

GRACE'S BLANKET WORKSHOP REPORT FOR 2016

November 2016 marked the completion of 45 years of work by the faithful participants of our small group. It has been a ministry which our Lord indeed has been blessing and the recipients of our quilts, baby-care kits, school kits, and motel soaps, know that "someone out there loves them."

Our completed work this year consisted of 49 quilts and 48 baby-care kits (layettes), 8 school kits, 17 lbs. of motel soap and 24 lbs. of pop tabs. The tabs go to support the Ronald McDonald House in Knoxville, TN. Two years ago the House received \$4,000 for the tabs collected from donors in the area. All the other items were sent to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to be distributed in distressed areas around the world. Since we started in 1971, our group has made approximately 2285 quilts, assembled 1044 layettes and 417 personal-care kits, and collected 559 pounds of motel soap. This year 8 school kits were sewn and contributed by Ingrid Busch and family.

LWR instituted Project Comfort in 1997 to cover shipping costs from the LWR warehouse to places of need. The Blanket Workshop has contributed \$2813.74 to this fund in the intervening years.

Our total expenditure for 2016 was \$1364.20 which included a check for \$194.85 for Project Comfort accompanying our August shipment to LWR.

Every year – the third Sunday in May, the Blanket Workshop displays finished quilts at each worship service. This is the only time during the year we ask for financial support from the congregation via a Love Offering. Financial contributions from Grace's Chapter of Thrivent Financial have been very important in supporting our work, as well as support from our Grace membership.

Thrivent required a summary of volunteer hours. I tallied a total of 1721 hours by approximately 13 different women who participated during the year. This includes some of the hours spent at home surging flannel pieces, or creating baby blankets for layettes, and knitting sweaters (one for each layette), plus cutting quilt squares and doing the zig-zag stitching to secure all layers of our quilts.

You may ask how we receive the raw material to make our blankets, layettes, etc. Fabric contributions by our Grace members and friends in the greater community continue to flow in for our quilt assembly. We go to the First Methodist's bi-annual Second Chance Sale for most of the baby clothes necessary for our layettes. This year we purchased \$294.75 of infant clothing at this sale.

We continue to extend an invitation to anyone who would like to join us the 1st, 3rd, or 5th Thursday of each month in the Fellowship Hall from 10AM - 2PM. (You don't need to be a seamstress to be of help; just being the essential pair of hands for the large quilt assembly is appreciated.).

Each of our dedicated members feel called by the Holy Spirit to share God's love and that has been the impetus for 45 years. Thanks be to God!

Late in the year Margaret Martin, one of our most regular and faithful members moved to New Mexico to be closer to family. We continue to be in touch with her, but we miss her at Blanket Workshop. Please contact Sigrid Ludemann for more information about this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Sigrid Ludemann