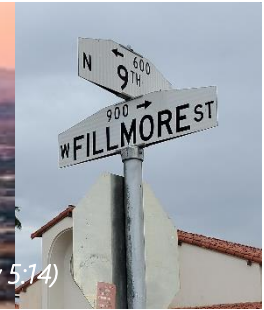




MERCY MINISTRIES

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)



"Handfuls of Purpose"

A CLOSER LOOK: "HANDFULS OF PURPOSE"

The book of Ruth in the Bible tells a beautiful story of God's faithful plan of redemption.

Ruth was a "stranger" in a new country. She clung to her mother-in-law, Naomi, as together they returned to Naomi's homeland. In great willingness, Ruth goes to glean in the barley fields to help provide food for them.

The owner of the fields, Boaz, shows great kindness toward Ruth and instructs the workers to leave "handfuls on purpose" for Ruth to glean (Ruth 2:15-18).

A far greater story is unfolding that points directly to the promised Savior that would be born. The Book of Ruth reveals Jesus as the true Kinsman-Redeemer and God as the One who leaves "handfuls on purpose" for all people to experience His grace and mercy.

(To read the full story, see the book of Ruth.)

It has been **exciting to witness** and be part of the re-start of our weekly food distribution. Prior to Covid-19, the food distribution served more than 300 families each week. Long lines of people formed and waited to be served. Because of Covid-19, and the numbers of people that were gathered together, the food distribution needed to be closed.

We re-started in August serving around 50 families. Now, a **growing number** of more than 200 families are served through an intense three-hour distribution each Tuesday morning via drive-through and safely-distanced walk-ups.

We see **God at work and doing what only He can**. He provided two grants that made it possible to purchase the equipment and supplies needed to re-structure and re-open the distribution. He has given a wonderful and faithful group of volunteers who work extremely hard to help make the new processes happen. The Holy Spirit is reminding us of God's call and purpose in this work as we gather together to hear from His word and pray before starting the distribution. Our hearts are being infused with fresh vision in working together to serve and reach our community. We are seeing previous barriers being broken down and volunteers working together across language barriers. God is at work – and **we are eager to stay in step with Him**.

Will you join us through:

Praying for the workers needed each week and opportunities for the Gospel.

Giving to help purchase the boxes that are filled with food each Monday for distribution on Tuesdays. Every \$1 will purchase 2 boxes. Currently, \$125 would cover a week's worth of boxes.

You can give by going to mercyministriesphx.com (the Giving tab, and choosing the "unrestricted" option). Gifts may also be mailed to the Mercy Ministries address (made payable to Mercy Ministries, with a separate note saying it is for "food distribution boxes").

Volunteering with us.

Mondays: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.: Pre-boxing / pre-bagging food.

Tuesdays: 7 a.m. – 1 p.m.: Set-up, food distribution, clean-up.

Please contact us via phone or email to let us know of your interest and for more details.

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410-596-7194 (Sherrie)



Thank you for being part of this life-giving work through your prayer and ministry partnership. We thank God for how He leaves “handfuls on purpose” that each person might know and experience His grace and mercy.

“It’s very good because I get to meet and talk with people personally, and they love it.”

“People are important and I want to invest my time in them... as God has done for me.”

-DANIEL,
One of our food distribution volunteers.



THERE IS MUCH TO TELL...AND MORE WE WANT TO SHARE

We have one included “one more story” (enclosed). God is up to some really great things...always (John 5:17).

THANK YOU

God continues to provide – and He does that through you. **Thank you!!**

We had thought these past few months would give opportunity for a focused-time of support raising. But meanwhile, God had other plans. Our Mercy Ministries (MM) Director needed to step aside. We are thankful for how God greatly used him. In being asked by the MM Board to take greater leadership roles within MM – though not expected – we could see the Lord’s hand in it, and have willingly stepped forward to use the gifts and abilities He has given us. It certainly has been overwhelming at times to continue the ministry focus while taking on additional responsibilities and opportunities. However, we see God at work in providing both people and resources to help make it possible.

We are trusting God for the additional needed ministry partners and resources. We would be blessed to have you join us. Also, a year-end gift would be an awesome blessing as we anticipate completing this year and eagerly moving into the next for Gospel ministry.

PLEASE PRAY WITH US FOR:

- ✧ The needed volunteers each week for the food distribution, open doors for the Gospel, and volunteer training.
- ✧ The continued discipleship and growth of Hope for Addiction leaders.
- ✧ The strength, additional laborers, and financial resources to meet expanding ministry needs.
- ✧ Specifically, for one who would be open to support-raising and joining us on a part-time basis to help fulfill administrative needs.

For Your first coming, Jesus, and for Your return that we await,
“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus.”

As we wait, may we leave “handfuls of purpose” for others to know and experience Your wonderful mercy and grace.

Merry Christmas and a very blessed 2021!

Ricky & Sherrie

AS WE THINK ABOUT “HANDFULS OF PURPOSE”:

Where and how have we seen God show His mercy and grace in our lives?

For Naomi and Ruth (above), it was gleaned in a barley field.

For the ones who come on Tuesday mornings, we pray it is at the food distribution.

For all of us, it is responding to His welcoming and loving invitation to open our hearts and lives to Christ, to draw near, and cling to Him.

Like us on Facebook at Mercy Ministries



To give online, visit mercyministriesphx.com. Gifts may also be made payable to Mercy Ministries, with a note saying it is for Aulds, and mailed to Mercy Ministries, 745 W. Fillmore St., Phoenix, AZ 85007.

ONE MORE STORY

"Behind the silence is deep emotion...that God never gave up on us."

As we closed out our Hope for Addiction meeting, Andrew* read the words of "Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)." We wondered if he thought he was just supposed to read the first verse since he stopped reading. But after a moment, we looked up and realized **he was silent** in trying to hold back his emotion and tears.

Ricky reminded us that behind the silence, is deep emotion that God never gave up on us. It was a very special moment as each around the circle reflected on **God's goodness** that brought each of us to Himself. As Andrew closed us out in prayer that night, He thanked God that whether we left to pursue lives of addiction – or whether we did not and were kept from that way of life – it has all been His grace and goodness that brought each of us to Himself.

We have been encouraged through Hope for Addiction leadership training, our weekly meetings, and one-on-one discipleship times. God continues to breathe fresh wind into our hearts to faithfully meet together and to reach out. We are encouraged by what He is doing to encourage, convict, and draw us all to Himself through applying the Gospel and His truths to our lives. **Thank you.** We want you to see and hear what God is doing and making possible through your prayer and ministry partnership. There is much to tell.



Remember Cheryl from our previous newsletter? She shared her story of "The Gift of Desperation" that led her to freedom through Christ. At the time her story was shared with you, the relationships with two of her children remained broken with no contact. Cheryl has **excitedly shared** that within just the past few weeks, those relationships are starting to be restored and communication is taking place again. Wow, isn't God amazing to do what only He can fully do? **Thank you** so much for the prayers you prayed for Cheryl and her family after reading her story. It is making a difference. Let's continue praying and believe for what is possible through Him.

As we are seeing through the food distribution, Hope for Addiction, and counseling / discipling sessions God has given us to be part of, **He is the One who lovingly, consistently, and faithfully pursues.**

His Word does the work and the Gospel changes lives.

* Name changed.