

**GALLATIN COUNTY**

# **L** **OVE INC**

MOBILIZING CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TO TRANSFORM LIVES & COMMUNITIES IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

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## **STICKING CLOSE:** Living Like Family

We use family terms quite a lot in Christian circles, such as: family of God, family of believers, brothers and sisters in Christ, and children of God. I'm sure you can think of more.

God chose to gift us with family as an example of His love for us. Tragically some families are not like the family God intended, at all. God created family to mean: comfort, love, support, and acceptance. To many, family means judgment, uncertainty, hatred, and rejection.

Love In the Name of Christ hears stories every day from people who have experienced "family" portrayed the wrong way. Clients often reach out for our help because their own family, for some reason, is unable or unwilling to act as a support system.

It is often said, "Friends are the family we choose." The bible says, "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24) As believers we know this friend is Jesus and we are called to live like him. "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends." (John 15:15)



However, sticking close is challenging. It requires balancing truth and love, requirement and freely giving, work and rest. The Love INC staff is privileged to witness church volunteers rise to the challenge of loving God by sticking close to others.

Our mission to mobilize the church to transform lives and communities in the name of Christ puts us in the middle of living out a model of the best kind of family. A family where there is comfort, love, support, and acceptance offered not only when things are good, but when they are bad. This is the greatest testimony to our world of God's great love for us.



## **STORIES OF STICKING TOGETHER:** Call Center Highlights

### **LISTENING:**

A volunteer made a delivery to a client who struggles with anger issues. The client expressed some of that anger to the volunteer. The volunteer quietly listened; shared his own story of how he overcame anger with the help of the Lord; and assured her that he would pray for her to come to a place of peace.

### **SELF-SACRIFICING:**

A volunteer reported that she spends at least twelve hours every month transporting a mom and child to and from appointments. The volunteer sees this as an opportunity to bless this single mom with the love of Christ.

### **SYMPATHIZING:**

A volunteer involved in the budget planning ministry included these words in her report: *“met with (name). She seems a little depressed—still grieving the loss of a family member. I encouraged her to get out of the house and invited her to church. She seemed open to that so I am praying she will do it.”*

### **PERSISTING:**

A report by a computer repair person: *“made five trips, but got the computer working for (client).”*

### **SHARING:**

A partner church included twentyfive Love INC clients/families in their annual Easter Basket distribution. We were encouraged to hear stories from both church members and clients who were mutually blessed by this ministry.

### **LOVING:**

A volunteer wrote: *“(Client) is an elderly man... he was very apprehensive about calling Love INC because he is not Christian—I explained to him that we were about ministry and how we partnered in community. He was so appreciative and grateful. We had a unique conversation.”* The volunteer also shared that the client had called for furniture and “art work.” The volunteer was able to find donors to meet both of those needs. We pray that he also finds Jesus as his living Savior.

## **THANK YOU FOR STICKING WITH ME:** Notes from Clients

“Thank you soooo much. It (the computer) will allow me to send and receive pictures from our families. It will also help me in finding information about my health conditions. Thank you for all the prayers. They are working.”

“I am utterly and completely overjoyed with the fix up on my home that had deteriorated during a long illness. . . . I was made aware of the Rotary Club’s Fix-Up Festival through Love INC. . . . I am eternally grateful.”

## **NEW LOVE INC CLIENT/VOLUNTEER VIDEO:**

Our client/volunteer video debuted at the “Plant the Seed” Dinner and Silent auction on May 6th. Thank you to all the volunteers and clients who shared their stories with us.

Check it out on our website and see how God blesses those who “stick together”. [www.loveincgc.org](http://www.loveincgc.org)

## **CHANGE YOUR LIFE:** Room to Grow!

The “Change Your Life” program is one of the many ways that Love INC fulfills its calling to be an instrument of transformation in people’s lives in the name of Christ. In the past year the “Change Your Life” program has grown from a fledgling program into a program that is soaring to new heights!

What does this mean?

New programs are creative in nature. Big ideas are born. Passionate people are brought on board. Great things happen and they happen fast.

After several years of establishing and building a life changing program we’ve stepped into phase two of any worthwhile endeavor – creating room for expansion by streamlining current programs and processes.

This is how we see it happening:

**Simplifying Every Step => Frees Up Volunteers => Creates More Time to Love Neighbor**  
**Simplifying Every Step => Frees Up Staff => Creates Opportunity for More Big Ideas**

## **START YOUR LIFE:** Growth Opportunity

At Love INC we believe our life skills classes encourage positive life change and share the love of Christ. It’s exciting to watch client after client grasp hold of healthy budgeting, parenting, career, and relational concepts and literally change the trajectory of their lives.

Love INC’s “Change Your Life” program has been the primary avenue we’ve used to teach adults in our community. About six months ago, staff, volunteers, and former students began asking questions like:

*“Why wait to teach life skills when unhealthy habits have been established for 10, 20, or 30 years?”*

*“How many teens would never become adult Love INC clients if we engaged with them now?”*

The more questions we asked the clearer it became that Love INC needed to offer classes to teens. However, everything we do here at Love INC is driven by our local partner churches. So we prayed for a likeminded church to step forward. God likes answering prayers!

This fall our new teen focused life skills program, “Start Your Life”, will begin across from the Bozeman High School! Our first class will be **Financial Foundations 101**. Teens will learn how to create a budget, balance a checkbook, and make financially wise decisions.

Our hope is to expand course offerings and create a *teen only* Clothes Closet and Personal Care Pantry. We need your help!

**FINANCIALLY:** Use the DONATION CODE: **SYL** on the memo line of your check.

**VOLUNTEER:** Call Hannah at 577-1296 to offer your time, expertise, and love.



**START YOUR LIFE**

## **Love INC Classes**

Summer/Fall 2014

**LOVE IN THE KITCHEN:** Going on now!

**FINDING FINANCIAL FREEDOM:** Tues, Sept 23rd-Nov 25th, 6:30~8:30pm

**FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS 101:** Thurs, Sept 4th-Sept 25th, 6:30~8:30pm

## **GOD ANSWERS PRAYER:** And We Want You to Know About It!

Many of the members of our Love INC family receive the weekly prayer chain via email. Some requests on this prayer chain are generated in the Love INC Call Center. As we listen to the stories of clients, we ask how we can pray for them. We also ask if we can include their needs on the prayer chain.

A new goal for 2014-15 is to be more consistent in calling clients back to ask how their prayers have been answered. Throughout the coming year, we hope to include more praise and thanks for answered prayer on the weekly prayer chain.

To God be the Glory!

### **RESPONSE TIME:** Prioritizing Life Stories

Since the Clearinghouse is a Call Center, much of our day is spent on the phones. We receive calls from clients and make calls out to volunteers. Historically, a receptionist would listen to the client's basic request and fill out a message log. This message log would then go to the call center. A call center volunteer would call the client back within a few days to listen to their full story and (with staff input) would make the appropriate referrals.

Over the past year, we have looked for ways to improve our call back response time.

With one simple change we dramatically shortened our response time! Here is what we did.

Receptionists now assist in the call center process by acting as the first responder to incoming client calls and connect the client with an open call center volunteer. This, reduces and in most cases eliminates the need for a call back.

*Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it"- when you have it with you. ~ Proverbs 3:27-28*

### **CALL CENTER:** A Look to the Future

The Love INC Call Center is the hub of our ministry to the Gallatin County. All of our client requests for services funnel in and calls for volunteers to serve funnel out. In recent years, the volume of calls has increased due to the economic downturn and tremendous county growth.



Our phones are constantly ringing.

To stay in step with growing community needs we'll be making a few changes to the Call Center in the near future. All of our client files and volunteer database will be completely moved over to a computerized system. When volunteers answer client calls, files will be instantly created, updated, and/or accessed while a volunteer listens and offers Christ-like support.

Going paperless will also make it easier and faster to match a client's need with a volunteer's gifting.

For volunteers who love listening to client stories but are not comfortable working on a computer, printed forms matching the computer system will be created. The information will then be passed to another volunteer and easily entered into the system.

Our Love INC staff is excited about this dream. We will continue making plans and keep you updated on our progress.

*Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ~ Isaiah 43:19 ESV*

## **COMPUTER MINISTRY:** Making It Easier To Serve And Donate



Last summer the Computer Ministry workshop moved out of a warehouse into the Love INC office. The move has made it more convenient for donors to drop off computers, more comfortable for our refurbishing team to work, and more efficient for our delivery team.

Love INC accepts all computers and hardware that are 5 years old or less. Due to our non-profit status, Microsoft grants permission for Love INC to reload software. We are also happy to receive laptops. They provide added value to our clients who are returning to school and reduce client costs because tying into Wi-Fi is far more affordable than an internet connection.

The refurbishing team usually meets one Saturday morning of each month to clean and assemble the computers. Thank you Volunteers!

## **PERSONAL CARE PANTRY:** Result Of Our Facelift

As you may remember from our April Newsletter the Personal Care Pantry (PCP) underwent a facelift. Here are a few excerpts from a volunteer.

*“As I think you both know I have enjoyed working at the PCP. Today was the first day I have worked since the changes have been made. I just could not believe the difference. I was amazed. . . . most of the time before the pantry got its ‘facelift’. . . the focus was on the shopping list and making sure the total matched the voucher. Today we saw 10 clients and with every one of them we had a good conversation and they were very open and almost needing to share and interact, in fact, the last client asked us if we would please be willing to listen and pray with her. Maybe it was the beautiful spring day. . . . I believe it was partially due to me being able to focus on them and not on the ‘numbers’. I just wanted to share our experience as 12 hours later I am still thinking about it!”*

## **AUCTION:** New Ways To Give

Love INC donors are generous. They always have been.

We know not all of our donors are able to attend the “Plant the Seed” dinner and silent auction each spring. So, we are bringing an online auction to you!

Throughout the year, Love INC will hold an online auction featuring fantastic donated items. The auction items and times will be featured on our FaceBook page, website, and in our newsletters.

**The first auction starts July 28th!** To bid go to: <http://www.biddingOwl.com/GCLOVEINC>

Want an auction item sneak peak? Make sure to...

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK AT: Gallatin County Love INC

or

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT: [www.loveincgc.org](http://www.loveincgc.org)

*Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?*

*~ Luke 14:27-28*



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## **GETTING TO KNOW YOU:**

Here at Love INC we love our volunteers and want to get to know them better! So - we made a few changes in the way we sign people up to volunteer.

Each new volunteer now has a brief, in-office “interview.” It’s so much fun for our staff to learn about the gifts, talents, and interests of each individual. The more we know about our volunteers the better job we do at plugging them into serving opportunities.

During the interview process, volunteers are able to select key areas of interest. As the staff member and volunteer chat, choices are refined to fit each individual.

It blesses our staff to get to know each new volunteer and see their excitement about serving in an area that fits not only their personality but their God-given gifts.

We will continue to fine tune this process and are looking forward for the chance to meet many more who are willing to serve God through Love INC.

## **PLANT THE SEED:** A Huge Success!

How can we say thank you enough to all the Business Sponsors, Partner Churches, Church Ministry Coordinators, Artists, Plant the Seed Volunteers, Flower Donors, and Auction Basket Donors? We are in awe of all you have done for Love INC and those with need in Gallatin County.

Each and everyday we see how your generosity results in changed lives, here and now, and for eternity. Thank you!

All our goals for the fundraiser were met to the Glory of God!