The Power of 1, multiplied

Fall is a time that brings excitement and anticipation, doesn’t it? School is back in session, sports gear up, clubs and congregations’ calendars fill with activities. At Greensboro Urban Ministry, fall is a time of anticipation, too.

Thanks to your support, we are working to anticipate the issues facing those who need us most. Many activities encompass this work, and faithful volunteers help us provide meals, grocery bags, shelter supplies, support groups and children’s activities. As fall rolls into winter, we’re working on winter shelter plans with our congregational partners and connecting with groups that want to provide essentials, such as warm socks and shoes, to the men, women and families with children in our care.

Each one of us brings a piece of this practical action to our neighbors in need. None of us can do this work alone, but when we multiply that Power of 1, all of us can contribute to solutions that have the power to change lives. This is hope worth holding on to and sharing with others!

Fall also kicks off CROP Walk, Honor Cards and the Feast of Caring. Whether you volunteer, donate, bring a friend and participate – or all three – we look forward to working with you and seeing you. Your support inspires our staff and encourages them in their daily work.

Supporting our events provides resources that GUM requires to meet neighbors’ crises. We are able to do as much as the community entrusts us to do. This year, GUM will require $4 million to continue our fight against hunger, poverty and homelessness. Local and federal government will provide only about 3 percent of this total. We really need and value your support.

In this issue, you’ll read about a retired pastor, a renowned artist, and many talented potters who bring their Power of 1 to GUM and multiply it to abundance. They, and you, are the power we rely on. You’re the hero in our halls because you show up with us, year after year, and share what you can to make a difference.

GUM is your hands and feet in greater Greensboro. Together, we are making a difference. So let’s get started! We’ve got a big year ahead.
Sneak a Peek at Feast of Caring Pottery!

The Center for Visual Artists is hosting a one-night Pottery Pop-Up on Nov. 3 to showcase handcrafted bowls that will be featured in the popular Feast of Caring Pottery Room this year.

The event is from 6-9 p.m. during First Friday on Nov. 3 at the CVA gallery space in the Cultural Arts Center, 200 N. Davie St. There will also be refreshments and live music by Rich Lerner and friends.

This year’s Feast of Caring will be on Thursday, Nov. 16. For a minimum donation of $25, guests can choose and take home a piece of handcrafted pottery created and donated by N.C. artists.

The simple meal of soup and bread is a reminder, the week before Thanksgiving, that too many of our neighbors will face this celebration of feast and family without food, shelter or loved ones. All proceeds from the event support Greensboro Urban Ministry’s programs that fight crisis, hunger and homelessness in our community.

Gary Owens: Leading local fight against hunger

Greater Greensboro CROP Hunger Walk Steering Committee Chair Gary Owens knows what it’s like to feel hungry – that’s why he’s spent much of his life working to prevent others from feeling those familiar pangs of having to go without.

When Gary was in elementary school, his family struggled to put food on the table.

“If it wasn’t for our neighbors, we would have been really, really hungry,” says Gary, a retired pastor.

There was the bag of food the grocer would put on his family’s porch, the pickle jar collection into which members of the small farming community would put extra cash, and the dry goods store that would donate whatever inventory it had left over.

“That’s what local communities always did, and that’s what we’re trying to do now” with the CROP Walk, Gary says.

Gary’s involvement with CROP Walk began when he was just 15 years old. A regular youth fellowship participant at his church in Cincinnati, Gary helped put on the Ohio city’s CROP Walk.

After graduating from high school, Gary began what he terms his 10-year “dry spell” – the only time since he was 15 that he was not involved with the annual walk.

By his mid-twenties, he was back at it again. In fact, he helped out with the CROP Walk in all of the cities in which he was pastor.

So he found it more than a bit funny when he arrived in Browns Summit to be the pastor at Monticello United Church of Christ, and they asked: Do you know anything about the CROP Walk?

He went on to become the chairperson for the Northeast Area CROP Walk. He also volunteered for the nearby Greensboro walk of which the Northeast event is an affiliate.

Now retired and serving as the Steering Committee Chair for the Greater Greensboro CROP Hunger Walk, Gary says there is no image more inspiring than the one he sees at the beginning of each walk.

“As people start to walk, you look ahead and see just this mass of people – this mass of humanity,” Gary said. “All of these people are coming together to fight hunger.”

EXPRESSING THE LOVE of GOD TO PEOPLE IN NEED THROUGH PRACTICAL ACTION
This year is the 30th anniversary of The Honor Card, designed by artist William “Bill” Mangum. Since 1988, the program has raised more than $4 million for people in need in Greensboro.

Last year at Greensboro Urban Ministry, the Honor Card raised more than $272,000. This year, the goal is to raise $300,000 in honor of the 30th anniversary.

Come help us kick off this special season on Tuesday, Oct. 31, at The Honor Card 30th Anniversary Lunch with Bill Mangum (see information box, below right).

“I’d love to see the community step up and create a banner year for the Honor Card, not only to support our critical work at GUM, but also to say to Bill Mangum that this community appreciates his drive and dedication, and together we are changing lives,” says GUM Executive Director Myron Wilkins.

Bill, who is also a longtime breakfast volunteer in Potter’s House Community Kitchen, started creating the Honor Card in 1988. Over the years, he has expanded the program to 13 agencies statewide.

For a minimum $5 donation per card, buyers receive a beautiful card that is given in the person’s honor at the holidays – and 100% of the donation goes directly to help the homeless and hungry in their community. Expenses for the production of the card are underwritten by Bill, an anonymous donor and the Wells Fargo Foundation.

In Greensboro, Honor Cards are available beginning in early November at sites around the city, including Greensboro Urban Ministry, William Mangum Gallery, and through several congregations and retail stores. Cards can also be purchased on the Greensboro Urban Ministry website.

GUM is looking for more congregation and business partners to carry the Honor Card during the holidays. Can you help out? GUM makes it easy to partner! Contact Lane Harvey Brown, Director of Development and Communications, at labrown@guministry.org or 336-553-2656 to find out how to get involved.

Honor Cards are also a popular part of GUM’s annual Feast of Caring. This year’s event is on Nov. 16 at First Baptist Church, 1000 W. Friendly Ave. For a minimum donation of $25, guests can receive five beautiful Honor Cards. They make terrific gifts and greetings for the holiday season.
Greensboro Urban Ministry's food pantry helps many men, women and families with children who struggle with food insecurity. The pantry’s shelves remain stocked thanks primarily to your generous donations!

Twice a year, GUM works with congregations and grocery stores for the weekend #FeedGSO food drives.

The fall #FeedGSO food drive will be Oct. 20 and 21. Volunteers will be outside participating stores on Friday and Saturday to collect your donations. They also can provide a shopping list of items to you as you go into the store so you can see which items the pantry needs most.

Here is a list of participating grocery chains:
Food Lion Stores- Saturday Only
Harris Teeter Stores – Friday & Saturday
Lowes Food Stores – Friday & Saturday
Walmart Neighborhood Market Store (W. Friendly Ave. W. Gate City Blvd. and Alamance Church Rd.) Friday & Saturday
Whole Foods – Friday & Saturday

Last year, the community donated 1.3 million pounds of nonperishable food to the food pantry. Volunteers packed this food into emergency grocery bags that assisted 20,947 households.

Please shop and share on Oct. 20-21. Help people in our community who lack access to food because they must stretch scarce budgets on things like rent, medicine, childcare and transportation.

Post on social media to remind your friends to shop and share, too! Use the #FeedGSO hashtag on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Please like our Facebook page and find us on Twitter and Instagram (@gsourbanmin) to get the latest updates on the work that you make possible through your support of GUM.