

"Impact Stories"

The **Streetside Shower Clothing (SSC)** Core team wanted to keep you informed on how this ministry is impacting our local community. Below are some stories that will help us understand our impact!

We have all had times in our lives when we are sharing a story and we have commented at the end, "wish you could have been there." This is the Core Team's attempt to tell "some" of our stories, affirm that what we are doing is making a difference, lessons learned, and the many blessings that we have received.

For those of us attending FPC Plano, did you know that we have a homeless situation locally? By partnering with the **StreetShower Ministry** and being fortunate enough to have participated in the distribution of clothing on Wednesdays, my eyes have been opened and I have gained knowledge which has expanded my horizons. I have learned not to judge, to be a better listener, have patience, accept people as they are, and have realized that I may not be able to meet all of their needs. Based on what we are learning, we are better able to freely serve those in need.

Did you ever question why we need to "advertise" what we are doing at FPC Plano? Little did I realize that by making an effort to discover the community need for clothing and taking action to help those in need, that it would evolve into the Ministry we have today. By keeping the congregation apprised of the needs of the ministry, by sharing our ministry with other Churches, the *Plano Star Courier* and in the *Newsletter for SYNOD of the Sun*; it has resulted in increased donations, provided funds, allowed us the opportunity to connect with other organizations in our community that have helped us to meet the needs of our homeless population and could lead to more ways for FPC Plano to serve.

Did you ever question whether you could make an impact to an issue in our community? The last Wednesday that we were distributing clothing prior to the Holidays; I was passing out coats from the backend of my Blazer. Helen, an older woman who has been coming for the past couple of months came up to me and stated "you have been such a blessing to me, I wanted to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." This affirmed that I am making a positive impact in the lives of those we are serving!

Did you ever question how God is working through you? One of the best parts of being involved in the **Streetside Shower Clothing Ministry** is the opportunity to establish relationships with our shower participants. It is as simple as learning their name, assisting them with finding what they need that day, just listening or having a conversation. A young woman by the name of Cassandra came one Wednesday. I assisted her in finding the clothing she needed. Later, I noticed that she was leaving, I called out to her saying, "nice to meet you Cassandra, see you next week." She turned around and said, "you remembered my name." I strive to call each participant by their name when possible; it's heartwarming when their eyes light up, or they smile.

When we started in this ministry, they were referred to as "shower participants" or "them." While working through donations on Tuesday, a coat was held up and the comment was made, "I think Janie would like this." They are no longer "shower participants" or "them"; we know them by name, they are members of our community, they are "our people."

Core Team,

StreetSide Shower Clothing Ministry