



"Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses." - Isaiah 58:12

Better Together... After 40 Years!

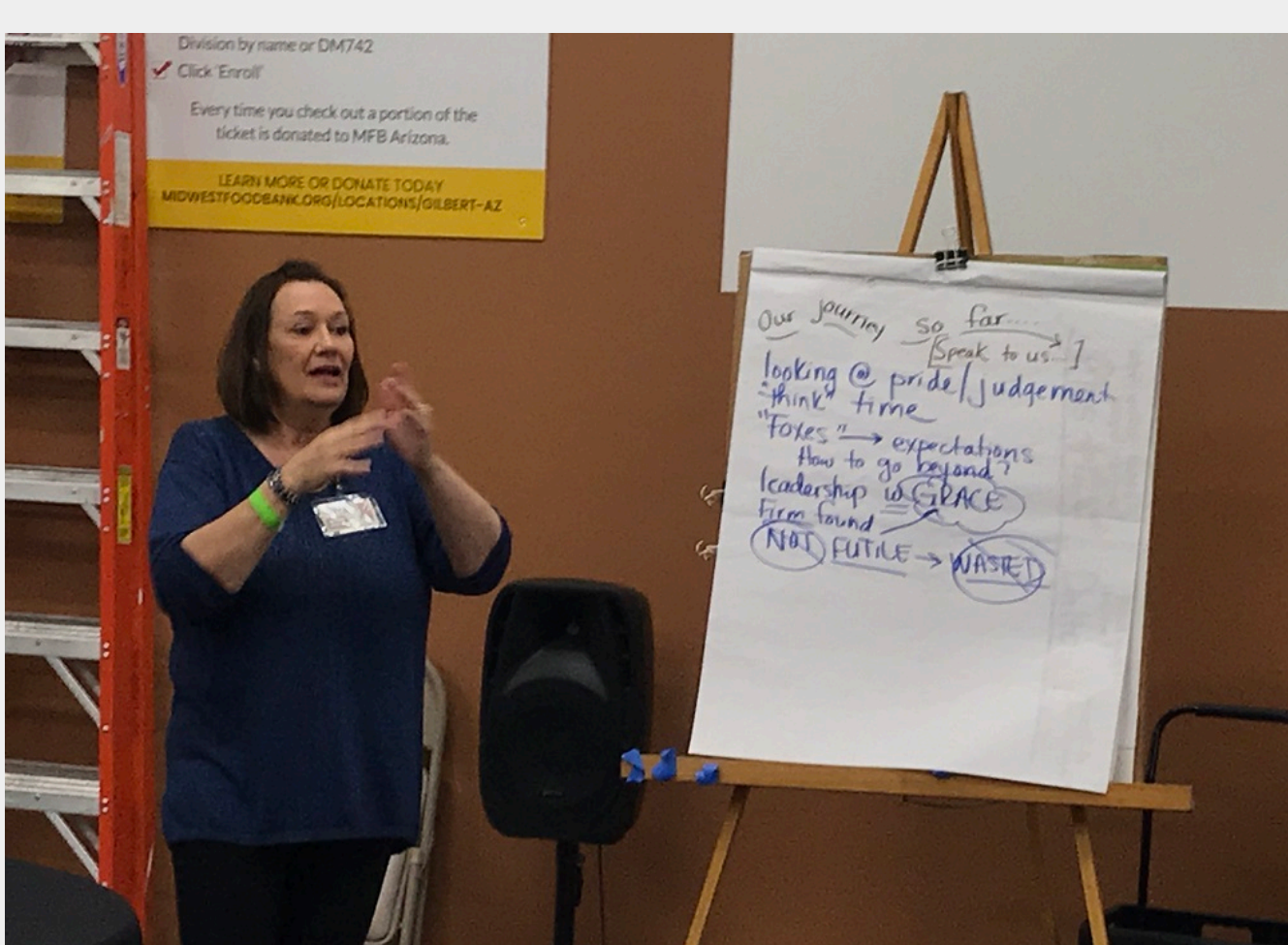
We actually housed our first family in 1979, but our first official ministry endeavor with a long term situation was in 1981. My firstborn was just short of 2 years old and we had brought our second born home from the hospital four months earlier. Annie graced us with her presence, a timid 13 year old fresh out of severe abuse and trauma. It was eye opening and a pretty wild ride for our little family but an answer to prayer. We wanted to reach the least of these and had cried out for the Lord to use us in any way that He designed for us. We knew that hospitality was a gift He had given us but we wanted so much to have His wisdom as we stepped out in faith to welcome others into our home. It was the first of many wild rides over the years.

Time brought many new learning experiences and opportunities for us. Tom always had a burning desire to network with the larger body. It is obvious that coming together as a team can accomplish so much more than laboring independently. I was always moved by a beautiful Twila Paris song that was released in 1990, "How Beautiful is the Body of Christ." It never gets old to hear the words of that song. Though it may seem that the broken body of Christ is sometimes more visible to the world than the resurrected body, there are many things the Lord is doing globally to show off His bride and use her to invite others to come!

At Jesus Cares, we want to do a little showing off. As we have worked hard to develop long lasting partnerships with others, it has proven to be such a great benefit to all. I don't mean to be pretentious but the Lord has allowed us to walk alongside of some beautiful people and organizations. They are beautiful because our Savior is beautiful and we are made in His image. It is good to remind ourselves of such privileges and honor that he has bestowed upon His bride. It is good to give honor where honor is due. Join us as we introduce some of our partners:

E.Q.U.I.P. Conference 2021/Suzanne - Administrator Extraordinaire

Bridgeway Church in Awatukee has been a tremendous support to our ministry in varied ways. They have provided some very faithful and committed volunteers. Suzanne is one such volunteer. It has been a vision of Jesus Cares to provide a venue for local churches to receive tools and skills for helping to undergird pastors and ministry leaders. This vision was interrupted for a season and seemed to die only to have it resurrect in an even greater capacity. What started out as a training venue for women to help women became an opportunity for training couples as well as individual team members. Tom gets the vision, I try to flesh it out in my abstract and discombobulated ways, and Suzanne ties it all together in a neat package. Others will be joining us in the future to help with this endeavor. Here is what one couple remarked about the first conference:



"Thank you for a wonderful day of learning!! We were truly blessed!!" Thank you to Suzanne for making this so much more efficient and effective. Thank you to all that made this conference possible. We look forward to future E.Q.U.I.P. Events.

Midwest Food Bank

One of the partners that made this conference possible was **Midwest Food Bank**. We became a recipient of their blessings in 2020. As one of their partnering agencies we are entitled to use their community room. What an amazing gift of hospitality it provided for our participants. Their generosity provided table coverings, drinks, coffee, the sound equipment, fully stocked kitchen, utensils for serving and much more. We are beyond grateful. Not only do they give us the opportunity to provide an abundance of food for needy families, they provide this gracious venue for us to hold our community events. I asked them if there was anything, we as a community, could do for them. Here was their response:

"As you know, we are here to serve and we do that by providing food without cost to 320+ partner agencies. As a result of the pandemic, there continues to be a need for specific food items that we are not able to procure through our normal channels (i.e. manufacturers). We would be thankful for your support in a food drive to help with these food items: peanut butter and jelly, spaghetti sauce (no glass jars, please), canned items, and cereal."

If you have any questions on how you can help this organization, please contact: Merilee Baptiste, Executive Director, 480-892-0134. Let them know you appreciate their work in the community!

Fortified Marriages Ministry

"Building the foundation, defining a Christian Marriage and providing the tools and resources to fortify marriages"



About 10 years ago I was scrambling for resources due to losing our social worker to the mission field. I made contact with a couple that I found and to this day, I cannot tell you how I found them! We actually met with Chris and Carmen Garner and quickly forged a close friendship as we could see their like-mindedness, gospel focus, and humble desire to see God provide for and move within their ministry for His glory. We call them the "monkeys" because we don't just labor together but sometimes we just need a break from ministry and enjoy brief out of town "monkey shenanigans" together. Chris and Carmen have become such an asset to our mission and we treasure their partnership. We are privileged to serve on their board and look forward to continuing this vision to network so we can be better together. To contact Chris and Carmen: 480-699-2515 and info@fortifiedmarriages.com

New Turning Point for Women

1 in 4 women experience intimate partner violence! We cannot have enough ministry to help this devastating reality. Many leaders and church staff do not feel equipped to handle this difficult and complex issue. It can sometimes be like an onion that has multiple layers. You begin the process of peeling and due to a struggle to resolve Biblical passages of God's design for marriage with what is actually happening in families, it can be tempting to look the other way and choose not to approach the difficulties at all! For some, it's like grieving, "I don't know what to say or do!"



Gloria has been an amazing resource for the women we have sent her way. We are seeing cycles broken as women explore the depths of their own heart issues, grave disappointments, and dashed expectations. They have the marvelous opportunity to heal from deep wounds and scars as they live out life in a safe, believing community. Gloria loves to teach these women God's design for restoration and their identity in Messiah! We are so grateful to partner with this special lady. She is a great friend, ministry partner, and an excellent example of God's grace and goodness! Within the last year, Gloria asked her wounded ladies to look beyond their own pain and take up **Elpis** as a mission project. (Isabella's mission under Jesus Cares Ministries.) Isabella left for Iraq with beautiful jewelry, scarves, and monetary blessings that sent her out with a fullness that she could pour out to the abused and hurting population she was reaching. I love how Gloria moves her women from victims to victors through the name of Jesus! We look forward to our continued partnership as we labor among the broken and bruised.



Freedom House/Hope for Addiction

When we visit the **Freedom House** and see the dedication of their staff and volunteers, I feel like I am stepping back in time to when we had our maternity group home. God blessed us with such gracious and strong women of God and it was the lifeblood of our mission! The ladies we loved were desperate for mentors. We see that discipleship happening in many practical and spiritual ways at **Freedom House**. Their mission, among many things, is to help others connect the desire to change with the power to change as they choose to move away from addiction as part of their identity. As with the others with whom we partner, the gospel is the clear focus and hope for genuine change. We are able to come alongside the staff, offer our parenting course, "Children: Our Heritage," and offer individual and comprehensive support for the residents. It is a delight to be a part of walking with **Liz Beck**, the director and founder of this program. Their group support meetings, on Thursday evenings are another resource for us. The leaders gather together to help the participants toward a common goal. "Our purpose is to walk alongside, equip and care for those who struggle with addiction. We support people with substance abuse problems as they transition into their new life. This is accomplished through weekly recovery meetings, mentorship, transition support and practical tools."

Support for those experiencing addiction issues has been a huge component of our outreach. The aftermath on families is devastating. Liz and the team she leads and trains is a partnership that we appreciate and love. Thank you for your commitment to love and lead well!

Hope for addiction can be contacted at 480-782-0403 or email Liz at connect@hopeforaddiction.com

Hope in Christ

For years we were able to refer young women in need to various housing organizations for placement. The tables turned several years ago and it became mandatory for them to go into homeless shelters to await these placements. Since we are not involved as much in street ministry like we used to, it became difficult to know how to handle these situations! Into our lives came a man with a heart to place vulnerable populations into safe places. He brings his streetwise expertise to the table, connecting with organizations and placement opportunities that we would never have been able to access with our limited time and availability. His compassion is beyond belief. His family and children have a like-minded heart to serve the "least of these." Logan has been reaching out to the most vulnerable on the streets of Phoenix for several years, expending resources for the kingdom and meeting people in the darkest places. **Hope in Christ** brings hope to despairing hearts in practical and spiritual ways.



Here are the latest developments straight from the director: "It has been so humbling over the past several years to see how God has used me and continues to use me (and my family now) to help the most vulnerable in our city. We just had a new baby boy born at the **Hope in Christ** shelter for pregnant women last week. The mom was 6 months pregnant and homeless when we brought her to the shelter. I also have been working with a woman who is 5 months pregnant with two young children living in her car in Alabama. She said she wanted to have an abortion because there were no shelters with openings in her state and felt hopeless. She needed a safe place to stay for herself, her unborn baby, and her kids to get back on her feet. I arranged for her to come and stay at the **Hope in Christ** shelter where she could get the love, nurturing and guidance she so desperately needed. She has been with us about a month now, and is keeping the baby, amen! She also wants to stay and complete the program, God is great!

My son who is 13, is always engaging with the homeless in the community, bringing them food and referring them to me to try to get them off the streets. He had been speaking to a homeless woman for many months named Dawn, who had been homeless for the past 3 years. He convinced her to talk to me to see how we could help her. She has been working full-time while still being homeless, and I assisted her in saving her money. We found a one bedroom apartment for her in Tempe, and moved her in and blessed her with all the furnishings for her new apartment. She is now self-sufficient working full-time and off the streets, (she also had a homeless cat with her who now has a safe home as well).

Even though I have been dealing with something personally difficult the last couple of months, God has still used myself and my wife to get many other people off the streets these last 2 months. God has also put on our hearts to open a shelter for orphans and homeless children in third world countries. We are praying and seeking God's direction in this for the future. I pray I can do God's will with helping the least of these in our community and around the world until my last breath."

It has been a real joy to partner with him over the years and find a way to share resources, wisdom, and friendship in a way that makes us **better together**. Please pray for him and his family as they face some challenges in this hour.

Hope in Christ can be contacted at 602-341-9649 and or email at hopeinchrist@gmail.com

Last but not least: Our Board of Directors

Many years ago when starting this mission, we understood the need for strong accountability and partnerships with individuals who understood the vision and heart of Jesus Cares. Tom birthed this vision many, long years ago, but the nuts and bolts of putting this together would not have happened without an amazing board of directors that has held up our arms through it all. Deep gratitude that no words can possibly convey go out to: Jackie and Jeff, Tim and Sue, Blair and Kriss, and Micah and Chrissy. We covet your wisdom, insights, support, and love!

I hope you have enjoyed this testimony of the beautiful body of Messiah. There are many more organizations that Jesus Cares and our volunteers partner with but special appreciation goes out to these ministries that have been a part of a close co-laboring relationship. They have extended their hands continually to those that we love and care for and have enabled us to bear more fruit together than we ever could have accomplished alone!

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"

Thanks be to God for each of those that make up the beautiful body of Messiah.

We truly are "BETTER TOGETHER"!

Jesus Cares