



HOPE FOR RENEWAL MINISTRY CENTER ON GLENWOOD AVENUE, YOUNGSTOWN



Hope For Renewal seeks to serve, build relationships and to share the love of Christ for those living in the Glenwood Corridor in Youngstown, Ohio.

REVEREND GARY KOERTH

The Challenge

We all find ourselves in the midst of very challenging times personally and in ministry. Most of our ministry strategies and plans have been reduced to the most basic plans. At first this seemed to trouble me. But as I have processed this I feel that God has given me a simple yet powerful purpose that can be summed up in a few simple yet extremely powerful words from Jesus.

³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22: 37 – 39

Simply explained, we need to seek God with all of our being and then rely on God to take the most simple plans and literally empower them by the Holy Spirit. Seeking God and

then loving our neighbors! God is taking us back to a time of total trust in Him to draw people in the most basic ways. It seemed as though God wanted us to return to minister to the way that we started four years ago. Literally almost one on one with those whom God would bring across our path.

The Glenwood Playground Outreach Ministry

Three years ago in July we were called to minister at the Glenwood Playground with a weekly community Picnic each June through October. Over the last three years the picnic has become an incredible way to serve the community and to build relationships and share the love of Christ. We were looking forward to another great outreach picnic season. We were planning to continue activities and have several VBS's. But because of the pandemic the playground looked like a ghost town. All summer park programs were cancelled. But then, at the beginning of July after talking with the park director we were given permission to use the playground and pavilion with a number of restrictions.



The tables were removed from the pavilion and signs were posted that said “Use at your own risk”. We would be able to cook the hotdog picnic but serve with masks and gloves.



Under these restrictions our VBS program and family and children’s activities would be very difficult and therefore we decided not to have them this summer. Most of our summer ministry plans were lost. I believe I actually said to myself, “we are reduced to just cooking hot dogs and being there for people one at a time.” And then the thought poured into my mind and heart, “So you are reduced to the heart of the command of Jesus to go into the world and to serve and show them and tell them about the love of Christ!” And so on July 15th Cindy and I were humbled to pray the exact same prayer that we prayed on this exact same week in July three years ago at our first playground picnic, “Lord even if we only give one hotdog away tonight it will be a huge victory for the Name of Jesus!” That first Wednesday we only saw a dozen people. No children just adults.

Since then we are watching God do some incredible things. Four weeks ago twelve young men started to come to the playground every Wednesday to play basketball. So we began the joy of serving and build relationships with them each week. Not long after that parents started to bring their children.

On Aug. 12 we saw fifty adults and children come to share a meal and fellowship and the love of Christ.

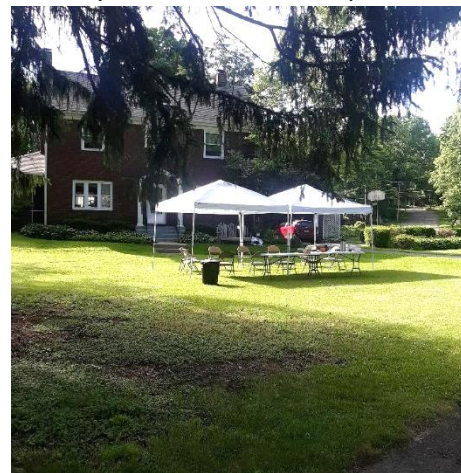
A huge “Thank you” to New Albany EPC and Bethany EPC for coming to the playground to help serve in August!



Community Worship

On November 7, 2019 we gathered our core group together and started to worship in our living room of our house. And then on March 23 we were forced to start a new way of worship, with a 15 – 20 minute message recorded on Youtube and sent in a text message link to our small church family on Sunday to watch on their phones.

On June 7th we started to worship in person again on our front lawn under 10’x10’ canopies. We start each Sunday with a time of coffee and donuts, then Praise and Prayer and God’s Word from the book of James. Sermons are sometimes interrupted by cars honking as they drive by or a couple walking past and hearing them say “They’re having church”!



I am convinced that God is teaching us to be “Basic” and let God empower and anoint all that we do through His power and authority!

Ministry Center

Our Ministry Center has made some significant progress during this difficult time as contractors were able to work at the building from April – August. Volunteer work days stopped for several months but we are now having work days once again. A big thank you to all who have volunteered at the building, including Bakerstown E.P.C. who came to install the kitchen floor tile.



We hope to have the ministry center far enough along that we can begin using it for ministry before the end of 2020. Please let us know if you would like to join us for a volunteer work day.

Youth Mission Team

In July we were blessed to have the youth group from Austintown Community Church come to the neighborhood to work on two homes. They were a huge blessing to two families.



Anticipating God's Provision

We are excited to see how God will supply the financial needs of Hope For Renewal in 2020. Would you please consider

becoming a new supporter of Hope for Renewal either through a one-time gift or becoming a monthly or yearly supporter.

Gifts will be used towards the completion of the renovations at the Ministry Center and startup costs and continued support for the neighborhood ministries of Hope For Renewal. A huge praise and thanks for those who have supported Hope For Renewal in the past and we pray you are led to continue your support in the future.

Gifts for Hope for Renewal may be sent attn: Gary Koerth to Hope for Renewal, at the new mailing address listed below. Checks can be made to "Hope For Renewal"

You are important partners in this ministry and we'd love to hear from you . . . In Christ's love,

Gary and Cindy Koerth

HOPE FOR RENEWAL
 2906 Glenwood Ave
 Youngstown OH 44511
 330-550-9506
 e-mail: hope4renewal@gmail.com