

What's Happening

- A gap ministry tour took place on Aug. 25. Church ministry coordinators and board members were invited to visit Love INC's Personal Care Pantry, Linen Closet, Clothes Closet, Furniture Ministry Warehouse and Computer Workshop.
- Macy's 7th annual "Shop for a Cause" on Aug. 25 raised \$195 for Love INC! Thanks to Macy's and everyone who bought a \$5 shopping pass for 25 percent off everything in the store. We appreciate your support!
- Baker Street in the Gallatin Valley Mall generously donated 5% of its sales on Sept. 5 to Love INC. Thank you, Baker Street, for helping us raise \$50!
- Dillon has officially decided to launch a Love INC! Staff and volunteers are currently in the training process. Churches in North Flathead Valley and Livingston are taking the preliminary steps to start Love INC.
- Two staff members, Eliz Tritthart and Jim Good, attended National training workshops for Love INC on Sept. 27 – 29 in Gurnee, IL. Chiara Schober also attended, providing administrative support during training sessions.
- Executive Director Nancy VanDyken led six seminars at the National Gathering in Gurnee. Topics included "Building a Strong Board of Directors", "Managerial Responsibilities of Executive Directors" and "Using Love INC's New Support Website". She also gave a report on the development of new Love INC affiliates nationwide and internationally.
- Love INC was represented at the Montana Association of Churches Annual Conference on Oct. 22. We also had a booth at Montana State University's Catapalooza event this fall.
- Nancy VanDyken met with representatives of Bozeman's Help Center on July 27 to update them on Love INC services.
- The National Love INC Movement paid for Nancy to train and equip five developing affiliates in Nairobi, Kenya, from Aug. 3-18.
- During Pastor Appreciation Month, Love INC expressed its appreciation for pastors by mailing thank-you cards to all 44 partner church pastors on Oct. 14.
- An all-time high of 95 people attended our Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on Aug. 30! Many thanks to Ressler Motors for donating the grill and to Don for serving as our "grill master."
- Secretaries and administrative staff of Love INC's partner churches met Sept. 18 to brainstorm ways to connect with Christians who are willing to serve in the community to offer service opportunities. They discussed the need for volunteers to fill 19 vacant two-hour shifts for manning the help lines at Love INC.
- Under construction? We're redesigning our website to look and function more like the National Love INC Movement website, loveinc.org.

Annual Business Meeting

Love INC held its Annual Business Meeting on Oct. 23 at Christ the King Lutheran Church. Designated representatives from partner churches voted on the 2013 board of directors and reviewed Love INC's financial and ministry reports from 2012.

Board members are Dr. John Patterson (First Presbyterian Church), Ray Stinnett (Springhill Presbyterian Church), Larry Holle (First Lutheran Church), Jeff Abelin (Trinity Church), Andy Breuner (Resurrection Parish), Carrie Chestnut (Journey Church), William Curtis (Grace Bible Church), Pastor Mark Hofman (Bethel Christian Reformed Church) and Merlin Nelson (Christ the King Lutheran Church).

Love INC Night at the Maze!

On Oct. 17, at least 15 Love INC partner churches had fun at the Bozeman Maze. This event for

families, individuals, youth and children was made possible by the Mandeville family, who donated 50 percent of the entry proceeds to Love INC. Many thanks to the Mandevilles and to all who came to the maze for a time of fun and laughter.

A contest for church youth groups resulted in a special prize for the group with the most participants. The top three churches were: C-3 Church (58 participants), Bozeman United Methodist Church (50), and Bozeman Christian Reformed Church (37).

Other churches whose members came to the Maze included: E-Free Church, First Presbyterian Church, Belgrade Christian Assembly, Grace Bible Church, Christian Center, Alliance Fellowship, Gallatin Valley Christian Fellowship, Springhill Presbyterian, Living Waters, Trinity Church and St. Anthony Orthodox Church. Many thanks to everyone who came to share this great time together!

It's Time for Us to Share Christ's Love!

Our neighbors, especially the elderly, disabled, struggling families and single parents, need real help – our help. Their needs are hidden but real, like the elderly widow who cannot fix her leaking faucet. The lives of our struggling neighbors don't make it to the evening news. But God knows their silent suffering. Who will respond?

Gallatin County residents are phoning Love INC in increasing numbers, looking for Christian churches to love and understand. They need to connect with us, and it all begins with a phone call.

Each partner church commits to staff the phones at Love INC. Now, more than ever, Love INC needs you! Too often during the week, the phone desks are empty. We need volunteers from our church who are loved by God, who will serve behind the scenes in the Love INC office.

These volunteers are Christ's "voice" on the phone. They:

- Record pertinent information so staff can find the most effective help for the caller
- Serve as a listening ear
- Pray for the caller (on or off the phone)
- Discover how much impact they can have on others' lives when they give just two hours per week

Love INC office volunteers are Christians who are detail-oriented, good listeners, able to speak forthrightly, follow guidelines, willing to try, learners with hearts of mercy.

They do not try to find solutions to people's problems. Rather, they gather information over the phone, in keeping with the goal of empowering others who receive temporary help in a crisis. As team members, they may provide insights to staff about moving each caller toward health and self-sufficiency. They pray and inspire faith.

Love INC has a waiting list of people who want what only Christian servants can give: the love of Christ! You can be the person on the phone whose voice brings hope to a hurting household. It takes only two hours per week!

The potential:

- An impact for all eternity, and lives changed here and now
- Real help, real hope on a local, person-to-person basis
- Your faith in action – and your growth in Christ
- An opportunity to pray like never before
- Our church represented on the "front lines"

The current reality:

- Phone lines turned off at times due to lack of volunteers
- People unable to connect with Christians
- Waiting lists and phone messages

Call today! Our business line is 587-6395 or you can email us at loveincoffice@yahoo.com. Volunteers receive initial training, continuing education and a supportive environment with dedicated colleagues.

“His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your Lord.'” (Mt. 25:21)

The Old Rugged Cross

The Love INC offices were recently blessed to receive a large wooden cross, made and designed by Pastor Jerry Blom of Bozeman Christian Reformed Church. The cross adorns a blank stone wall at the base of the stairs. Built with recovered logs from an original building on church property, the beautiful cross now meets everyone ascending and descending the stairs between office rooms. It is a visual reminder of Who loves us, why we're here, and what we're doing at Love INC. Many, many thanks, Pastor Jerry!

[Picture of cross]

Voices of Love INC

Daily I hear many voices talking outside my office. Uplifting voices. Kind voices. Caring voices. Voices that form a melody of compassion.

These voices belong to the wonderful volunteers of Love INC who serve as intake workers on the phones. They gently glean information from people in our community who call for help in order for Love INC to verify and responsibly meet needs in partnership with churches. Though they use a specified and organized intake process, each one often goes “off script” to offer encouragement, empathy, and love. This is a critical ministry.

Did you catch that? The volunteers who talk on phones and take down information have a “ministry” – an important and crucial ministry. But what really makes the Love INC intake work a ministry is not heard or written. It is the hope that enters the hearts of those calling; hope that comes from other church volunteers who take the time to listen, to pray, and to care.

The holidays expand the need for volunteers in the intake ministry. So, if you believe God has given you gifts of empathy and compassion, and you are organized and can write legibly, and you feel that God has called you to do something to share His love with your neighbors, please give Love INC a call to learn more about this ministry. Call the business line: 587-6395. Due to the nature, confidentiality and importance of this position, it is selective and requires a steady commitment. You can also email loveincoffice@yahoo.com.

– Nancy VanDyken, executive director

Changes in the Love INC Phone System

Help Line 587-3008 (for clients)

All calls for Love INC church network assistance are received on the Love INC helpline (587-3008). There is only one phone line connected to this number. If the caller hears a busy signal, it's because a volunteer is on the phone line talking to a client about his or her request for assistance. Volunteers answer the Love INC help line from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday. New requests are accepted Monday through Thursday.

If there are no phone volunteers in the Love INC office, we are not able to answer calls to this number. There may also be times when the volume of incoming calls is so high that volunteers can no longer handle new requests that day, so the line is temporarily turned “off”. The phone will be answered again when the existing requests for assistance have been processed. Love INC processes requests in the order they are received.

NOTE: We discontinued allowing voicemail messages on this line a few years ago, when they reached 70 to 90 per day.

Business Line 587-6395 (for donors, supporters, volunteers)

This is the number ministry workers, supporters, churches, agencies, businesses and donors use to contact the Love INC office and staff directly (587-6395). There are multiple lines available to receive incoming calls on this number, which is answered 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays by volunteers and Love INC staff members.

Outside of business hours or when the business lines are busy, callers are able to leave messages for the Love INC staff. The business line can be used to access the voicemail boxes of all staff members, 24/7.

If you are a volunteer, pastor or an agency advocate and you are returning a call to Love INC on behalf of a client, use this number to contact Love INC staff directly.

Love INC cannot take requests for assistance on the business number. Please do not give this number to clients to call for assistance, as they will be asked to call the help line to make their request.

Love INC's Week of Prayer and Fasting

Love INC asked its partner churches to designate a day of prayer and fasting during the week of Oct. 15–21 to focus on Love INC's ministry. Churches were asked to pray for more office volunteers, for the Christian servants who volunteer, and for various aspects of Love INC's ministry, including its partner churches, ministry center, gap ministries, leadership and planning, and the Change Your Life ministry. In response to your prayers, several new servants of Christ have begun serving others through the Love INC office. Keep Praying!

Loving the Moms

Recently, we heard a tone of excitement in an email from Heidi Rasmussen, a key ministry leader with the Crib Connection. Heidi reported that The Crib Connection had just delivered its 50th crib!

The Crib Connection is a Love INC gap ministry whose mission is "to connect the love of Christ to the need of the community by providing cribs, compassion and comfort to expectant women in need." One goal of the ministry is to establish relationships while providing a new crib, mattress and other donated baby items to new or expectant mothers whom we have determined are in physical and financial need.

The Crib Connection partnership includes links with Love INC, Grace Bible Church and Zoe Women's Services. Love INC screens requests carefully prior to making the referral to The Crib Connection.

This ministry is based at Grace Bible Church, which has budgeted money for new cribs to be purchased through Walmart. Each crib is new and is able to transition to a toddler bed. However, the ministry is not just about cribs! Each mom needing a crib is visited by a team of women (most of whom are members of Grace Bible Church) to visit with her, assemble the crib and create a loving relationship. The team members also help meet spiritual needs through serving as generous witnesses of Christ, presenting the gift of "The Hope" DVD and by providing a Bible.

So, the "connections" made are about much more than cribs! Many thanks to Heidi and all the faithful members of the Crib Connection team, and to Grace Bible Church, for making this ministry of Christ's care and love possible. Praise God for the way He allows us to be part of His provision for the needs of the tiniest members of Gallatin Valley!

Helpers Needed

Is Christ calling you to do something? Not sure what? Want to give back? Discover how to help our community and serve others behind the scenes!

Gallatin County Love INC helps churches help people in need. We serve through volunteers from local Christian churches. Everything Love INC does starts in the office, on the phones, as people call for help. Right now, Love INC needs people to serve in the office. The need for workers is critical. The opportunities for these volunteers are life-changing. The tasks and the time commitments are doable. The Lord is calling!

Find your niche and make a difference! All Love INC ministry starts in the office, and the office urgently needs help. Give just two hours per week, and put your skills into Christ's service! Training provided.

Come on in. Work with Christians from around the valley. "Play" on a computer. Grow, learn, serve. Be part of a team bringing hope and restoring lives. **Don't delay! Many shifts are vacant!**

YOU are needed!

Contact Love INC and put your faith in action! The need for workers is great, and the joy is real! Email loveincoffice@yahoo.com or call 587-6395.

Opportunities to Bless a Life

New Warehouse Building Materials

The Love INC warehouse has a number of new building and finishing materials available for volunteers who are serving clients. Materials include fasteners, tools, cabinetry items, plumbing supplies, interior and exterior lighting fixtures, ceiling fans, lawn care items, lava rock, cleaning supplies, flooring material, and doors and windows.

These materials are available to churches ministering to the needs of community members or families/individuals in their own congregations. They may also be used by volunteers who signed up to do home repairs for Love INC clients.

The warehouse catalog is available online via computer, smartphone or tablet. People interested in accessing the catalog will need to request a user login because the site is not visible to the public. Once a user logs in, he or she can browse the catalog for project materials. Call 587-6395 for details and login information.

Common Sense Parenting Class

This course was everything but common sense! The instruction provided a blueprint for methods of teaching our children, using skills to change their behavior with positive reinforcement and controlling the "red zone." These methods help empower children to take responsibility for their actions and gain confidence in the process. Parents were able to "practice" on their mentors and then take the new methods home. (They were even given a handy business card-sized "cheat sheet," as it takes time to change habits.) The skills learned will continue to affect not only the students' children but generations to come!

One student reported her children are more responsive and there is less conflict since she's taken the course.

The instructor, Ida Mutchie from Journey Church, is so passionate about the course that she supplied the students' materials! Thank you, Ida!

LOVE STORIES

Yard Work Ministry

An elderly woman received yard work help from several Love INC & church volunteers. They mowed, raked, worked in flower beds, etc. What was amazing, though, was that through a discussion with yet another servant, the Lord sent a 17-year-old young man to also help. His mother had wanted him to reach out earlier and volunteer somewhere over the summer, but that hadn't happened. But when he volunteered to serve through Love INC, it was discovered that he lives in the same neighborhood and attends the same church as the elderly woman! God is about relationships and serving our neighbors! One volunteer commented that, despite ourselves, the Lord can connect the dots. It was evident that His hand was involved here!

Furniture Ministry

It is interesting how the Lord can minister through furniture. One of our ongoing clients, who is disabled, asked if it was possible for him to receive matching swivel chairs for his living room. (He is very particular about his living environment and has made other specific requests in the past.) We thought this was a rather high expectation and conveyed that to him, but nonetheless made a note of it. Surprisingly, only three days later, he was delighted to receive two matching green avocado swivel chairs through the Furniture Ministry! In delivering them, a Love INC volunteer said that no one else had been interested in them until now.

Grocery Shopping Ministry

One elderly client called requesting help with a grocery shopping errand and two medical appointments.

We left a voicemail for a woman who last year had helped this client with some errands. In the message, we asked if the volunteer would be available to shop for and deliver groceries for this lady. Shortly after we left the voicemail, the volunteer called back. She said that, just that morning, she had driven by the lady's street and wondered how she was doing since they last saw each other. Our volunteer recognized that God had **orchestrated the connection that morning!** God always seems to go above and beyond, as He provided volunteers for the medical appointments as well.

Visit Shut-In Ministry

A few weeks ago, we were looking for a ministry worker who could read to an elderly client who has macular degeneration. Though ministry workers have been willing to serve her in various capacities over the past few years, it was a challenge to find someone who could commit on a regular basis. The Lord worked out the details by finding the perfect match. **Christ's servant whom** we found hadn't enjoyed the time she **spent** with **a different** client she **had** previously **been** assigned to, **so she wasn't sure** if she would continue in the Visit Shut-In Ministry. However, when the call came in from the clearinghouse, she felt pressed to take on **this new** assignment, **though** with some hesitancy. **But it was a perfect match!** Now this **servant** has set aside a couple of hours each week to read out loud books they both had on their reading lists. She said she looks forward to **visiting the client**, and it's the high point of her week. "She is so intelligent and knows so much!" the **servant** said of the client. "She is a fascinating woman, and I love seeing her." **God blesses the givers!**

Save the Date!

Next year's Plant the Seed Dinner will be **May 7, 2013**. **Mark your calendars early.**

THANK YOU LETTERS & PRAYERS

"What does it mean to my family to receive a vehicle from Love INC? My **kids see** relief in their mother's face. Personally, I received something much more than nuts, bolts and tires. I saw humanity in God's **people**. At my lowest, I was given an opportunity to see beyond my need and receive something more important, lasting: hope. Oh yes, I still use the tools I learned from Finding Financial Freedom and share with family. And I would be remiss if I didn't add that I love my little blue car. With all the appointments/obligations that I'm responsible to keep ... I am convinced that this is one of those moments where things turned around because of the willingness of some good-hearted folks! We serve a wonderful God, who out of His busy day, thought about me and my little needs. Wow! Thank you so much."

– a Love INC client

"Dear Love INC,

Thank you for partnering together with different churches in the name of Jesus to bless others. You have given us two beds, a couch and two bicycles. Thank you for being there for my family and other families in Gallatin County. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ."

– a Love INC client

"Dear Father, I am so grateful and blessed to get to know and work with your faithful servants who volunteer their time through Love INC." – Cheri Kirkpatrick, secretary

"It has been a pleasure to see all of the work that can be done by ordinary people who desire to give a **gift** of service to **You**. There have been many needs met, hearts healed, lives made whole and an awesome number of prayers answered. Thank you for your provision and blessings now and always." – Eliz Trithart, operations manager

“Dear Lord, please send your servants to **the Change Your Life program** who are not only willing but passionate to help someone change their life, directly or indirectly, using and growing the gifts You placed in them to make it possible for someone's life to change in You. Let the lost really see **Your** love. Amen.” Dawn Long, Change Your Life coordinator

“Dear God, please touch the hearts of those you have **gifted** with computer skills to feel the call to give of their time and talent in **this** ministry **of churches called** Love INC. Show them that this is a place to experience and share Your merciful love and to transform lives in the name of Christ. In Jesus' name, amen.” – Chiara Schober, administrative assistant **to the director**

“My Father in heaven, I know that You are a God of strength, wisdom and abundant resources. I feel weak. I ask for Your strength. I ask for Your divine wisdom and I ask for human resources to meet the needs of the many clients whom we serve in Jesus' name.” – Verla Blom, intake referral coordinator