

A Day in the Life of a Pastor at a Homeless Shelter, by Jody Schaible

Being the pastor at Interfaith is both a blessing and a challenge. Along with my 'pastor hat' I am also the Facility Manager, so it's a whirlwind ride every day, but I work with great people and I'm never bored. Come along with me on a typical day at Interfaith.

Each morning, I start my day with a little quiet time to gather my thoughts. It's a chance for me to connect with God and prepare for whatever the day brings. By 7am, I grab a quick cup of coffee and walk-through the shelter and our other ministry buildings (8 total that we maintain). Being one of the few people here at that hour allows me to assess our campus for anything broken or hazardous before we open. By 7:30, clients start arriving and lining up for food which opens at 9am. All of our ministries start the day with prayer, so I always try to be in a different department each day to join in.

From there, the day could take me to cutting grass, changing air filters, or plunging toilets. Today it was a broken AC and leaking roof. But one of my favorite parts of the job is meeting our clients. Each person has their own story and struggles, and it's important for me to listen and offer support. Just the other day, I met with a guy named Paul. He had stopped me and asked for prayer. He opened up about his struggles to find a stable place to live. We talked about the resources available to him and, of course, I was able to pray for him and it felt great to help him see a way forward.

I also love spending time with our homeless friends. Sometimes we share meals, or I'll just sit and chat with them. After hearing of needs from them, I direct them to the help they need. I also actively seek partnerships with local businesses and organizations that can help us provide more resources. After lunch, it's a quick visit to check in with a batch or two of our volunteers. I work closely with them, and they are incredible! They bring so much energy and compassion to our work. I spend time working with them and making sure they feel equipped to help our clients. I believe that working together makes us stronger.

Whether it's food donations or job training programs, these collaborations make a big difference in our clients' lives. Of course, there are tough days. *Sometimes it's hard to see and hear the struggles people face, and it can be emotionally draining. Loneliness, abandonment, and so many more heart-breaking situations. But those tough moments are often balanced by the joy of seeing someone succeed, like when a client finds a job or moves into their own place. Those victories remind me why I do this work.*

At the end of each day, I feel grateful for the chance to serve our community. Every interaction, whether it's a smile from a friend or a heartfelt conversation, reinforces my commitment to this mission. I invite you to get involved! Whether it's volunteering, donating, or praying for us; every little bit helps. Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of those



Jody sharing a bible study with Bruce and Eric in the Engagement

Karla wants to visit your church or club!

Our CEO, Karla Greenway, is actively seeking opportunities to connect with the community by speaking at local churches and clubs. Karla is passionate about sharing Interfaith's mission and impact, highlighting how we work to support our neighbors in need. These speaking engagements offer a wonderful chance for community members to learn more about Interfaith's vital programs and discover how they can get involved in making a difference. If your organization is interested in hosting Karla, please reach out to Emily.Pozo@iesmarion.org or call 352-644-9208.

From the Chief Executive Officer: Karla Grimsley-Greenway



It's hard to believe that summer is on its way out (even though the heat isn't). I am excited to announce that we are bringing back an exclusive club that you can join! ***It's the High \$5 Club.*** Because we know many are struggling with the increased cost of, well....everything, we want to invite people to be a part of Interfaith without having to make a big donation. So we are seeking donations in any increment of \$5 and that makes you a member of the High \$5 Club! I will be out in the community

sharing more information about this campaign and giving real "high fives" to people as they join. If you have a community or a group of any size that I can visit and give a quick infomercial about this club and Interfaith, please call Emily at 352-629-8868 ext. 228 OR email her at emily.pozo@iesmarion.org and she will get you on my calendar!

Now there is a second level of the club that comes with a monthly donation of any amount with a "5" in it. A recurring gift makes you part of "***The Solution***" campaign to ensure that we can help people in need all year long. At our recent tea we had 9 people become part of The Solution and together they will contribute over \$1,500 to our ministry this year! So don't think any amount is too small. When many help a little, the result can be ALOT! You can learn more about The High \$5 Solution Campaign on our website. With so many caring people in this community I know we can continue to do this great work.



Food Drives Needed for Fall, by Maxi Rodriguez

As summer comes to an end, we are grateful for the food donations we received from our awesome community to help us get through. This summer we served over 2,000 families every month. With school being out, there's more hungry tummies at home and it's hard to make food stretch, especially with growing kiddos.



Sasha and her son are a great example of clients that we help throughout the year. Sasha is going through a difficult time and struggling to keep her apartment since her rent was raised. Trying to stretch each dollar, she relies on Interfaith each month to help supplement her groceries. Like so many others, she is so grateful for the help they get at Interfaith. She confided, "***At first, I hated asking for help, but you guys were so gracious and made me feel like you were happy to help in my struggles. I know God will bless all of you that are part of this place.***"

As we head into the fall months, our food reserves are nearly depleted. We need more food donations for our Food Warehouse Distribution Center. Would your church, company, small group or friends be willing to host a food drive to help feed our community?

Find out how your group can launch a successful food drive for us by reaching out to Sonya at 352-644-9202 or Sonya@IESmarion.org. Everyone can help – Even individuals and families can pick up an extra bag of groceries, use those BOGOs (buy-one-get-one) specials and drop off your gift to the Warehouse at 450 NW 2nd Street, Ocala.

If you want to help financially, we would love that as well! Send donations to PO Box 992, Ocala FL 34478 or online at www.IESmarion.org/donate. Thank you!

Interfaith is God sent

In addition to assisting those in need of food at our Social Service office, I also administer a grant that provides rent and utility assistance to those in need. The money we receive from grants time to time, can play a crucial role in supporting individuals and families facing financial hardships. For instance, a recent family of nine that we assisted shared her heartfelt appreciation for the help she received: "***I feel that Interfaith is God sent. As a family that is anchored in Christianity with a strong relationship to faith and salvation, Interfaith has embodied and epitomized the meaning of faith and belief that God answers prayers.***" Nina, who was so grateful, also shared that her family is so large because parents and a few cousins are living together to try to save money.

This quote highlights how vital grants can be during challenging times, providing essential support when it's needed most. The assistance can help families maintain stability in their homes, especially during periods of crisis, such as death in the family or unexpected financial strains. By receiving this financial aid, families can focus on rebuilding their lives rather than worrying about immediate survival, reinforcing their sense of hope and belief that there are resources available to help them through difficult times. Ultimately, grants not only address immediate needs but also contribute to the long-term well-being of those we serve.

By: Andrea Jordan, Social Services

Special Gifts

In MEMORY of:

Harold Collins
By: Julie & Molly Moody

Thomas Fuller, MD
By: Henry & Val Ehlers

Ann Anderson
By: Annette Holland

Charlotte Jean Justice
By: Terry Spray

Bert Yancey
By: Terry Trexler

Rita Seymore
By: Frank & Pamela Stafford

Patsy Foreman
By: Roy & Linda Underwood

Ann Richardson
By: Charline Drake



In HONOR of:

Maxi, Bruce & Warehouse Team
By: Patience Barberie

Honor Someone Special

Give a gift to someone special - an honorary or memorial donation in their name to Interfaith! The person honored (or their family) will receive a letter of acknowledgement. Please contact Kayla at 629-8868 x202 or Kayla.Hess@IESmarion.org. Mail donations to PO Box 992, Ocala, FL 34478.

More Thank Yous

It was such a treat to see Father Matt, Father Don and Tom Smallen recently! We received one check from the church and another gift from the youth from Vacation Bible School! We feel so blessed! We love our church partners. They are all pictured with Karla left. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Special Thanks to...

Special thanks for these large donations (in pounds): St Martin's Anglican Church: 66; Saddle Oak Club: 100; Marion Landing: 44; Alicia Benjamin: 51; Ocala West United Methodist Church: 280; Rose Grove Farm: 392; Stone Creek Bourbon Club: 93; First Christian Church: 95; Iglesia Evangelica De Willison: 540; First Assembly of God: 125. Also, Wells Fargo: 100 hygiene bags; Saddle Oak Club: 63 pounds of clothes.



Thank you to our local HCA Florida hospitals for donating 2 pallets of hygiene supplies for our clients! What a blessing these will be during the summer! Above HCA staff: Alan Keesee, CEO, Adrian French, and Kaitlyn Wilson-Butler, pictured with Karla & Sonya

Special thanks to the Bold Ladies Network we received a check for \$1100 at a recent function!

Meeting the Needs, by Cherie Galloway, CFL Manager



Meet our friends Frances and Alvestico. Frances first came to us with a need for medication assistance after being discharged from Advent Hospital. We were able to get her medication and an appointment with the Hope Clinic so that she'd have a primary care doctor. She soon brought in her partner Alvestico. He was insured and we were able to make a quick call to Estelle Byrd

Whitman Wellness and get him a medical appointment, his first in many years. Meanwhile, we learned that they had other needs. They are homeless and staying at Salvation Army. They needed clothing, food, bus passes and help finding affordable housing. The Engagement team helped them with clothing and local bus fare to get to their Social Security appointments. **Like many others, they are still searching for housing. They are among the growing population of seniors that are homeless with little to no income.** They stop in the Center for Life occasionally to get help with her medication. I am always impressed by their upbeat and positive demeanor. Frances volunteers at the Soup Kitchen even through episodes with her health and the increasing summer temperatures. Please join us in prayer as we hope for solutions for this couple and for the many other seniors that are struggling to find a home.



A 33 hours of online giving event is Sept 16-17 this year. If you want to offer up a matching donation to help us get more donors, let us know!

Thank you Kent!

We are sad to say farewell to Board Member, Kent Adams. Kent has served faithfully since 2021 and he will be greatly missed. Thank you, Kent, for your support and may God bless all of your endeavors.

*Thank you for your
time and talents!*



P.O. Box 992 • Ocala, FL 34478

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Check out our website at
www.IESmarion.org



MISSION STATEMENT

Interfaith Emergency Services is a community of faith called by God to offer emergency assistance without judgment to all persons in Marion County.

Giving Time to Help the Need, by Tina Reid, Volunteer Coordinator

As summer comes to an end, we are grateful to all those who helped us get through the summer months. The summer is always a time of concern for me, as we typically see a dip in our volunteer numbers and attendance. ***My prayer is that we will see the largest increase in volunteers we've ever experienced in the coming months.*** I hope you can come alongside me in that prayer, as many factors have come into play to make our need for volunteers to be greater than ever.

We are praying for volunteers in our Engagement Center, Center for Life, Thrift Store and in Devotion leadership the most of all our ministries. I would ask you to take a look at how much free time you truly have and pray about donating just 3 hours a week. We really do live in an amazing community, it's time to truly become a part of it!

Back to School in Style by Shannon Pickering, Manager

As the back-to-school season approaches, Interfaith Thrift Store is here to help you and your family prepare in style—without stretching your budget. Our racks are filled with gently used name-brand and luxury clothing perfect for students heading into a new school year or even off to college. Whether you're looking for a sharp outfit for the first day of class or affordable fashion that reflects your unique personality, there's something special waiting for you here.

When you shop with us, you're doing more than just saving on top-quality clothing—you're helping transform lives in our community. Every purchase supports our faith-based mission, including a prescription drug assistance program for individuals experiencing homelessness and underinsured residents in Marion County. Proceeds also fund vital dental care programs for those in need and help shelter residents as they transition into stable housing. Come discover back-to-school shopping with a purpose—and leave knowing you've made a difference. Stop and shop at 718 N Pine, Ocala!

