



Fisherman's Peace

More of Him, Less of Me

"He must increase, but I must decrease" John 3:30

6:00 a.m, the alarm clock goes off. We pick up our phone and the first thing we do is click on Facebook to see what is going on in the world. After scrolling through many posts for about 15 minutes, we realize we have to wake up and hurry up to get ready for work. We then leave for work, doing everything we can to hopefully get a promotion. Then, we leave work to get our kids and take them to practice. From there, we come home and eat supper, quickly clean up, and start preparing for bed just to repeat the cycle the next day. With all this, we tell ourselves, "I just don't have time to read my Bible, or take the time for devotions, or pray like my pastor suggests!" But in truth, we do! We must decrease and HE must increase.

Life is busy. We do all of these different things each and every day, but yet we miss the most important thing. Our lives revolve around us and everything we want to do. The truth is Jesus must increase and we must decrease. When we leave this earth it is not going to matter how hard we worked to get the promotion or even how many points our child scored in a game. Even though these things are enjoyable, the only thing that will matter is our relationship with Jesus.

Once we begin to understand how important Jesus is in our lives, it should motivate us to do more for Him. Instead of scrolling through Facebook in the morning, we could use that time to study His Word. Throughout our day, we should want to tell others about Him. Even though life gets busy, let us remember that He must increase, and we must decrease

By: Justin Parker, Associate Pastor at Putney Bible Church



CHRIST'S HANDS, INC.

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Sharing His Blessing

Summer 2023



From a Fellow Servant

Serving God through the Christ's Hand's ministry has been an immense blessing and joy to me and my family. I'm infinitely grateful for the experiences God has allowed me to have here. Through this ministry I have grown and matured in the faith, and as a man. My fellow servants have been there to help carry me and keep me moving forward whenever I may feel weak or discouraged.

Other than dishes, the main task that has fallen out to me is serving as a delivery driver. I remember when I finally made up my heart that I would go in and ask if I could get involved. It had been on my heart for the longest time yet I was uncertain and afraid. As soon as I walked in all of that melted away, I was greeted and welcomed so warmly. I was invited to work alongside them so I could learn everything. I got to go out for deliveries my very first day.

I learned many people who would be blessed by steady meals are actually not able to make it to the kitchen, such as shut-ins. Therefore, I take the job very seriously and am thankful to God that we have the means to do this. It is such a joy getting to be on the front-end and meeting everyone and becoming a part of their lives. There are so many beautiful souls in our community and Christ's Hands has been a source of encouragement to them affecting them positively by showing them the love of Christ through service. Those who can't get out often suffer from depression and loneliness. To me it's a ministry all in itself just getting to spend a little time with people, and the meals are sometimes secondary. They may not realize it but they're also ministering to me and being a blessing to me just as much, it's fully mutual!

Near the beginning of this year, I was searching for a job. As I sat in my car, I decided to pray to the Father to help me find a job that would be good for me. Immediately it came into my heart to go ask our director Bryan Toll about a job. Hesitating until it slipped my mind, maybe 2 weeks later I get a call from him. To my great surprise he asked if I could take on a full-time job as a delivery driver at Christ's Hands, supported by a grant. They expressed interest in partnering with us to provide groceries and assistance to people in our local area. I felt this was from the Father and that he would be involved with the project so I happily said yes.

Under this grant we worked with 3 organizations along with many volunteers working together as one. I had the privilege of being part of this inspiring and humbling initiative that brought hope, sustenance, and love to families in our area. Driven by our shared commitment to serving others we've been able to put around 1000 food boxes on doorsteps across Harlan County and Bell County every week. With each box weighing upwards of 60lbs it was no easy task, but what lightened the burden and almost made it too easy was seeing all the happy children, the gratitude of the parents, and how much of a blessing in general the program was to everyone. Inflation has made it harder for a lot of us and the boxes relieved some of that pressure, helping families no longer have to choose between paying all the bills or their growing kids being satisfied with enough to eat. In addition to the delivery program, we were able to extend the reach of our kitchen into four other communities once a week with the help of amazing volunteers. We set up and offered hot meals and fellowship, sharing the gospel of Christ every chance given us.

At the start I believed our heavenly Father was with us in our work. After six months, I am convinced. So many great things and miracles, I wish I could share all of them.

To sum up what I'm hoping to express is that what you are doing matters, and it IS making a difference in the lives of many special people that God loves. You who labor out of sight, behind the scenes, while I wish everyone could see you and show you the love you deserve, God sees you and the hard work you're doing. You are appreciated! Youths are being encouraged by our examples and works of love. They are being inspired to make better choices in their life that have a far-reaching cascading effect on all those around them. There is still much work to be done and it can feel discouraging at times when you don't see instant results from your labors, but let us never forget. With God, all things are possible! Love you all, forever, your fellow servant...

By: Andrew Slusher, Volunteer and Delivery Driver



CHRIST'S HANDS, INC.

112 Railroad Street
Harlan, Kentucky 40831
Office: 606-573-6030
christshandsky.org

Sharing His Blessings
Summer 2023

Taking Hot Meals to the Streets



Monday Meal Program

As you know, it is our joy to provide hot meals to the hungry. This spring and summer we tried something new; every Monday Christ's Hands provided and helped serve meals on the streets. We focused on the communities of Cawood, Cumberland, Evarts and Wallins. With the combined efforts of local churches and community members who made up plates and prayed for those who sought help - after four months of working together- we served 2,021 meals. We will be continuing this program after Labor Day and appreciate prayers for the individuals served.

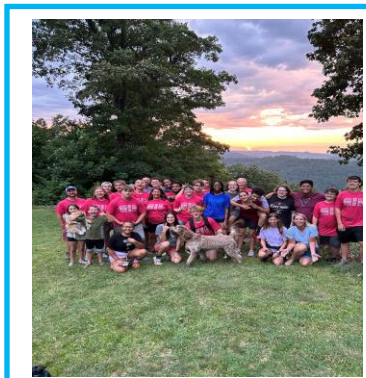


Camp Host Rodrick and Brittney Majors & family

A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE OUR NEIGHBORS

It was our privilege to work alongside the Mennonite Central Committee's SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People) program for many years here in Harlan. However, after the devastating flooding in eastern Kentucky in 2022, the SWAP program decided to relocate to Elkhorn City, Kentucky closer to the new immediate need there of home repair. SWAP had utilized Harlan County's Forestry Camp on Little Shepherd Trail to host volunteer teams since the 90's and with their departure, the lease was awarded to Christ's Hands.

It is with God's guidance and help that we grow, to facilitate and promote a new camp ministry to those seeking to come serve in the Kingdom work being done here in Harlan County. This new ministry is still in development as we hope to utilize it for many different purposes. During our first summer we housed four teams totaling 126 volunteers. The teams helped do several projects at the camp, worked in our food pantry and assisted in various other ways at Christ's Hands. They also worked at Camp Howard in Wallins to host a Bible Camp, they worked on several houses throughout the county and helped host a give-a-way with United for Jesus in Cumberland among other activities. We are working to build a strong foundation for this new ministry that will focus on the spiritual growth of both those who stay at camp and those who will be served by the volunteers. Several teams have already booked their stay with us for next year and we anticipate many more. While SWAP will be greatly missed, we look forward to launching new efforts to share God's love and present the Gospel to the lost.



AN ENDEAVOR TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE- Life at Camp

Tucked back through the twisting, winding road of Little Shepard Trail is a hidden jewel I have been calling Mount Horeb or the mountain of God. On this mountain 2600 feet above sea level, our family has been entrusted to host camp to missionary groups on behalf of Christ Hands. This camp has proven to be a beacon of light and hope to many in Harlan County. Some group members even calling our community their home away from home. With the disparity and need that our community faces, these diverse groups equipped with a servant's heart, helped meet some of those needs whether it was putting on a roof, installing windows, plumbing, or landscaping. These groups of teens to adults have been moved with the compassion of our Lord Jesus to help serve others in our area traveling as far as Indiana, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and even other parts of Kentucky. They didn't come for recognition or reputation, they came to humbly serve the people of Harlan County. But what has stood out to me more than their carpentry, plumbing, or landscaping abilities is their desire to build relationship with those families they came to serve. Jesus told us the world would know that we are His disciple by the way we love each other. These groups of people came with skills ready to work but the real impact is how they have loved the people of Harlan they came to serve. They came ready to give their time to listen and learn about these families, and that is living the Gospel to people who may not know Jesus. Not only did these groups of people share Jesus, they experienced Him in unexpected ways each night during their worship and devotional time! During one week a group of teens from a church in Pennsylvania came together and worshiped God with a group in northern Kentucky. The Kentucky teens left encouraged in their faith walk, experienced freedom from sin in new ways and desiring to know Jesus more intimately. It was an honor for my family to get to praise and worship God with each of these group that came from all different denominational backgrounds. Most important to me was watching God answer my personal prayer that each person we are honored to host would grow in their relationship with Christ and get time to meet with God and experience His presence in new ways on His mountain. "The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Psalm 24:1-4 KJV

By: The Majors, Camp Host and Volunteers

BIG NEWS: Amazon Logistics for Good and Christ's Hands team up!

If you live in Harlan or Bell counties you may have noticed some vans out running the roads between February and July with our logo on the doors. It has been our great pleasure to be working with MidWest Food Bank, Logistics for Good and Save the Children to fight hunger door to door. Some of the highest poverty rates in the country are right here in our neighborhoods and reflected in our schools. More than 33.2 percent of the population of Harlan County and 32.1 percent of Bell county's population has an income below the poverty rate (US Census estimated 2022). Together we set out to deliver 968 food boxes each week to the door steps of homes referred by the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers to help provide nutritious food to school age children and their families. After twenty-two weeks of deliveries, we served 20,535 households with a total of 327,372 meals delivered to those in need.



It is hard sometimes to grasp the full impact of this organization, known as Christ's Hands by so many. When speaking to volunteer groups, community organizations and churches about the ministry, it never ceases to amaze me that I forget to mention one thing or another that happens here. The work being done by this ministry covers so many different service areas and impacts a large variety of people groups. Christ's Hands is a unique place to volunteer and serve within the Kingdom of God. This is linked to the environment or culture of the organization. The values that this creates are birthed from the dedicated volunteer base, the network of supporters and donors, the multiplying of resources by God and the shared desire to express the love and grace of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. In the last twelve months our neighbors have accessed the following services and these numbers reflect the impact you have helped make happen.

- The New Covenant Kitchen Meals prepared and served 27,456 meals. We serve 3 meals a day, 5 days a week in the kitchen and dinner the last Sunday of each month. We sent breakfast to the Harlan County Christian School last year each morning. We partner with a local church to send 75 meals to Evarts weekly. We help the Harlan City maintenance garage with lunches when the inmates work within the city. We started the Monday meal program to 4 area communities. We also provided job training service to 10 individuals. There were 5940 volunteer hours completed in the kitchen.
- The Harlan County Emergency Food Pantry prepared and distributed 4,597 food boxes. We serve everyone who comes, on the 3rd Monday and Tuesday each month. This is made possible due to over 1200 hours of volunteer time.
- The winter emergency shelter provided 352-night stays. The shelter provides a warm, safe and dry sleeping condition, open nightly from 9pm to 8am during the months of December, January and February.
- The Good Samaritan Ministry provides non-food related donated items to the community. It served furniture and household items to 22 victims of domestic violence, 11 families who lost their homes to fire, 3 homeless who found housing and 137 other families in need. They also processed 30,000lbs of donated clothing.
- The Health and Hygiene Closet offers a variety of services to our community. Showers provided: 507, Clothing provided to individuals: 385 outfits, Boxes of diapers distributed: 176, Cans of Baby formula handed out: 21, Loads of laundry done for the homeless: 720
- Volunteer housing. Hospitality Center and Camp provided housing for 210 volunteers. We partnered again with Appalachian Service Project and housed 338 volunteers.
- Warehouse Ministry. Received and distributed over 30 semi-trucks of food and donated goods. We partner with over 15 different pantries/churches to help provide food for creating food boxes being distributed throughout Harlan, Bell and Letcher Counties in Kentucky and in Lee County, Virginia.



Kellianne Doan Rizvi's smile welcomes the first guest to Christ's Hands.

On December 30, 1998 Christ's Hands served its first hot meal of spaghetti to 20 community members. What great things God has done in the time since. We look forward to celebrating the ministry you have helped support and grow. A celebration gathering is being planned for early next year. We hope to see all the volunteers who made 25 years of impact possible.

Christ's Hands Needs Lists

Pinto Beans, Green Bean, Corn, Peas, Baked Beans, Greens, Tomatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Cream of Chicken, Sweet & Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Evaporated Milk, Dry Ranch Seasoning, Brown Gravy Mix, Pasta- Egg Noodles, Macaroni, Spaghetti, etc., Stuffing mix, Chili Powder, Taco Seasoning, BBQ Sauce, Ranch and Italian Dressing, Soups, Sugar, Salt, Meal, Flour, Oatmeal, Canned Meat, Beef Stew, Powered Coffee Creamer, Fold Top Bags, Single person tents