

A Message from Jeanette Schaffer, Director
Presbyterian Outreach Ministry
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I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. John 17:23

I pray this season is a peaceful one filled with the light and love of our powerful Savior, Jesus Christ. One thing I'd like to point out is that this Presbyterian Outreach ministry has close relationships with other ministries in the area. When we help a family or individual that has a need, we work with other organizations they can go to for additional help. As a result, I often talk to the other ministries and so we form ties with each other. And it warms my heart when I see us coming together as Christian churches to bring love and aid to those in need.

As an example of this, the other day a lady I will call Beth came into my office. She was clearly broken and shaken up. She needed help with an electric bill, as the electric company was just about to turn off her electricity, which was distressing her as she has three young children. As I was processing her paperwork, she began pouring out her heart about her circumstances. She is from Florida, where she had met her husband. They had been married for about ten years when suddenly, a couple of months ago, he told her that he wanted to come back to Roswell. She had no friends or family here, but she wanted to be with her husband, so she quit her job and got her kids and came with him here. Evidentially he had been planning something all along, because almost as soon as they arrived, he abandoned her and their three young kids for another woman. So, when she was in my office last week she was scared, broke, and without hope. And she didn't have a thing for her kids for Christmas, nor did she have any means to do so. It wasn't something she could really think about as her concern was survival at the moment. I only found out as I gently questioned her.

This is where the story gets good. I prayed with her then directed her to other places where she could go for additional help on utilities, food and rent. I thank God for the other organizations we partner with. But I was still concerned about her kids. All of our slots for the Angel Tree gifts were filled, and I knew the Salvation Army had already passed their deadline for taking applications. But I also know they have a vast amount of resources. So, I called Lt. Amber West, who co-pastor's the Salvation Army church along with her husband Lt. Joe West, and I explained the situation to her. She agreed to by-pass the rules and regulations, and to get this family helped for Christmas. Compassion trumped over strict procedures. They took the children's names and ages and other information. Each one of those kids is going to get a bundle of gifts for Christmas! How wonderful is that?!! In the midst of the heartbreak of being abandoned with no money and nowhere to go, the kindness of the Salvation Army bringing Christmas to their home warms my heart. Those children will find gifts for them on Christmas morning, and their Mom, Beth, will be filled with the delight of a Mom's heart when she sees her kids happy. And it is only because she came for help here at the Presbyterian Outreach, that it even happened. Most importantly, though, I pray they recognize the love of God for them through this experience. May they stand in wonder and awe at the beauty of the Son that was given to us, the little child in a manger who sacrificed everything that we may live.

Having said all of that, Beth was helped as a result of this ministry partnering with other ministries. But also know that all the children of the poor families that are on our own Angel Tree program, through the giving of First Presbyterian of Roswell, are also being helped. And each family has a story of their own, so by your giving you have helped bring happiness into the lives of many families this Christmas Season. Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive. May you feel the warmth and joy of God's pleasure for your kind generosity.

I hope you had a very joyous, warm and Merry Christmas and that you have a prosperous and blessed New Year.

Jeanette
Director, Presbyterian Outreach