

# I-HELP NEWS

I-Help Newsletter for Desert Cross Lutheran Church, Volume 5

## My first time ...

She was standing outside the doors of the Fellowship Hall as the I-Help guests gathered. With a little persuading she stepped through the door joining our circle around the tables. After a brief description of what to expect and a prayer, she quietly slipped back out the door into the 100 degree heat. A volunteer came up to me and told me about her and I said that I would check on her. I went outside and found her sitting at one of the picnic tables. She was wearing her name tag, so I was able to call her by name. I sat down on the opposite side of the picnic table while she got up and moved to another table. It was then that I noticed that her nose was slightly deformed as if she was in an accident. "How are you doing?" I asked. She mumbled words but I couldn't hear them well enough to respond. I told her that I would like her to come inside and get something to eat, and that it was hot out here. She



continued to stare down at the ground again mumbling in a whisper. I sat with her for awhile in silence, hoping that I would gain her trust. After about ten minutes I went back into the Fellowship Hall and that same volunteer asked me if she should put a plate of food together and bring it out to her. I thought that was a great idea. The volunteer did that, but our frightened guest refused to eat. The volunteer stepped back into the Fellowship Hall and asked me what she should do. "I'm afraid that she will wander off," she said. I asked her to keep an eye on her to make sure that she was safe. Eventually our guest crossed the parking lot and walked into the Community Center where she laid on her mattress alone.

Now that I knew that she was safe, I visited with another female guest who had befriended this struggling lady. I asked her, "Do you know anything about Mary (not her real name) who was so reserved?" "Yes" she responded, "She is really quiet and has been in I-Help for the past four days. She told me that Mary had been living on the street for the past two years. My heart sunk. I contacted the director for the I-Help program at Azcend (non-profit sponsoring I-Help) and shared my observations with the hope that her agency could help her. I was assured that Mary was actually placed in a more appropriate program that would better fit her needs.

This was the first time I've met someone like Mary in the I-Help program. She was scared, vulnerable and broken, like a small child who lost their parent. I can only imagine what her life has been like and pray that with God's help that our helping agencies & the kindness of others will allow Mary to relax and smile again.

Peace & love,

Glen Stadler

I learned that a friend  
may be waiting behind a  
stranger's face.

~  
Maya Angelou

## Thrivent Night at I-Help

Clad with dark gray Thrivent t-shirts the Gilbert Campus Breakfast Dudes, assisted by a team of volunteers from Esperanza Lutheran Church, Sue Kyle doing breakfast and David Fleming assisting with Wednesday morning clean-up, shared over 60 volunteer hours as we celebrated Thrivent Night at I-Help. Pastor Don Legacy one of the retired pastors at Desert Cross worked with Thrivent to provide t-shirts, stickers and \$250 grant for I-Help supplies. The money was used to provide items that Desert Cross' I-Help program has not seen before. Individual packets of peanut, jellies, butter, cream cheese and other paper products were purchased from a restaurant outlet store allowing our guests a more sanitary setting when sharing dinner and breakfast. Our thanks to the volunteers and people with Thrivent Financial in helping us serve the least of these.

### June's I-Help Team

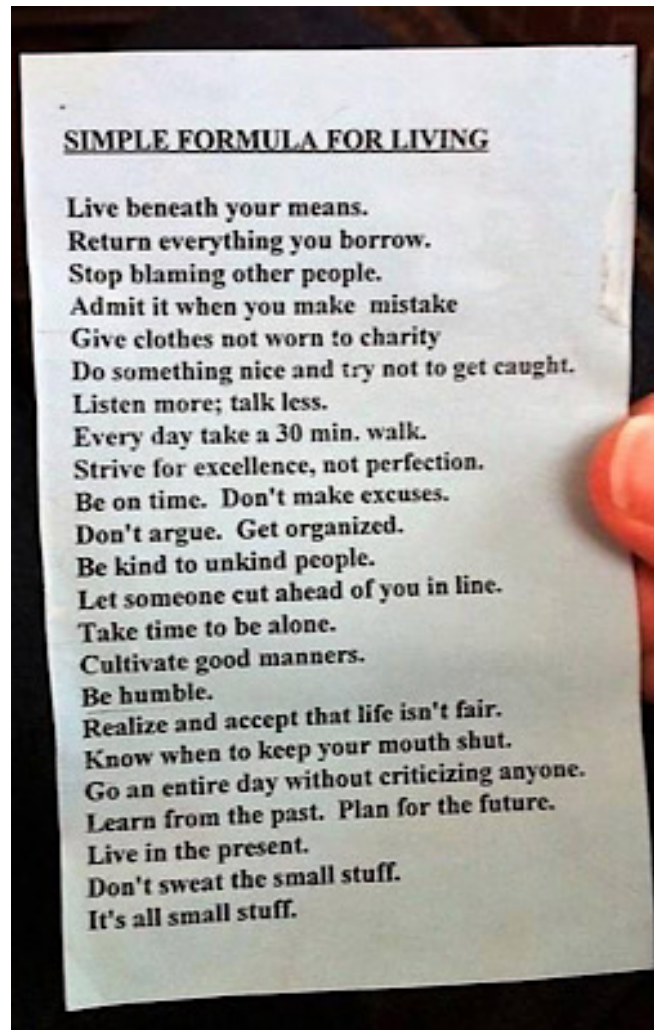
Shirley Huntley  
Linda Dickson  
John Gemma  
Staci Smith  
Peyton Gordon  
Claudia Huss  
Molly Hurst  
Susan Pillard  
Dave Pillard  
John Christiansen  
Ruth Legacie  
Cindy Delano  
Sue Kyle

### Food Support:

Glenn/Susan Tischaefter  
Ron/Cheryl Diegle

### Assisting Cleanup:

David Fleming

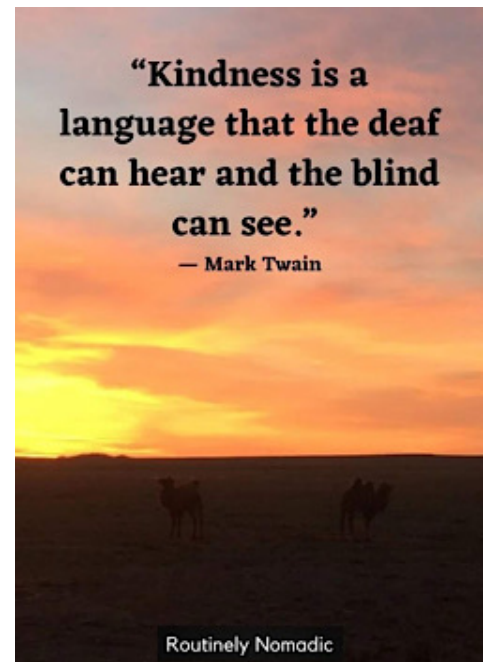


## 2023 I-Help Schedule

Date	Serving Dinner - 6:00 pm	Breakfast Club - 6:00 am
January 24, 2023	Glen Stadler & Friends	Glen Stadler
February 28, 2023	Perkins Family	Adam Pfau & John/Deb Christiansen
March 28, 2023	Thursday Morning Christ Care Group	Perkins Family
April 25, 2023	Nancy Barnett Friends Group	Staci Smith & Mari Johnson
May 23, 2023	Church Council	Joe & Stacey Weingartz
June 27, 2023	Breakfast Dudes	Sue Kyle Family
July 25, 2023	Esperanza I-Help Team	Tina Strickler
August 22, 2023	Esperanza I-Help Team	Tina Strickler
September 26, 2023	Thursday Morning Christ Care Group	Tony & Donna Tainter
October 24, 2023	DCLC Chamber	Glen & Deb Gabrielson
November 28, 2023	Esperanza I-Help Team	Open
December 26, 2023	Nancy Zine & Friends	Open

### Is 2024 The Year You Join the I-Help Team

Have you ever considered putting together a group of ten people and sponsor an I-Help dinner? Perhaps you would want to join the Breakfast Club where you serve a simple breakfast from 6:00-7:00 am. The breakfast is low-keyed ... with 2-3 guests coming at a time. Typical two people can easily handle the serving. If you would like details about serving either the I-Help Dinner or Breakfast, contact me, Glen Stadler at [glenstadler@gmail.com](mailto:glenstadler@gmail.com) or text me: 480-233-5667.







## Story Behind the Backpacks

I had a chance to sit down with Priscilla Acero the director of I-Help at Azcend to discuss the backpack situation among our I-Help guests. I have continued to see guests using plastic garbage bags along with backpacks when they are dropped off at Desert Cross. Priscilla shared with me that because of space, each I-Help guest can carry no more than 2 bags. She assured me that I-Help guests receive a backpack when they enter the program, but because of odor issues that come from sheets, blankets and towels used the entire week that it's not practical to pack clothing and personal items in the same bag. Remember, Desert Cross is

one of the few sites where guests can take a shower. We both agreed that plastic garbage bags were not ideal and she is investigating alternatives ways to transport the linens.

## Prayers Please

We are expecting 27 I-Help guests in July. Typically half of them were in the program the month before. The names below were our June guests. I would ask that you hold these individuals up in prayer. You may not know them, but God does.

- Amy A.
- Emory B.
- Jason B.
- Sandra B.
- Sadie C.
- Daniel E.
- Lamonty G.
- James H.
- Derek J.
- Jawara L.
- Vanessa L.
- Kurt M.
- Ian M.
- Katheryn M.
- Charles O.
- Danny P.
- Ann P.
- Calvin R.
- Andrew R.
- Carl S.



## Esperanza Lutheran Church Joins Our Team

I don't know if many people are aware that I'm a retired Lutheran pastor. I also have a daughter who followed my footsteps and served Grace Lutheran Church for 12 years in downtown Phoenix before moving into Interim Ministry at Esperanza Lutheran in Ahwatukee. I occasionally fill-in for area pastors when they are on vacation. One of the congregations that I've had the pleasure to preach and lead worship is Esperanza Lutheran. I shared Desert Crosses I-Help ministry as a sermon illustration and the following week I received a request to tell a small group of members the Desert Cross story. They wanted to get into the action but felt like their facility was too small to host an I-Help event. Our Desert Cross schedule had some openings, so they jumped at the chance to serve the homeless community using our space. Please join me in keeping the Esperanza Team in your thoughts and prayers as they follow YOUR footsteps into this ministry of compassion.

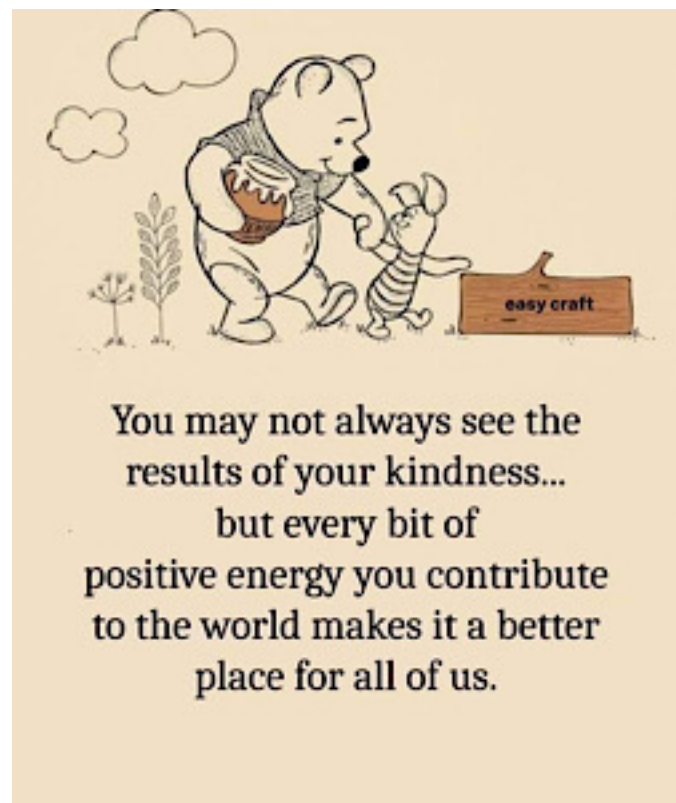
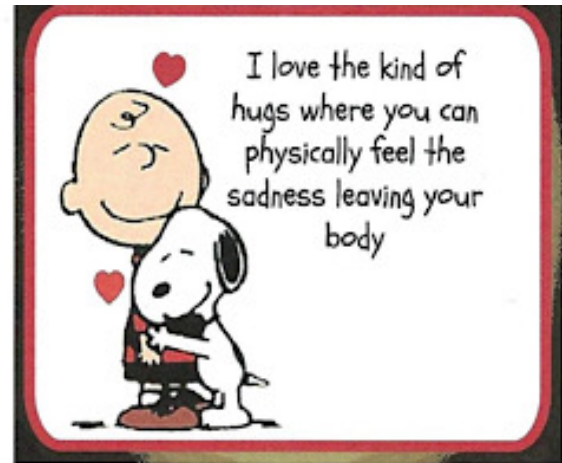
### The Esperanza Team

Linda Dickson  
Shirley Huntley  
Molly Hurst  
Kathy Gemma  
John Gemma  
Peggy Wagner  
Craig Peck

### The Desert Cross Core Team

Staci Smith

Cindy Delano



**29** I-Help Guests!

