

Community Ministry *Newsletter*

November 2023

An unanticipated job loss. Unexpected medical expenses. Homelessness. Higher bills driven by inflation. These are just a few of the situations people in our community face. Your generous giving to “Light on the Hill” enables us to respond to some of these needs.

Jesus emphasized the importance of “loving your neighbor as yourself.” The story of the Great Judgment teaches that when we minister to those who are hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, or imprisoned, we are in fact ministering to Jesus himself (Matt. 25:40). We are to be a light set on a hill, guiding people to the One who can fulfill all our needs! Our efforts to help those in need are done in the name of Jesus, always giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Col. 3:17).

The ministry’s highest priority is to provide aid to those of our Hillcrest church family (Gal. 6:10) who are facing financial crises. When our ministry team becomes aware of a need of one of our congregation members, team members work with them to determine how best to assist.

A second priority is to aid our neighbors. People often come to the Church Office seeking food or clothing. Since we do not maintain a food pantry or clothing room, they are referred to our partners at Christian Service Center and Christian Ministries, who are able to meet some of their needs. They are also given a Blessing Bag that includes some food stuffs along with a list of agencies in Abilene and the services they provide. We also tell them about the various locations in Abilene where free meals are served daily.

The Church Office receives numerous telephone requests and inquiries for assistance each week. A staff member gathers information about the individual and the assistance they are requesting. The caller is informed that their request will be considered when the benevolence team next meets, generally within one-to-



HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

two weeks. Before that team meeting, information about the caller and their request is reviewed in the Basic Needs Network of West Central Texas (often known as BNN or 2-1-1). This network allows us to coordinate our response with other agencies in the Abilene area. Most requests are for assistance with rent or utility bills. Assistance to the same individual is provided by Hillcrest only a few times each year.

Hillcrest’s Family and Community Ministry has working relationships with many similar groups in Abilene.

Occasionally one of these agencies refers qualified individuals to us because, either they don’t provide the needed service, or their available resources have been expended. We help fulfill these needs depending on our availability of funds. Again, these requests are primarily for assistance with rent or utility bills.

Monthly support is provided for the routine maintenance and cleaning of one of the residences in Houses for Healing. These tiny houses are used by people from the surrounding area when they come to Abilene for extended out-patient medical treatment. Individuals generally supply their own meals (or arrangements are made with Meals on Wheels); however, ministry team members assist with transportation to appointments as needed. When a new resident arrives, a team member welcomes them and determines their needs. Soon thereafter, another member brings them a Bible and prays with them.

The needs in our community are great and we can’t satisfy all of them. However, your generous donations are helping some of our neighbors during difficult times.



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AISD Homeless/Taylor Elementary

Abilene State Supported Living Center

All Kind Animal Initiative

Alliance for Women and Children

BCFS/HHS (Abilene Transition Center)

Beltway Garage Ministry

Ben Richey Boys Ranch

Betty Hardwick

Big Brother/Big Sister

Big Country Casa

Boots on the Ground

Boys/Girls Club

Cancer Services Network

Child Welfare

Christian Homes

Christian Ministries

Christian Service Center

Christian Womens Job Corps

City Light Ministries

Communities in Schools

Community Foundation

Disability Resources

Disability in Action

Faithworks

Food Bank

Gideons

Global Samaritan

Goodwill

Habitat for Humanity

Harmony Family Services

Hendrick Auxillary

Hendrick Hospice

Hope Haven

Houses for Healing

International Rescue Committee

Junior League

Kairos (Outside Abilene)

Love and Care Ministries

MCH Family Outreach

Meals on Wheels

Mental Health America

Middleton/Robertson Prison

NAMI

Nehemiah Abilene

New Beginnings Big Country

New Horizons

Noah Project

Phoenix House

Pregnancy Resources

Presbyterian Medical Care Mission

Regional Victims Crisis Center

Rolling Plains Management Corp.

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)

Salvation Army

Sanctuary Ministries

Soar Like an Eagle (Amputee Support Group)

St. Vincent De Paul

Steps Recovery Center

United Way

Young Life