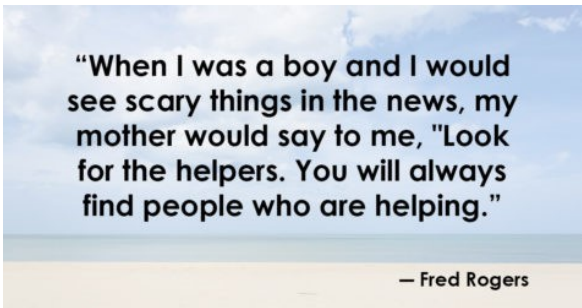


Keeping the Faith – A Year in the Life of the COVID-19 Pandemic

By Carol Murphy, President Harvest House Ministries

I don't save many things on my phone – family pictures, special events at Harvest House, etc. --- but as I scanned my photos recently I was in awe of a quote I saved March 14, 2020, just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit our community...



"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

— Fred Rogers

This quote could not have been more prophetic. When it seemed like the world was falling apart, our community found its helpers.... the fixers, the menders, the solvers. The volunteers and staff at Harvest House who leaned on their faith, family and friends as guides as we faced the pandemic head-on.

I sat down with our team last week to listen to their stories of resilience and hope. I asked questions like: Who inspired you this year? What did you rely on to get through this year? What did we do differently that will benefit the ministries moving forward?

They say that with challenge comes opportunity. I look forward to having the opportunity to continue to serve with this incredible team of "Helpers." We're just beginning to truly understand the impact on all our lives but here are some thoughts we shared about helping some of the people hardest hit by the pandemic.

The neighbors who called desperate for information on the virus...

"In the early days, we were literally answering phone calls seven days a week to reassure our patients we were still here and provide information on COVID to keep the virus from spreading."

The woman who was helped just days before we found out COVID hit our community... *"She said she'd come down with COVID and wanted to make sure she hadn't infected our ministry (she had not). I can't explain why none of us came down with COVID. We prayed to GOD to protect us and I truly believe HE did."*

The mother who was frantically searching bare store-shelves to find formula for her baby...

"I'm a mom. I can't imagine not being able to feed my baby. We're seeing so much food insecurity. That really hits me hard." - We posted an urgent message on our Facebook site and within hours people were dropping off baby formula.

The senior who needed help getting insulin for her ailing husband who has diabetes...

"She was feeling really scared and alone. We prayed with her and then went to work filling out patient assistance forms to get his meds. I'm so grateful to have been here for them during this crisis."

The young man who told us gravely that he'd lost his job and was ready to give up...

"He decided that if he made it all the way to our doors and found them closed he would take that as a sign and end his life. Thank goodness we were here!"

The community that tells us we're making a difference...

"A client told me this place was a ram in the bush for her (a reference to GOD's gift to always provide a ram in the bush to help His children). She told us she heard in the community this is the place that helps people. That means a lot to me."

We laughed and cried about serving during a pandemic...

"I can't believe the courage of our Board of Directors to keep the doors open. They didn't know how any of this was going to play out but put the needs of our community first... And then they set to work making sure we had the money to keep serving."

Special thanks to our Board, The WNY COVID-19 Community Response Fund, M&T Bank for helping us file for a PPP Loan, and the MANY foundations and individual donors who helped us inflate the lifeboat.

"I've never worked in a place where people support each other so much. This was a tough year but I never felt like I was doing this on my own."

"Oh, the ever changing Department of Health and CDC mandates! We had to take our service model and flip it on its' head three or four times a day. I remember running on sheer adrenaline some days and then going home completely exhausted, rushing past my family to throw all my clothes in the wash and into the shower to keep them all safe. That was a scary time."

"I'm glad we were able to help pivot to online learning so our nursing students could graduate and join the (medical teams on the) frontline... but man am I tired of the ZOOM life!"

"Some of our volunteers stayed involved hosting prayer groups online even though they couldn't come down to the ministries. That really kept me going."

"I remember how relieved I was to get the vaccine. I know this isn't over and we have lots of work left to do, but it gave me hope that we're finally getting our arms around this."

"I think COVID forced us to look at how we serve and make changes to our service delivery; really focusing on our patients, not us."

"We helped people who have lost everything. It changed my perspective about what's really important."



**THANK YOU to all
our Helpers for being
truly Good Neighbors;
Bringing our community
together when we
needed each other**

Harvest House is Working to Advance Racial Equity



Race Matters Institute
a program of JustPartners, Inc.

www.racemattersinstitute.org

Harvest House Board of Directors and Staff are focusing on initiatives to advance racial equity in Western New York. Our President, Carol Murphy and Housing Director, Darwin Rosales are participating in a series of Racial Equity coaching sessions presented by The Race Matters Institute. This initiative of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and The United Way will help us get beyond talking about racial equity to effect needed systems change.

*“Serving a diverse community is hard work. Every person we meet has a different story, a different perspective,” says Carol Murphy. “Harvest House has been serving this community for 28 years. Gary and Linda Tatu were ahead of their time when it came to making a commitment to racial equity and serving in a diverse community. They recognized early on that you **earn** trust each and every day. We’re committed to carrying on that legacy not just today but into the future.”*

Carol and Darwin will be our “coaches” using the RMI’s groundbreaking Racial Impact Analysis tool to make key decisions and review policies and procedures that may contribute to racial inequities. The goal is to provide a service model within each ministry that can help lead system change through the lens of the following three pathways toward social and economic justice.

Diversity is the presence of differences that may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective - Populations that have been-and remain-underrepresented and marginalized in the broader society.



Equity is promoting justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities.

Inclusion is an outcome to ensure those who are diverse actually feel and/or are welcomed. Inclusion outcomes are met when you, your institution, and your program are truly inviting to all, allowing diverse individuals to participate fully in the decision-making processes and development opportunities within an organization.

A former student recently wrote a letter to instructor, Bob Gibson, one of our education partners from 716 Ministries who teaches job-skills classes at New Hope. Supported by a grant from Empire State Workforce Development, this class helps our students prepare to enter the workforce.

“Hey Bob, how’s everything? Hope all is well with you and the family. I was thinking about all of the current social events going on as far as social justice and equality and it’s everything we talked about in our group meetings. I want to thank you and the rest of the staff because before this became world-wide awareness you guys and ladies were willing to really listen and begin to understand our stories. You guys had no idea what was happening in our community and you just let us express our experiences living in the African American community. I want to sincerely thank you for that opportunity.”

Here are examples of how Harvest House will use the Racial Equity Impact Analysis (REIA) Tool to continue to advance racial equity in our community:



Host Community Listening Sessions

The community we serve is diverse. We need to continue to be active learners. The voices at our listening tables will represent diverse communities... The African American Community, Hispanic/Latinx, Veterans, (Dis)Able, Immigrants, LGBTQ, etc... Each group bringing a rich fabric of many different cultural traditions and faiths to help us better understand the needs of our community.

Build a Diverse Team of staff and Volunteers

Harvest House has worked hard to develop a diverse staff and Board, this doesn't happen by chance, it happens with intention. We will continue to make a commitment to building a diverse team to help us understand the needs of our community and address issues of equal access to medical care, education and safety-net services.

Bring Systems Change to our Community

We will look to see which internal “systems” need to be modified in order to close racial gaps and bring more equity into our organization. How are our policies and procedures perceived by those we serve? Do

they serve us, or do they serve our community? What revisions need to be made to frame our programs in more inclusive ways?

“The pandemic has hit this community especially hard,” says Darwin Rosales, MSW. “We see the challenges in the community, but we also see the courage and resilience not to give up during this challenging time. A racial equity centered approach will provide us with the tools we need to treat everyone in a dignified and inclusive way. According to the greatest servant in history, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life for his friends. (John 15: 12-13).”

Join us in learning more! Here are some recommendations from racial equity advocates at Harvest House:

Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race

Beverly Daniel Tatum, PH.D.

Adults both white and of color, often hesitate to speak to children about racism for fear they will create problems where perhaps none exist, afraid that they will make “colorblind” children unnecessarily color-conscious. Tatum shows the importance — and possibility — of cross-racial dialogues, highlighting the urgent need for conversations about race.



I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Maya Angelou

This 1969 autobiography describes the early years of American writer and poet Maya Angelou. This coming-of-age story illustrates how strength of character and a love of literature can help overcome racism and trauma.

Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor

Layla F. Saad

This NY Times bestselling author leads readers through a journey of understanding their white privilege and participation in white supremacy, so that they can stop (often unconsciously) inflicting damage on Black, Indigenous and People of Color, and in turn, help other white people do better, too.

From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America

Elizabeth Hinton

In the U.S. today, one in every thirty-one adults is under some form of penal control, including one in eleven African American men. How did the “land of the free” become the home of the world’s largest prison system? This Harvard Historian traces the rise of mass incarceration to an ironic source: the social welfare programs implemented at the height of the civil rights era.

PBS Series: The Black Church: This is our Story, This is our Song

Henry Louis Gates

This moving series from executive producer, host and writer Henry Louis Gates, Jr., traces the 400-year-old story of the Black church in America, all the way down to its bedrock role as the site of African American survival and grace, organizing and resilience, thriving and testifying, autonomy and freedom, solidarity and speaking truth to power.



If you would like to be a helping hand to allow Harvest House to continue our fight for racial equity, justice, spiritual welfare, human rights, affordable housing, education, healthcare, dental care, and much more.....

**Help us
make a difference!**

go to www.harvesthousebuffalo.org and click on the donate button

Or mail your check to:
Harvest House
175 Jefferson Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14210





Good Neighbors Healthcare Continues to provide vital services during the pandemic

By Kait Gannon, Program Coordinator, Good Neighbors Primary Care

With rollout of the new COVID-19 vaccine early in the year, a light at the end of this very dark tunnel began to emerge. There was new hope in the air. Like with many new things, however, this hope did not come without challenges, questions and concerns. For many of our patients at Good Neighbors Healthcare, talk of the vaccine led to just that.

As we sifted through the many questions we received, we pinpointed two basic areas where we knew we could tangibly help make the process easier for those in our community: education and vaccine scheduling.

While listening to the questions we received regarding the vaccine, we quickly realized that there was a lot of misinformation that needed to be addressed. Our staff in Good Neighbors quickly got to work researching and educating themselves about the vaccine, its side effects, and how it works. We were committed to learning as much as we could to give the most educated answers to the patients we serve.

Next, we realized that finding and scheduling an appointment for a vaccine was a huge obstacle for many people. Patients who wanted to receive the vaccine struggled to find their eligibility status and a local appointment time. Our Good Neighbors staff implemented a simple process for helping our patients get an appointment that worked for their schedule and transportation needs.

While the pandemic continues to bring change, and the COVID-19 vaccine becomes more readily available, Good Neighbors staff will continue to diligently work alongside our community to provide the most up to date information, care and assistance.

How to contact us:

Harvest House Ministry Center
175 Jefferson Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14210-1038

Good Neighbors Health Care 716-856-2400
GoodNeighbors@harvesthousebuffalo.org

Baby & Children's Ministry 716-824-7818
Babyministry@harvesthousebuffalo.org

New Hope Education Center 716-855-0654
NewHope@harvesthousebuffalo.org

Administrative Office 716-855-0654 x230
blutz@harvesthousebuffalo.org

Harvest House Retreat Center
1782 Seneca Street
Buffalo, NY 14210-1895

Retreat Center 716-825-0929
Ltatu@harvesthousebuffalo.org

Visit us at:
www.harvesthousebuffalo.org

UB Dental Students bring a smile to Good Neighbors Dental Care



Special thanks to the Eighth District Dental Society for bringing fourth-year dental students and faculty from the University at Buffalo's School of Dental Medicine to Good Neighbors Dental Care one Saturday each month. "We're thrilled to have UB students and faculty join our volunteer providers at our dental office," said Dr. Patty Haberman, Dental Director of The Dental Office at Good Neighbors. "The Eighth District Dental Foundation heard of the retirement of several of our amazing volunteer dentists. Along with helping us rebuild that network, they brainstormed how to serve the significant needs in our community."

The Dental Office at Good Neighbors, an affiliate of Harvest House Ministries, offers donated dental services to Buffalo's working poor, improving access to dental care for adults who are uninsured and underserved. The office is operated by an all-volunteer dental staff and is supported by donations.

Good Neighbors has seen a growing need in our community for emergency dental services due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and special COVID protocols have been implemented to keep patients, volunteers and staff safe from COVID-19. "The need in our community has always been great but our ministries and services are needed now more than ever," said Dr. Haberman. "The dental students from UB have been unable to participate in traditional outreach efforts due to the pandemic so they are sharing their energy and talents with us. It's a great fit" she added.

We have been blessed to continue our services during the COVID-19 pandemic and have received donations from individuals and community foundations to pay for increases in supplies and PPE. We also needed to purchase a remote handheld X-ray device which assists with social distancing between patients, staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to Dr. Patty Haberman for her leadership, providing compassionate and faith-filled care in our private practice environment.



Program Coordinator Joycelyn Moss, who is specially trained in infection control, provides an unwavering smile and assurance to our neighbors in need.

Special thanks to our fabulous funders: The WNY Community Response Fund, the Eighth District Dental Foundation, and Dr. Donald A. Tucker DDS, for helping us purchase a new hand-held X-ray device – keeping our patients and volunteers safe!



Making Plans to Reopen The Harvest House Retreat Center

After being closed to due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are now allowed to have day and overnight summer camp programs at our Retreat Center .



Facilities (which are handicapped accessible) include large conference and retreat rooms, a main sanctuary, and five living room style rooms for meeting or dormitory-style sleeping. We also provide a gymnasium, game room, fully equipped kitchen, bathrooms with showers and a large dining room.

Our fees are:

\$10 per person (day only)

\$30 per person overnight weekday

\$60 per person overnight weekend

\$100 per person/per week



If you have a group interested in joining us for retreats, prayer services, bible study or community service programs please give us a call at (716) 825-0929.



Chapel



Conference Room



Fully Equipped Kitchen



**Dining Room
Seats 85**



Game Room



CONGRATULATIONS CAROL!

Working for Women (W4W), a national organization whose mission is to facilitate strategic partnerships between businesses and nonprofits, has honored Carol Murphy, President of Harvest House Ministries, for her innovative work empowering underserved women in Buffalo.



working for women™

Each week Working for Women spotlights a national leader on their **Women Crush Wednesday** social media blog dedicated to elevating women in the workforce. The Western New York Women's Foundation submitted this nomination for Ms. Murphy's work during the COVID-19 pandemic.



As President of this non-profit, Carol led the opening of Harvest House's New Hope Education Center, which provides workforce development training courses leading to livable wage jobs. Harvest House breaks down the barriers keeping people in poverty by providing integrated, inclusive support services for the working poor, the unemployed, the marginalized, and communities at risk.

In addition to Carol's work to support communities of color during COVID, Harvest House also launched a program to support single mothers and women in workforce development training programs in summer 2020. She and her team have demonstrated courage under pressure and put their own safety at risk to provide access to primary,

dental and mental health care, education and connection to jobs, food and clothing, as well as housing assistance. We are honored that Carol is our #WCW this week. Who is yours? Tag us in your post so we can see all the amazing women crushing it in their work!
www.workingforwomen.org, www.wnywomensfoundation.org

"I am humbled to be recognized by both the WNY Women's Foundation and Working for Women," said Ms. Murphy. "Both of these amazing organizations are working to empower businesses and not-for-profit organizations to work together to be a force for social good. I invite Buffalo businesses to join us in connecting, empowering, and investing in women in our community."

www.harvesthousebuffalo.org

YOUR CHANGE CAN CHANGE A LIFE



Harvest House Bottles For Babies TM

*It's easy! Simply take as many baby bottles as you want,
fill them with spare change &
make a difference in the life of a child.*

A great socially-distant fundraiser for school groups, church/youth groups, dress down day at work, a birthday party or a baby shower!

Get your church or community group to collect change for a select month... Advent or Lent, between Mother's Day & Father's Day... be creative!

We'll provide the bottles. Once they are filled, return them to Harvest House and the money will be used to provide local children with clothing, safe cribs, and linkage to care.

Harvest House is the largest provider of baby and children's clothing in Western New York, supporting more than 5,000 children every year. If your group or church would like to learn more about our ministries, our Founder or President is available for speaking engagements.

Be the “change” for children living in poverty.

For more information, call Linda at (716) 825-0929
or email ltatu@harvesthousebuffalo.org

HARVEST HOUSE
175 Jefferson Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14210-1038

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