent lot. She was running out and back, morning and night, to move the car from metered parking spaces in downtown Dayton. Hearing that we had helped other tenants of the building, she called to see if there was anything we could do. Since we are associated with PMI Parking that operates our church lot and many others nearby, I contacted their office and upon hearing this story they immediately agreed to offer a temporary parking pass for Glenda to use just one block away from her building. Because of the church's long term contract and the goodwill that has been established between us, PMI was happy to partner with CityHeart to help in this case. Although we were happy to bring together a temporary solution, Brenda remains in ongoing negotiations with Biltmore to get her parking situation remedied permanently. With gratitude and a sense of newfound determination we are confident that she will.

In Romans chapter 8, Paul writes to his followers about living a life in the Spirit, a life that may include some pain and suffering. And yet, as the scripture says "if we are children of God, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." In this season of Advent these scriptures remind us that "the creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed." Not all days at CityHeart go so smoothly and not all situations are resolved so quickly. These are the days when I believe that we have glimpsed the hope of God's glory yet to be revealed.

Kris Sexton