



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ
Of Muskegon County

Love Letters

September/October 2012

From the Desk of Gail Kraft, Executive Director



Love INC of Muskegon completes our three-year Strategic Plan

A good leader has a plan. Jesus had one. He gave clear instructions to His staff members regarding how they could attain their desired results. He also had received a plan that He was working on implementing. He spoke often about how something was either part of or not part of the plan. Without knowing all the details, He saw the big picture and acted on a day-to-day basis according to that picture. He knew His mission and stuck to it. Our board decided we needed to plan for the future. It's easy to get complacent, especially when you are busy helping people. But, we needed to take the time to pause and reflect what we've been doing and what the impact has been. Then, looking to God for His guidance, looking to our partners in ministry and looking to the present needs in our community, move forward with a plan for action over the next three years. In other words, we needed to determine our mission and stick to it!

The theme of our Three Year Strategic Plan is 'Expressing and Engaging our Values Through Planning'. Some of the Strategic Initiatives include a more objective focused approach to serving our neighbors in need, specific marketing and development goals, new ministry, and volunteer management programs. One of the initiatives already completed is more involvement from the board on committees. With a very small staff, it would be impossible to complete these initiatives without the involvement of our board and volunteers. I'm especially excited about the "new ministry" opportunities. We are looking at a possible "Jobs for Life" ministry or something similar – it is something so needed and would fit perfectly into our New Directions classes. During the process we always kept in mind our purpose, our mission and our values. They are what direct us.

I want to thank those of you who completed surveys by phone, mail or in person to help us develop our plan. You can view the entire plan by visiting our web site at www.loveincofmuskegon.com. If you are not on the internet, give me a call and I'll be happy to send you a copy. Since a Strategic Plan is always a work in process, we also welcome your comments and suggestions. May our Great God continue to guide this ministry not only for the next three years but for as long as we are needed to meet the needs of our community. You may contact me at 773-3448. Gail Kraft

Our mission is transforming lives In the Name of Christ through the church

Celebrating 30 Years at Hampton Green Farms

On October 6, 1982 Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) signed their Articles of Incorporation in Muskegon County for their non-profit status. Now, 30 years later we are celebrating with a friendraiser at Hampton Green Farms in Fruitport on October 6, 2012. As we look back over the past 30 years there have been staff changes, pantry changes, and even location changes but the one thing that has remained consistent is our solid foundation. We are committed to transforming lives in Muskegon County by offering our wrap around services to our neighbors in need.

Over the past 30 years, we have helped thousands of people through our programs and services. **Will you help us celebrate this year by attending our celebration?** The festivities will take place at beautiful Hampton Green Farms located at 5440 E. Farr Rd. in Fruitport on October 6, 2012 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Tickets are \$30.00 each (that's \$1.00 for every year of service), (2) tickets for \$50.00 and minor children accompanied by a parent \$10.00. There will be a silent auction, dressage, derby horse racing, trivia challenge, live music by the Reachin' Out Men's Quartet, Dinner by Chef Fred Boyer (soft drinks and ice provided or bring your own beverage), and don't forget to wear your craziest derby hat.

We have impacted over 10,500 people already this year. Please help us continue the tradition of offering a hand up to our neighbors in need. Money raised will go toward our programs and services where we look at the whole person, not just the problem. We offer compassion with accountability and goal setting continually striving towards self sufficiency.

Some of the stories we hear are heart wrenching and some are heartwarming but all are desperate for help. Would you partner with us and help begin our next 30 years with a solid foundation? Contact us at 773-3448 for tickets.

God Bless You!



***Get out your hiking shoes and join us at
Heritage Landing on beautiful Muskegon Lake***



Teams now forming...we need you!

Saturday, October 13, 2012, we are joining forces with The Muskegon Rescue Mission and West Michigan Catholic Charities for the 1st Annual Hike for the Hungry. One hundred percent (100%) of the proceeds will stay right here in Muskegon County where the current needs are great. Sign up today by following the “What to do...” next steps listed below.

If you are unable to join us on the walk but would like to sponsor a walker or team...you may check on the website below and find the team you wish to sponsor. Love INC Board or Love Bugs (volunteers) would be a great suggestion!

If you are interested in sponsoring this event there are many levels available. You can get a yard sign for as little as \$100.00 to advertise your business, church or family.

If you would like to help but don't have access to a computer, please call Paula at 773-3448 for more information, to sign up or to become a sponsor — she can send you the information you need.

Volunteers will be needed on the day of the event, if you would like to volunteer in some capacity, please email Paula at paulas@loveincmuskegon.com.

WHAT TO DO NOW THAT I WANT TO HELP

- ♥ Go to www.hikeforthehungry.kintera.org and sign up a team or individual
- ♥ Help promote and recruit teams by signing up your church youth groups or members from your church
- ♥ Spread the news to your family and friends
- ♥ Help us raise money for the hungry by collecting pledges/donations or supporting someone that signed up
- ♥ Take posters to blanket the area letting people know about this new annual event
- ♥ “Like” us on Facebook and help share and spread the news at www.facebook.com/HikeForTheHungry

Love happenings...Pantry Needs

Would you like to help Love INC out but you're not sure how? Here are some ideas, if you or someone you know would like to help. Please contact Paula at 773-3448 or paulas@loveincofmuskegon.com

- ♥ Car Mechanic: Give estimate and do small repairs if needed for clients
- ♥ Appliance Technician: Give estimate and do small repairs if needed
- ♥ Budgeting Mentor: Work one on one with a neighbor in need
- ♥ Clearinghouse Phone Intake/Assessment: (4) hours per week screening calls
- ♥ Warehouse Volunteer

Our Pantries are running low and could use the following items if you are shopping or cleaning out your kitchens—Please Keep us in mind.

- ♥ Sugar
- ♥ Spaghetti Sauce
- ♥ Canned Meat
- ♥ Diapers, Wipes, Baby Clothes, Baby Toys
- ♥ Juice
- ♥ Crackers
- ♥ Complete Boxed Dinners
- ♥ Household items: Dishes, Silverware, Can Opener, Bedding, Mixing Bowls
- ♥ Glasses, Small Appliances, Colanders, Measuring Cups/Spoons, Curtains
- ♥ Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Laundry Soap, Dish Detergent, Toilet Paper

Our clearinghouse numbers for 2012 are for families served so far:

Food: 1503	Personal Care: 982	Baby: 245
Household: 148	Furniture: 139	Other: 1040
Volunteer Hours: 7500	New Direction classes: 494	

FIGHTING HUNGER

Thank you to our donors who gave during the Feinstein Challenge. Mr. Feinstein gives away \$1,000,000 each year to non-profits to fight hunger. All the participating agencies are listed on their website at www.feinsteinfoundation.org with their proportion of the million. Love INC of Muskegon received \$318.03. While it doesn't seem like a lot, every cent helps and it encourages our donors. Thank you once again for helping us fight hunger.

Do you shop at **Gordon Foods**? If so, you can help us just by getting a FUNFUNDS card and swiping it every time you shop. By signing up online, you will also receive a coupon to turn in that is an immediate donation to us for \$10.00 and another one for \$10.00 off of your \$50.00 purchase. How cool is that! Go to <http://gfs.com/funfunds/home.page?OrgNumber=2523527>. Contact Gail or Paula at Love INC if you need any assistance or need to use a form rather than online.

The **Meijer** store on Harvey street has selected Love INC as their partner for the fall 2012 *Simply Give* campaign. The Meijer family will help stretch every customer's \$10 *Simply Give* donation by matching the donation between now and October 6. *Simply Give* cards are available at our office or at each check-out at the store. This is a great donation by the Meijer family - please help to make it successful for our pantries.

Please see our **Hike for the Hungry** article and get registered to walk, sponsor, volunteer or to donate. Thanks so much for helping Love INC help those in need in our community.

Relational Ministries **New Directions — Life Skills**

Did you realize financial problems are consistently rated as one of the top reasons for divorce and that it is often cited as the number one reason for divorce? Last year a lady took our Manage Your Money program while separated from her husband. They are now reconciled and are taking the Manage Your Money program together as they work toward financial stability as well as stability in other areas of their lives. They have stated they feel very blessed by the support that Love INC is providing them and that God is working in their lives.

Love INC provides these classes in a welcoming, confidential, Christian, environment and mentors are available to assist throughout the process. Achieving financial stability can help reduce stress in many other areas of a person's life. If you or someone you know is interested in attending this life changing program or any of our other programs in Powerful Parenting, Healthy Eating, or Stress management please call Matt Kaley at 773-3448 or the Clearinghouse line at 777-3905 to enroll in our next series of classes. This ministry is blessed with many caring, competent individuals who are dedicated to providing this service at no charge to you.

Amanda Gillihan joined Love INC in August 2012 as the new Administrative Assistant. She has recently graduated from Baker College of Muskegon with a bachelor's degree in Business with a concentration in accounting. She became a Christian at the age of 8 and she grew up attending New Era Bible Church but when she graduated from High School she moved to Muskegon, this made it difficult to attend her home church. Amanda is currently trying to find a church that makes her feel right at home. She recently heard a motto that she has decided to live her life to. "God is first, others are second, and I'm third." – Camp Pendalouan.

Welcome Amanda!

"In Memory of" Gifts



Peter & Fern Bosch
By Donna Bosch

William Wikman
By Marilyn Wikman

Robert Vanderleest
By Ruth Lubbers

William Boukamp's Birthday
By Annajean Boukamp

Beatrice Mary Lavender
By Lake Harbor Sisters

In Honor of:

Pastor Eric Stratton
By Thomas Watkins

PARTNER CHURCHES

For the months of July/August 2012

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
 Bridge Bible Church
 Calvary Church
 Calvary Bible Church
 Calvin CRC
 Church of God United
 Fellowship Reformed Church
 Ferry Memorial Reformed Church
 Fifth Reformed Church
 First Presbyterian Church
 Forest Park Covenant Church
 Fruitland Baptist Church
 Fruitport Congregational
 Fruitland Evangelical Covenant Church
 Gateway Church
 Lake Harbor United Methodist Church
 Laketon Bethel Reformed Church
 Life Change Church
 McGraft Memorial Congregational
 Prince of Peace Parish

Board News:

The board of directors recently and regretfully granted a leave of absence to Ron Nyenhuis. Ron was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and is waiting on treatment. Please keep Ron in your prayers.

At its' last meeting, the board approved a three-year strategic plan. See the front page article for more information

Two board members will be retiring at the end of this year due to term limits. If you are interested in a board position, contact Gail at 773-3448.



Love INC News

Bridges to Motherhood: Many years ago God began to put a burden on my heart for young mothers struggling with the un-known of parenting. After much research, I discovered that our city is among the highest in unwed pregnancies in the state. I then began coming into contact with girl after girl facing the challenges of single motherhood.

Bridges to Motherhood Support Group gives unwed young ladies (18 to 30 years) an opportunity to get support and learn from one another's experiences. Discussions cover everything from infant thru pre-school development, relationships, regaining your sense of self worth, goal setting, and much more.

As Volunteers, the team gives the ladies the encouragement and support they need sometimes at just the right time. It is a gratifying and proud moment to see the glimmer of hope in a young mothers eyes when she recognizes how far she has come in developing self worth, often for the first time in her life. That is truly God at work and true success, because it not only affects her life, but her child (or children).

I can think of so many special times over the years when I have been reunited with past participants and they share how Bridges to Motherhood helped them during a very stressful and difficult time in their lives. As volunteers we all have opportunity to have that "proud moment" by being available with a listening ear. If you, or know someone who has b heart and passion to be in a ministry such as this, please contact Gail or myself. You never know what an impact you can make in someone's life.

Veronica Murie
Bridges to Motherhood Coordinator

DONATE ONLINE — www.LoveIncofMuskegon.com

YOU make a difference in the lives of people in need.

Each need brought to Love INC represents an opportunity to connect with one of God's children,

We always urge everyone to give to their home church first.



- I want to help with a monthly pledge of ____\$50 ____\$75 ____\$100 ____ Other
- I want to become a Millennium Partner by donating \$1,000 or more annually
- I would like to donate \$_____ in honor of _____
- I would like to donate \$_____ in memory of _____
- I want to be a Prayer partner! Please send me the monthly Prayer Requests via: Email U.S. Mail



Mail to:

Love INC of
Muskegon County
2735 E. Apple Ave.
Suite A
Muskegon, MI 49442
231.773.3448

www.LoveIncOFMuskegon.com

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Church Affiliation _____

Board of Directors

Dick Nolan, Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, President
 Sherry Becker, Covenant Life CRC, Vice President
 Bruce Duiser, Unity Reformed Church, Secretary
 Tina Root, Covenant Community Reformed Church, Treasurer
 Pastor Brian Kyle, Fruitland Evan. Covenant Church
 Ron Nyenhuis, Calvin CRC
 Dick Morgan, St. James Catholic Church, Montague
 Joe Singerling, First Congregational Church
 Joel VanderWall, Forest Park Covenant Church
 Char Boertman, Olivet Evangelical Free Church
 Tedd Bryson, Forest Park Covenant Church, Ministries Chaplain

Office Staff

Gail Kraft, Calvin CRC, Executive Director
 Paula Scott Stewart, Laketon Bethel Reformed Church,
 Clearinghouse Coordinator
 Matthew Kaley, St. James Catholic Church,
 Relational Ministries Coordinator
 Amanda Gillihan, Administrative Assistant

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