

Cleanse me with hyssop,
and I will be clean; wash
me, and I will be whiter
than snow. *Psalm 51:7*

Loved

February 2021



Love INC of South Wood County beautifully
flocked in fresh-fallen snow. Schedule a visit and
tour today! See inside for dates and details.



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ

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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

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Connection Center Hours
Tuesday–Thursday 10am–2pm

Join our mailing list online to
receive our monthly newsletter.



H E L P I N G C H U R C H E S H E L P P E O P L E

Love Story

Ida is a Connection Center Intake Specialist and shares her God-given talents by taking calls from our neighbors in need. She has a huge heart for people and wants to see everyone reach their full potential and experience all that God has for them. She's a perfect fit for the Intake Specialist position since she's a good listener and has a way of making everyone feel loved by her kind and caring words. When asked about her time at Love INC she mentioned, "God is using us (Intake Specialists) to be compassionate listeners." She continued saying, "God blesses us by giving us an opportunity to love people we don't even know."

"Intake Specialists hear stories from callers who are Christians, and those who are not. Our constant prayer is that all experience the unconditional love of Christ—free from any judgment. In sharing their life situations, they are being heard by compassionate witnesses who provide hope, encouragement, and support. We have been so blessed to be a small part of the lives of our clients. Our hope is that each person who has shared a story comes to know Christ and that they have felt truly loved and cared for."



Ida Winker, Connection Center Intake Specialist

Ida shares this story:

“ I was making a follow-up call to a client who had called months earlier in need of housing, a job, and rental assistance.

His voice was upbeat and he shared that “after a year and a half of struggles, things are coming together and I am so thankful.” He had experienced homelessness and job loss due to medical issues. He was involved in Bible studies at a partner church, and thanked God for His help. He had been able to find jobs, had bought a car, and had hopes of a full-time job after a second interview. He was grateful, hopeful, and trusting God.

With encouragement, prayer, and awareness of resources he was able to take the lead in his journey to a life he wanted. People often know what they need, but just need a little help. It was a joy to listen and share in his hopefulness.

And another....

“ I could hear the sadness in her voice the day she called. A young mom, with a newborn and 4 other children. She knew we were not a crisis agency, but wondered if Love INC had any resources that we might be able to refer her to. Without help, there would not be presents under the Christmas tree this year. Rent was overdue. The father was out of work due to Covid, and waiting to be called back. She worked part-time. After she shared her story, we prayed together and I reassured her that we would all be lifting them up in prayer. Through connections with community resources, and help from staff and volunteers, the needs were met. Through the circle of care Love INC and their partners provide, this young woman and her family received a wonderful Christmas blessing. And, throughout the process, she and her family blessed all of us by being vulnerable and trusting us with their story. God is so good, all the time!

What's your part?

Your time, talent, and treasures, on loan from the Lord, can be the difference between a broken spirit and hope restored.

What will be your love story?

Time and Talent: We are currently seeking volunteers in a wide variety of roles highlighted on page 4.

Treasure: Love INC of South Wood County is seeking financial partners who will help sustain the financial needs of this impactful work.

Learn more and get involved
at www.LoveINCswc.org

2020 DATA

Total Volunteer Hours Served in 2020 = 4,418 by 157 volunteers

In 2020 we were able to:

- Build and strengthen relationships with **28** local churches and **70** agencies and organizations
- Equip and empower church and servant leaders by hosting **13** Love INC Informational sessions, **5** Partner Church Ambassador meetings, **2** Partner Church gatherings, and **1** Journey of Generosity leadership session
- Mobilize **157** ministry volunteers to serve **4,418** hours and build relationships with our neighbors in need
- Engage local churches, agencies, and organizations to meet **336** needs
- Serve and build relationships with **222** families within the South Wood County service area

“God blesses us by giving us an opportunity to love people we don’t even know.” -Ida

You’re Invited

Please consider attending a one-hour Love INC informational session which includes a building tour. All sessions are held the following Thursdays at noon and 6:00 pm for your convenience. RSVP to volunteer@LoveINCswc.org or 715.424.LOVE (5683).

**March 18 | April 15 | May 20
June 17 | July 15 | August 19**

Monthly Mobilizer – Will you join the team of Monthly Mobilizers? Please consider a new or increased recurring gift to help activate volunteers and meet the needs in our community. Donations are accepted online (www.LoveINCswc.org), with debit or credit cards, and through ACH transfers from your financial institution to ours.



Love INC of South Wood County Continues to Grow

Dawn Liebherr is familiar with Love INC of South Wood County because her husband, Paul, has been on the Board of Directors since its inception. Knowing the good that Love INC does in our community made it an easy decision for her to apply when the Office Ministry Assistant job opened up. Dawn has followed Christ since she was a young girl and strives to live like Jesus on a daily basis. Dawn has worked in the Nekoosa School District and at the Nekoosa Charles and JoAnn Lester Library. Her extensive administrative experience and love of people will be an asset to the work done at Love INC.



Dawn Liebherr, Office Ministry Assistant

Connection Center

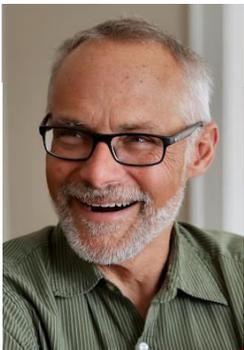
The Connection Center is the foundation of Love INC. Through the Connection Center, Love INC receives requests for help, screens the requests for extent of need and legitimacy, and refers the requests to a local church ministry, church volunteer, or community agency.

The Connection Center is staffed by our Client Care Coordinator, Tricia Janssen, who oversees well-trained volunteers who serve as Intake Specialists.

Connection Center Hours: Tuesday–Thursday 10am–2pm

Call 715.424.LOVE (5683) or visit www.LoveINCswc.org to submit a request for help.

LEAVING A LEGACY



Pastor Vance Elzinga
1958 - 2021

On Friday, January 15th, Pastor Vance Elzinga went home to be with Jesus after a year-long battle with brain cancer. Pastor Vance served 37 years in the ministry; 10 of those were at a Love INC Partner Church, Faith Reformed, in Wisconsin Rapids. He preached his first sermon as their pastor on August 22, 2010. He demonstrated a heart for outreach, steering others to Christ, and engaging the congregation in serving others. His daughter, Natalie, wrote on CaringBridge, “We ache deeply with our loss,” and added, “We have been so blessed and encouraged by the steady faith dad has demonstrated from beginning to end in this journey.”

Love INC worked closely with Pastor Vance and his congregation to serve our neighbors. He always had a smile on his face and a bounce in his step. His love for Christ and His people and his leadership was evident in all that he did. He will truly be missed by his family and church community.

Volunteer Highlight

Joe Hagen and Ron Herman

Volunteering as a team is one of the biggest assets for any volunteer project. At Love INC, we try to coordinate projects allowing for volunteers to work side by side in teams. We value building Christ-like relationships and find joy in seeing that happen naturally while serving. Sometimes we have the privilege of forming the team, and sometimes the team comes already in place. Joe and Ron are one of the latter.

Ron shared these words, "I feel very blessed and fortunate that I am able to have a comfortable retirement and good health which all allows me to do the things I feel compelled to do. Perhaps the best gift the Lord gave me was the ability and desire to work with tools, repair things, and the great working knowledge of how to apply those talents to help those who need help. I was also blessed to be able to establish a friendship and admiration for a fellow St. Luke's Veteran of the Cross, Lee Hagen. I was lucky enough to be able to spend about four years working with him on the Vets before he passed. He and I hit it off really well and he instilled in me to use the talents/gifts the Lord gave us and to do everything to the very best of our ability all in the honor and glory of our Heavenly Father.

He lived a Bible verse that I have memorized and adopted for my life now as well and that is what I try to focus on when doing any task. It comes from Paul's letter to the Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV. Verse 10 spells out why I do what I do..."*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*" I believe I was destined to use the gifts God gave me when I was created—I enjoy working with my

hands using the tools and gifts He provided for me."

Ron now serves side by side with Lee's brother, Joe. Not only do they love to serve, they love to serve together as a team, completing every project with excellence in mind. We truly appreciate their willingness to share their time and God-given talents as we seek to mobilize churches to transform lives and communities "In the Name of Christ."



Gap Ministries

In 2020, two Love INC "Gap Ministries" were launched. Gap Ministries fill unmet needs ("gaps") in community services and products. Providing Gap Ministries is a crucial step in developing relationships and trust with our neighbors in need. The ministries are led by one church but have volunteers from other partner churches serving with them. This is a perfect picture of churches uniting in purpose to serve our community.

Moving Ministry, led by Grace Lutheran Church – This ministry provides assistance to our neighbors by transporting their belongings from one residence to another on moving day. Volunteers who assist with moves enjoy time listening to the stories of our neighbors, providing encouragement, and praying together.

Household Items Ministry, led by Christian Life Fellowship – This ministry provides basic furniture needs for our neighbors, such as beds, new mattresses, dressers, small kitchen tables and chairs, couches, and living room chairs. Volunteers pick up and deliver the furniture from/to homes, offering loving conversation, encouragement, and a prayer. If you have items to donate, please contact us at 715.424.LOVE (5683). Love INC IS NOT a drop off site, so please do not drop off items at our building.

Greatest Needs

Prayer | Volunteers

- Board Members
- Faith & Finance Team Allies
- Connection Center Intake Specialists
- Emotional Support Phone Line Specialists

To learn more, contact
volunteer@LoveINCswc.org
or 715.424.LOVE (5683)