

# Standing In The Gap

*This ministry is for the sole purpose of reaching and touching people's lives with the love of Jesus Christ through acts of kindness. Matthew 6: 3 says, "But when you give to the needy (spiritually, physically, emotionally and financially), do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." "Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness." ~Psalm 115:1*

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Dear Friends and Servants of Jesus Christ,

Oh, but her bible! It was full of devotional papers, underlined and worn. We first met Kathy through a mentoring program that the women's shelter, Bethlehem Haven, asked us to initiate back in 2007. She was completing a two-year rehab program at the shelter and was getting ready to return to the outside world to begin over again. She had buried three husbands, had depression, and other crippling health issues. For years, she attended bible study faithfully. She was baptized in the back-yard pool and was growing in the Lord. She was a vital part of our group, and we loved her. About a year ago, she started pulling away. After several months of trying to encourage her to return, the Lord prompted us to wait like the Father did for his prodigal son (daughter) to return. She did. She came back "home" on Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. She said it was time for her to "get away from those people that had pulled her down" and to be a part of the bible study again. What a beautiful day it was for all of us! On Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, she went home to be with Jesus. Her two sons asked Standing In The Gap to do the memorial service, and of course, we shared the gospel of Jesus Christ to her family and friends. Isaiah 57:1 brought some comfort. "The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil." Kathy has been spared from further evil. We will see her again someday soon!

Jill Casaldi shares - On Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, we started the morning out with 25 bags of food to bless people with for Thanksgiving. This is our second year of doing this, and we went to the Beltzhoover area in Pittsburgh again. We went to houses and were able to pray, minister and offer hope through Christ. All were encouraged. Our most touching food delivery was a house on Warrington Avenue. It was a recovery house for women getting out of prison. We were able to meet the owner of the house whose name was "T". She was so overjoyed and excited that we brought five bags of food, laundry soap and toilet paper. We also had eight bed comforters that we put in the van at the last minute and the recovery house had eight beds. (No accident!) This house is called "Charlotte's House of Hope, and "T" teaches these women how to live and pushes them to go to school, get a job, and maintain their recovery from drugs and alcohol. It was their first Thanksgiving in Charlotte's House of Hope, and we were fortunate to donate their dinner. "T" told us that her motto is "placing women in greatness so they can do great things". I thought about this statement a lot and how greatness is achieved differently for each person. On this day, I felt greatness for the Lord by seeing hearts and lives being touched, and it was amazing. We went out to bless people, but we were more blessed than them.

We went again to the low-income apartments in the city and provided a card-making day for our friends who live there. It was such a God-ordained day. We prayed, cried, and gave out gifts to let them know how important they are to God and to us. Building loving, trusting relationships is a critical part of drawing people to Jesus Christ. While we were there, one of our volunteers noticed one man was very sick. She kept monitoring him, and it looked as if he was going to die in our arms. The paramedics were contacted, and he was taken to the hospital. He hadn't come out of his apartment for weeks, and we believe God used the card-making project to save his life.

From a woman in New York State who had to flee from her home in the middle of the night with her children due to domestic violence. "You know we are very, very thankful for your existence and the vision of Standing In The Gap! While we are enduring these struggles in our lives, we are more than gracious for your help! As we are trying to get on with our lives and the blessing of work has come our way to be able to support our family, how would we have been able to get around as the car was in need of this repair! We are and shall remain ever so gracious for the kind help you have all provided for our family! From the bottom of our hearts, thank you!"

Here are just a few of the many things you have done to share Jesus Christ through acts of kindness and the Word of God. Flower bouquets to those abused, individuals recovering from surgery and co-workers losing family members; groceries and household goods for those struggling with cancer, widows and widowers, single moms, grandmas watching their grandbabies while moms go through rehab, and families whose homes have been ravaged by fires; bibles for new converts and hungry people requesting them; sundaes for the elderly sitting outside on a hot fall day; haircuts; additional yarn for blankets to be knitted for the low-income; a birthday lunch for a woman who has no one to tell her how special she is; supplies for making gift baskets for those with breast cancer; a few partial utility bills for people with "just not enough to go around"; a bed for a new widow (her husband had been sick for so long); a few U-Haul expenses to help move the discouraged; encouragement for college students; a gift for a missionary family on furlough; a winter coat for a woman in a wheelchair, etc.

May Jesus Christ be the center and Lord of your Christmas. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Because Jesus cares, gives and lives,

*Ruth Mueller* *Janice Battalio*



*Dawn Hurley* *Marian Boett* *Marsha Nyland*

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