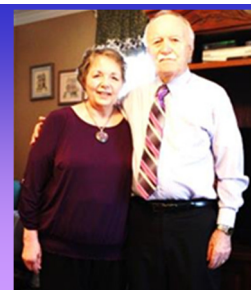




*From one heart—
To another heart*



Spring 2016 Comforting others with the comfort we receive from the God of all comfort



Musings—The Song of the Vineyard

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah described God as a Gardener (5:1-7) Who had prepared a vineyard and planted it with the very best vines. Choosing good ground, clearing the field, starting with good stock, and caring for it and protecting it surely gave God every right to expect good grapes and quality wine. But what He got was bad grapes and sour wine. What does a gardener do with such a vineyard, even after trying again and again? He can abandon it back to the wild, or He can start over in another way. Because God loves us, His creation, in the fullness of time, He chose another way. The Good News is this: God the Gardener sent the best vine of all—Himself! He is both the Gardener and the Vine. The Son of God, Jesus, told us, I am the vine; you are the branches. Abide in me and I will abide in you (John 17). God, by His Spirit, will produce in us good fruit, a fruit so good that we will become known for it. What is that good fruit? Isaiah tells us: to love righteousness, to seek justice. And Jesus said the law and the prophets are summed up by loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and your neighbor as yourself. Others will know us by God's love in us—a vineyard that produces good fruit. That is a song worthy of being sung, a Savior worthy of being praised.

Blessings—a Blessing Returned

Grandma's Comfort sends out monthly welcome bags to people entering an addiction recovery program, people who bring to the program nothing but a willingness to start over. The welcome bags include personal items, socks, hats and scarves in the winter, notebooks and pens, colored pencils and markers, snacks, and more. Many of those in the program, both men and women, send us thank you notes, often with drawings. One woman recently wrote: "I am truly grateful and you are a blessing to all you reach out to. Thank you." Such notes are blessings returned.

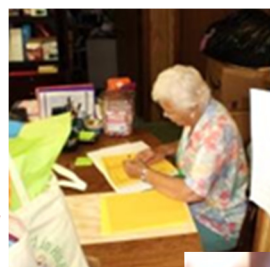
This month, a note came from John: "Thank you so much for believing in us at Holden House. This is truly a gift." Using notebook paper and colored pencils, John enclosed a picture he drew like those in the popular adult coloring books. (Thank you, John, for allowing us to include your note and picture in our Newsletter.) The program staff person, Michelle, recently told us how great it is when we include anything that sparks creativity. Knowing how blessed *GC* is by creative people who make pictures, cards, jewelry, washcloths, scarves and hats, cosmetic pouches, even soaps, we are always grateful for signs of the image of God in us—a blessing of His creative spirit.



Theme of the Month—Passing It On

The vignettes below all tell a story—passing on the grace, talents, and treasures God has given us. The handcrafters in these stories pull together numerous items to make a whole gift to pass on. But the final step—putting together the birthday, comfort, and welcome bags—could not happen without faithful volunteers who come together each week with servant hearts, assembling items into colorful, creative gift bags. Wrapping these beautiful bags (about 200 per month; many more at Christmas, of course) is an important part of passing it on—from donors to *GC* to guests at shelters. *GC* relies on men as well as women to get the work

done—recordskeeping, printing, card folding, lifting and sorting boxes, and making deliveries. Applause for a job well done!



Shared Beauty—Bead Earrings

Our friend Linda had an idea to share. A low-income friend of hers loves making beautiful earrings. Would *Grandma's Comfort* like to put some in its comfort and birthday gifts? Well, of course! Evelyn creates the beauty, Linda purchases them and donates them to *GC*, then volunteers wrap them in lovely jewelry bags and place them into gifts for homeless women. Beauty passed on at every stage in the journey. A shelter guest recently told us what the female shelter residents really like about the gift bags is receiving something "pretty."

Out of Fabric Pieces—Baby Quilts

GC receives some surprising donations, such as boxes filled with fabric pieces (some quite tiny) left over from other projects. Since we are confident that God has a purpose for everything He prompts people to send us, we couldn't help but wonder, as we counted the pieces for inventory records, what He had in mind. Then we "found" a church women's group, *Stitching for Others*, that makes baby quilts for charities and pregnancy centers. In assembly line fashion, women with various abilities, craft these gorgeous infant blankets, matching a variety of sizes, colors and patterns. They iron, piece, and sew them together, finally backing and edging the whole! The quilts are then blessed in a Sunday morning service and donated, many passed on to *Grandma's Comfort* for layette bags. Out of pieces, a beautiful whole! (There's a sermon or two in here!)



More About Yarn—Gifts of Love

In the last "Letter from Diane," we told the story of a lady who uses yarn skeins, balls, and small pieces donated to *GC* and passed on to her so she can make afghans for women and children living in the shelter where she lives. Pam, one of our volunteers, interviewed Theresa to get the rest of the story:



Theresa can use anything to make a gift of love. Since entering Maplewood three months ago, she has made over sixteen afghans. "I'm trying to beat my record of 32 afghans in six months," she jokes. Every blanket or scarf is given to someone else at the shelter—scarves for children and adults and blankets for kids and new moms. Most recently she saw a little boy who had gotten hurt roughhousing with his sister. Theresa gave him a blanket to cheer him up. "He was so thrilled," she laughed, "he forgot he was hurt!" Her family has many times urged her to sell her creations so that she will have a little money. She adamantly refuses. "You don't take what is given to you and use it to make a profit." Learning these crafts from her grandma, Theresa has crocheted and knitted for 50 years (and she also quilts and macramés).

Thank you for using the gift God has given you for others, Theresa! Since we first wrote about this story, *GC* has received some more yarn, but we could use some more. We have a list of folks who utilize donated yarn to create beautiful items for *GC* to give to others! Passing it on and passing it on!

Buttons and Bags—Comfort Pouches and Totes

Grandma's Comfort is very blessed to have so many, many handcrafters—over 60 at last count—so there just isn't space for all the stories and all the pictures. But one of the items that we receive "over the transom" always causes the volunteers to "oooh" and "aaah!" A number of years ago, Karen (truth in journalism—Karen is a Zimmerman daughter) had so many other projects she did not want to learn to crochet. Then one summer she said she was ready! She began making cosmetic pouches to hold various toiletry items (and now she even adds the toiletries before donating the pouches). Recently she began making and affixing crocheted flowers with button centers. Some of the buttons come from her cousin Alissa, who makes them out of polymer clay!



And then there's Kate who uses both fabric and yarn to make outstanding, unbelievably creative lined tote bags! And Char, who designed a crocheted comfort bag with a cross or a heart center. All of these crafters and volunteers reflect the *GC* theme of passing on our own treasures and talents:

God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings (1 Peter 4:10).

A big thank you to all *GC* donors for their sacrifice of love for others. In each letter we write, we include some of the many thank-you notes we receive so all friends of *GC* can receive that blessing. Pass it on!

Letters from Diane

Every other month Diane mails a letter to those who donated during the previous two months. So that others can read the letter as well, we also send it to the e-mail list. If you would like to receive Diane's letters, please send your e-mail address to: grandmascomfort@yahoo.com.

Thank You!

for my gift bag
Thanks for sharing,
Thanks for caring!

Glass House client



Current Needs

Financial support:

- Send a check to address below or use PayPal via our website at www.grandmascomfort.org

Purchased items:

- Consider purchasing your online orders through Amazon Smile and selecting Grandma's Comfort as your charity. Every quarter Amazon sends GC a check for .5% of the purchases.

Gift items:

- Jewelry—purchased or hand-crafted
- Dressy scarves—may be gently used
- Wallets—men or women
- Manicure sets
- Bath & body sets
- Handcrafted items—all kinds

Socks—all sizes, ages

Toys, crafts, small craft kits

- Stuffed animals, beanie babies
- Drawing/sketch pads and drawing supplies
- Coloring and activity books
- Balls, cars, jump ropes, Frisbees
- Jigsaw puzzles—adult, child
- Yarn—may be left over from other projects

Personal Items:

- Washcloths—new or hand-crafted
- Towel sets
- Lotion—full or travel size
- Shower gel—full or travel size
- Razors and shave cream—travel size
- Kleenex—pocket size
- Chapstick/lip balm
- Deodorant
- Toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Shampoo—travel or regular size
- Cough drops
- Band-aids
- Nail clippers, emery boards

Contact Us We'd love to hear from you! Feel free to tell your friends about the ministry of *Grandma's Comfort*.

Pay Pal: It is now possible to give cash donations to *Grandma's Comfort* through PayPal!

E-Newsletter: Besides print version, the newsletter is posted on our website.

www.grandmascomfort.org has a contact form. Please write to us.

Grandma's Comfort is a tax-exempt, 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization and is licensed by the State of Michigan.

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