



Manna Matters

NEWS FROM THE WARMING CENTER

Winter came early and with a vengeance this year, with Kenny and his team spending five days and nights in mid-November offering a warming center for the homeless and others without sufficient heat. We've all heard the *Farmer's Almanac* predictions of a "Polar Coaster winter," so there might be many more warming center stints ahead. If you've been among the many generous people who have volunteered at the center, enabling us to keep upwards of 55 souls warm, dry, and fed, you know that the sacrifice is worth it when someone who was destined to sleep outside says thank you. Here are a few words of gratitude from our November guests ...

Skip, 68: "Kenny is a blessing. Why? Because there are many nights I've been out in the streets, and I've froze, and if it wasn't for Kenny and his organization, I would have no place for my head. There are a lot of us [who are homeless], and I'll speak on their behalf: we all love Kenny and what he's doing for us. Without him, we wouldn't know what to do. He has provided us with warm shelter and meals in our stomach—a blessing from the Lord—you couldn't ask for better. I hope he can keep helping people like me so we can get off these streets."

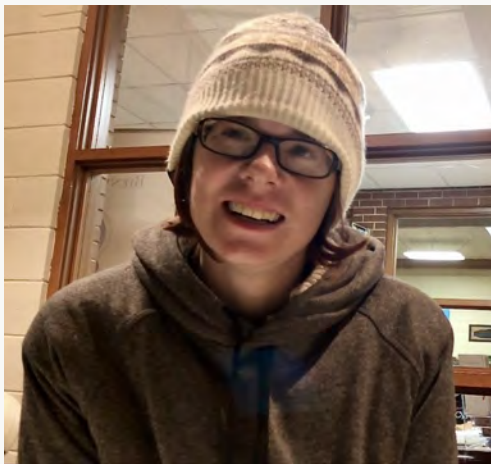


Ivan, 45, whose vision is so impaired that he must hold a phone one inch from his face to dial it, ended up homeless last summer. With no medical insurance and no progress yet concerning Social Security, he had run out of options, so on the first bitter night of November, an acquaintance brought him to the warming center. Ivan says, "When the (intake) lady found out I was blind, there was no hesitation, no *we've got a problem or we can't accommodate him*. She said they'd do their best to help me and take care of me." Along with the warming center volunteers, a couple of other guests took Ivan under their wing, assisting him

WARMING CENTER, CONT'D.

however they could. "I can feed and dress myself, but getting around is hard. But Manna has been wonderful. The warming center has been a lifesaver. If it wasn't for them, by now—I'm not gonna lie—I probably would have frozen to death. I can't thank them enough. Since they took me in, this is the most I've had to eat in two weeks. Last night, and then again today, is the first time I've actually laughed or smiled since the first of July."

Katie, 21: "I'm so thankful for the warming shelter because I'm anemic and I do *not* like the cold! Right now even though it's freezing outside it feels good in here, and I have the coats I've acquired since I got here. Growing up, my food



was always limited, and my meals consisted of peanut butter and bread. My mindset is still that I don't know where my next meal is going to come from. But the first day I was here, there was an

abundance of food, and I ate all day, and I was so full that at dinnertime I couldn't touch a bite! Thank you so much."

If you would be willing to help us man the warming center by taking a two-hour shift, please join our volunteer page: [Manna Cafe Volunteer Outreach](#).

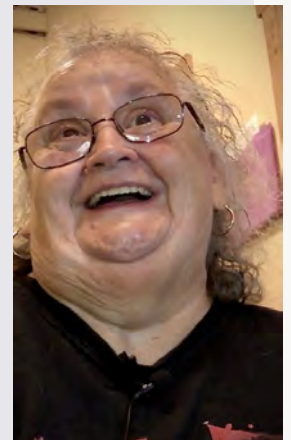
We're very grateful to New Providence UMC and Liberty Church for offering their facilities to bring folks in out of the cold. Many thanks as well to our devoted volunteers who sacrifice sleep, family time, finances, and even holidays to serve others. We love you!

MannaCafeMinistries.com
Facebook.com/mannacafe2010
Instagram: mannafe1

"A child is born ... a son is given to us ... The power of leadership, and the weight of authority, will rest on His shoulders. ... He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Dear Father everlasting, ever-present never-failing, Master of Wholeness, Prince of Peace." -Isa. 9:6. VOICE

"FOOD BOXES ARE LIKE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS"

Vicki Smith, who has been disabled since 1992, is eager to tell others how much she appreciates Manna Cafe's food distribution program. "I need a little extra to help me get through every month," she says. "I know I don't have to go hungry—that I can come here and Manna Cafe will give me food. And the people are so nice. That means the world to me! Without Manna Cafe, I don't know what I would do some months. I'm on a fixed income, and I start running out of money by the end of the month. I live alone, and after paying rent and electric and everything else, I don't have much money. It can get stressful trying to make my dollars stretch.

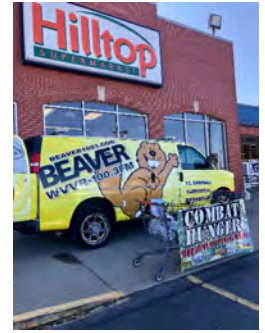


"Food boxes are like Christmas presents! I go through the box and say, 'Oh I got this!' The sweets of course are exciting and make me happy, and the meat helps out a lot. Manna Cafe is such a blessing to me."

COMBAT HUNGER 2019



We are blown away by the success of Combat Hunger 2019! More than \$3,500 and 32,000 pounds of food were collected at this year's event! Thank you to all our amazing volunteers who rallied together to pass out food donation slips to local shoppers. These donations will feed thousands of community residents. We are proud to be in the fight to help end hunger!

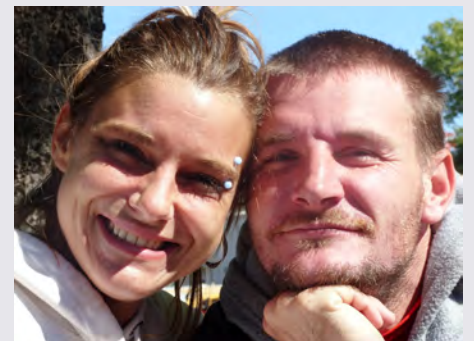


A WORD FROM KENNY: A TENT CITY CHRISTMAS

In 2020, Manna Cafe will celebrate its 10-year anniversary of serving Clarksville (we served our first meal here in the spring of 2010). All I can say is *Wow* and *Thank you Jesus*. We've come a long way since then, and we're serving more people than I ever thought possible.

But in the fall of 2009, the story was very different.

The Christmas before we moved from Nashville to Clarksville was one of the hardest *and* best of my life. For more than a year, Vicki and I had been taking a small, ragtag team of volunteers into Tent City (a large collection of homeless camps under a network of bridges) to give away supplies, hot meals, and the gospel. But then some of the folks got housing, so we shifted operations to a tiny church on Elm Hill Pike that was walking distance from both Tent City and the apartment complex our friends had moved to.



Sarah and "Snow," Tent City residents

Serving meals at the new location wasn't very successful. For some reason it was difficult to get people to walk to the church from either location. But God wouldn't let me give up. So I decided to do a huge, special meal on Christmas Day. We spread the word beforehand, getting commitments up front from the Tent City and apartment residents. On Christmas Day, we cooked turkey, dressing, and all fixings. We even brought our moms in to help. (In the South, you know it's serious when you get Mom involved!)



A Tent City dwelling

The time came. The table was set, the musicians were playing Christmas carols, the volunteers were ready ... but not one guest showed up.

I was crushed. I questioned everything. Maybe I hadn't heard God correctly. I wanted to give up. I wanted to say, *I quit!* I tried to bury my emotions, but I could only hide so much,

especially when we tried to figure out what to do with all that leftover food. Everything inside me wanted to throw it all into the nearest dumpster and go home. But a small voice in my ear said, *Put the food in to-go boxes and take them to Tent City.* That was the one thing I didn't want to do,

CHRISTMAS, CONT'D

but it was also the only thing that made sense. So that's what we did.

We got to Tent City about 10 p.m. We parked our vehicle and set out the food. Then Vicki and I, and a few seasoned volunteers, began walking from camp to camp. It was very dark and starting to mist rain. The temperature was dropping fast.

As we wandered through the individual camps, handing out turkey and gravy and letting the residents know there was more at the vehicle, my attitude changed drastically. I felt such a sense of community. Some of the camps were made up of several shelters covered in tarps, with a clear spot in the center for a fire. On that cold night as they huddled around those fires, there were stockings hung on some tents. Others had little Christmas

trees or at least some secondhand tinsel. As we walked, the joy and sense of community were intoxicating. We were invited into some of the camps and offered coffee or a cookie. (You haven't lived till you've had campfire coffee in a homeless camp.)



We were able to give away most of the food we'd brought, but what we left with was far more valuable. The joy I

received that night allowed me to keep going. It had felt like a wink from God. There have been other winks since then, but none as pivotal as that one.

During the next couple weeks, we made the decision to relocate to Clarksville, and the rest, as they say, is history. I'm grateful for what God has done so far, and I know there's more to come. But I'm also thankful for the lesson He taught me through that little church on Elm Hill Pike 10 years ago.

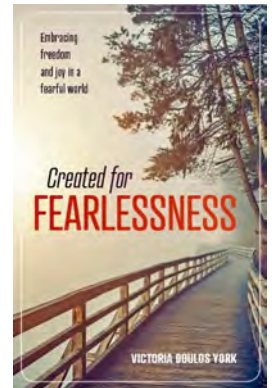
Peace out.

Manna Cafe is a 501(c)3 organization. All gifts are tax deductible.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAD NO FEAR?

Introducing *Created for Fearlessness*, written by Manna Cafe co-founder Vicki York. For nearly 50 years, Vicki experienced daily anxiety; then, during a two-hour commute in the spring of 2013, the Lord challenged her to a "fear fast."

The principles He taught her in the next seven days enabled her to step into Christ-centered fearlessness, changing her life radically and permanently. In this book geared toward women of every people and age, she shares these truths in a simple, straightforward way that will resonate with



anyone who's tired of being afraid. Available on Amazon and at Hudubam Booktraders (110 Franklin St.).

