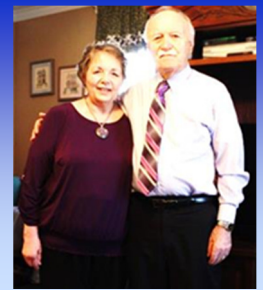




From one heart—
To another heart



Fall/Winter 2016 Comforting others with the comfort we receive from the God of all comfort

Musings—He Humbled Himself

The eighth-century BC prophet Isaiah frequently mentions the need for humankind to humble itself before the holy God because a day of “distress and darkness and fearful gloom” is coming (Isaiah 8:22). But, Isaiah prophesies another day when “there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. . . . In the future he [God] will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan—

*The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;*

*On those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned. . . .*

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.*

And he will be called

*Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.*

*Of the increase of his government and peace
there will be no end (Isaiah 9:2, 6-7, NIV).*



The Cradle and the Cross

The apostle John, in the first century AD, fills out the concept of the light dawning:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men (John 1:1-4, NIV).

John went on to observe that people rejected the light, preferring darkness because their deeds were evil. Or, as Isaiah said, we all, like sheep, have gone astray, each turned to his own way (Isaiah 53: 6). Throughout the centuries, God had sent messengers to draw people back to Himself—prophets, priests, kings. But that wasn’t enough. So God concluded that He alone could save His people from the deadly results of their sins. But why would this One who is the Light of the world, the very Creator of humankind, come into this world? Why not stay outside and just let us destroy ourselves? The apostle John, responding to the “why” question, cited Jesus’ own words as the answer: the very nature of God is love.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son,
that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16, NIV).*

Entering this world would require a humbling, a bending low, that none of us can even imagine—from a heavenly throne to an earthly birth in a barn, from spirit to flesh and all its ills. The apostle Paul clarifies what it meant for the Son of God, admonishing us to have His humility:

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!*

What was the outcome of that lowly birth, that servant life, that unspeakable death?

*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 3:5-11, NIV).*

As we observe the “traditions” of Christmas, my prayer is that “every knee should bow” before the Son, the Light of the world, “the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12, NIV).



Shelves of Christmas Gifts for Delivery

Blessings—Faith-based, Non-profit Agencies

Grandma’s Comfort could not exist without the faith-based, non-profit agencies whose sole purpose is to serve the poor. Through their humble service, they reflect the mercy of God and His particular care for the weak and the needy, especially widows and the fatherless. The 3000 gift bags *GC* wraps up each year are distributed through these faithful organizations, many of whom have been in existence over 100 years! Night after night, day by day, they shelter, feed, and counsel those who have nowhere else to go. Staff members make low salaries, and numerous volunteers come alongside to serve food, stock shelves, clean up, give out personal items, and share God’s love. Many times, as *GC* volunteers gather together to stuff full the comfort and welcome gift bags to send to these agencies, we reflect on their hard work and our fun. AND YET, agency people take time to thank US, when we feel we need to thank them. Here are some of the blessings they share with us:

Christmas Gifts for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors: *Our older youth tend not to get a lot of Christmas presents—sometimes they get none. Once our kids hit 18 they’re usually living independently so they are not in foster homes. A majority of our foster homes are outside of the Lansing district. We have approximately 82 youth in our Refugee Foster Care program. I appreciate all that you do for our youth! Thank you.*

Note: *GC* provides “welcome” tote bags for all the arriving unaccompanied children through this agency.

Birthday Gift for Child in Shelter: *Good Morning, I saw this note to staff from the other night and just thought I would share : “Chanise’s daughter got a birthday bag today from Grandma’s Comfort. It had a baby doll in it which she just adores!” Thanks for all you do! There is at least 1 little girl who is very happy this week due to your loving service!*

Comfort Bags for Men in a Shelter, a new outreach fall 2016: *Our men LOVE these bags! In the past when we would pass out basic items most men would leave them behind. With your very nice bags they are so pleased and take it all with them when they leave. These bags are a HUGE blessing. Thank you so much!*

Giving Tuesday

First we give thanks—on Thanksgiving. Oh, and we enjoy family time and once-a-year gargantuan meals! Then we spend money on gifts for others—on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Hopefully, we save money! Finally, we wrap up the thanks-giving season by giving to those in need—on Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Please give generously this year to a faith-based organization to ensure that those staying in a shelter on Christmas will receive joy and comfort and the Good News of Jesus!

Whether your heart is concerned about the tens of thousands of refugees internationally who are served by world efforts, or you feel a special passion for local outreach to those who are suffering, please give. Most faith-based organizations receive no government aid, relying entirely on the generosity of those who have been richly blessed. And, of course, these organizations are 501(c)3 tax exempt, so that your donations can be claimed as a tax deduction to the full extent of the law—a blessing in return. In fact, you might consider any tax advantage as another opportunity to give your refund to a worthy faith-based charity!

Facts from 2016, as of November 20:

Handcrafters:	Volunteers:
32 individuals	7 regular
3 groups (10-35 each)	12 total
87 total individuals, est.	Agencies Served:
Donors:	International: 4
28 finances	Local: 7
81 items, including groups	Types of gift bags given: 7
95 total non-duplicative	

Number of:	2015	2016 est.	% change
GC Bags Given	3215	2881*	-10.4
Items Received	25,368	22,605	-10.9
Handcrafts Received	1955	2232	+14.2

* fewer Christmas gifts planned

A Few More Thank You Notes—from Grateful Recipients

Dear friends at *Grandma's Comfort*, What a blessing to receive the "Aruba" bag chock full of goodies. Thank you for the beautiful afghan, the Bible, the devotionals, all the personal toiletry items—EVERYTHING! Overwhelming. Thank you!! God bless you for your kindness—the cake & ice cream—yummy! Thank you EVER SO MUCH! (from a graduate of a one-year transformation program)

Thank you so much for the bag. It brought me so much joy. I use the knitted bag as a water bottle holder and love the lip balm and lotion. It means so much to me & I am happy that I got it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Heart always! (Note: another person is using the knitted bag to carry her Bible.)

I would like to express a heartfelt appreciation for my "Welcome Bag." I am enjoying the coloring book [adult] as well as the nail polish. Thank you so very much for all of your thoughtfulness. God Bless.

Thank you for everything you do for people you do not know. It is truly a blessing & a light shining when there may be too much darkness. Sending much love & blessings to you all. Thank you. ❤️

Thank you so much for the two week bag. You are wonderful people. I came to rehab with almost nothing and you made my stay here much better. I appreciate it so much.

(Note: a two-week bag is a large "welcome" tote given after the person has stayed in the program for two weeks—a name for the bag we learned through various thank you notes!)

The blessings we receive from so many encouraging notes abound way beyond and above our gift-giving!

Remodeled Website Coming

At the same address—www.grandmascomfort.org—a remodeled website will soon be revealed. Currently under construction, it will keep the same theme and ideas but will better fit all devices—phones, tablets, laptops, desktops. The new site will include a blog, connection to our group Facebook page (which we will reinvigorate), rolling pictures at the top, descriptions of ongoing projects, along with the GC story, contact us, current needs, volunteer, and donate. The bi-monthly "Letter from Diane" and the biannual "Newsletter" will be posted in sections to the blog, with notices sent through the e-mail list when they are available. (We will continue to mail individual receipts for tax purposes.) We'll keep you posted!



Joy and Blessings to You

At this Christmas season, as we begin our twelfth year of outreach service and ministry, the Board of Directors would like to thank all who read our newsletters and e-mails, as well as the many donors, handcrafters, volunteers, and agency staff members. May you be richly blessed in Jesus Christ as we celebrate His coming to earth to be our Savior!

If you would like to receive e-notices when new information has been placed on the website, including the Letter from Diane and the Newsletter, please send your e-mail address to: grandmas.comfort@yahoo.com.



Volunteers' Christmas Luncheon

Current Needs

Financial support to purchase items:

- Send a check to address below or use PayPal via our website at www.grandmascomfort.org
- Place online orders through Smile Amazon and select Grandma's Comfort as your charity. We receive .05% gift from Amazon.

Winter items:

- Scarves, hats, gloves/mittens—purchased or handcrafted
- Winter socks, slipper-socks

Gift items:

- Cosmetic bags, tote bags, gift bags—handcrafted or purchased
- Jewelry—purchased or handcrafted, especially boys' bracelets
- Gifts for men
- Wallets—men or women
- Manicure sets, nail clippers
- Bath & body sets
- Blankets—such as fleece or handcrafted
- Washcloths—purchased or handcrafted
- Handcrafted items—all kinds

Personal Needs:

- Lotion—regular or travel size
- Shower gel—regular or travel size
- Kleenex—pocket size
- Chapstick/lip balm
- Toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Shampoo—travel or regular size
- Cough drops and bandaids

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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