

A Minute with Mercy



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Demonstrating Mercy

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Keep an eye out

 Follow us on Facebook for up-to-date information regarding these and other clinic news items.

 First Friday Homeless Connect, a monthly Lighthouse Ministries program, currently takes place in the parking lot of First Baptist Church from 9am until 11am.

Question: What do answering phones, giving away food, and diagnosing foot problems have in common?

Answer: They are all done by volunteers!

Mercy Medicine Free Clinic is fortunate to have many diverse volunteers, or people who willingly donate their time and skills, doing everything from clerical and administrative work to providing certified nutrition, podiatric, and physical therapy evaluations. We collaborate with hearing aid specialists and mental health providers, too. If you are at all familiar with us, you already know that we have many collaborative partnerships with dental, pharmaceutical, and medical professionals who offer their services to our patients at no cost or for a discounted rate. These services are provided both in our building on Coit Street and in other locations in our area even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Volunteers are also responsible for distributing free meals three times each

year. Made possible by donations of money and food from generous people with servants' hearts, one highlight of the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter seasons is a day leading up to each holiday when volunteers gather at the clinic to give out food to our patients. Either prepared as individual meals in take away boxes or as fixings to be cooked at home, up to 100 turkeys or hams with accompanying sides are available for Mercy Medicine patients to pick up. It is one way that we can show the love of Christ to people in a way that they can understand.

Sometimes God seems far away when we cannot feel His presence but we can help people experience Him in a way that makes a real difference. When Mercy Medicine is able to provide tangible services in the name of Christ, He uses us as a conduit of His love. All of what we do here is made possible because of the passion He has placed in the hearts of the givers, the prayer warriors, and the volunteers of Mercy Medicine Free Clinic.

What's Going On With Mercy?

 Our website has been completely overhauled! It is easier to navigate and more visually appealing, in our opinion. There is, also, a newsletter archive! Check it out and let us know what you think.

 We have sent out our first postcard to those in the area who may benefit from some of the services we offer. The plan is to send out a card every few months, each with a fact or two about how we support the community and our patients.

 Since the passing of State Elder Elijah Green in mid-November 2020, we have been privileged to have several spiritual leaders in the area agree to share the responsibility of leading our weekly Monday morning

devotions here at the clinic for the benefit of staff and patients alike. Elder Green was a spiritual presence all over this community for decades and we are grateful that this clinic is a small part of his legacy.

I Was Sick and You Cared for Me

My wife, Deborah, and I have been coming to Mercy dental clinics for almost 10 years. From the first day, everyone there has been kind and helpful. They have gone that extra bit to be sure our dental problems were fixed. When we were sent “out of office,” all of the volunteer dentists were also great.

Recently my wife began the process for dentures. Due to the healing time after her teeth were removed, she was without teeth for quite a while, during which time she tried to hide her mouth and did not smile much. The day for new teeth finally came and I waited for her while they were being fitted. When she came out, she didn’t say anything—she just started to cry. I asked what was wrong. After a few more tears, she gave me a big smile and said “I’ve got teeth—I’m so happy!” I hadn’t seen her smile in a long time and seeing that made me smile.

So, thanks Mercy Medicine. Not only did my wife get new teeth, we both got our smiles back!



Spotlight on... James Grzech, NP

James Grzech is Mercy Medicine’s lead medical provider.

He is dedicated to his curative calling and it is obvious that he genuinely cares about our patients. It is not unheard of for them to tell the staff that he is great at what he does or express their gratitude for the way he treats them.

But providing quality medical care is just one aspect of his life. He has a military background; over 35 years of it, in fact, and counting. He also enjoys many outdoor activities, both solo and with friends. His dog, Smokey, even gets in on it. He’s always up for sarcastic, witty banter, bad jokes, or plain old fashioned hijinks.

Thank you, Mr. Grzech, for keeping us on our toes.



Faith Perspective

*“Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters as well”
Rev. Mary Finklea, Mercy board of directors*



“If you can’t love the person whom we see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?” This quote is linked to Mother Teresa and finds its roots in a little, tiny book near the back of your Bible, First John. It isn’t the gospel of John but a minor letter. You might have skipped over it, but it is worth reading and re-reading. This small, diminutive letter is full of big ideas about love.

Loving God looks like loving our neighbor. We can’t escape this truth: our love for God compels us to be in community. We are not isolated individuals; we are caught up in a web of dependent relationships with others. Our lives, choices, actions, have consequences on others, and theirs, us. We often have blinders on that allow us to pretend we are independent, but it doesn’t take much, a natural disaster, a strike, or a pandemic to realize how inter-connected we all are.

Someone once realized “I only love God as much as I love the person I love the least.” All of us are called to demonstrate our love for God by love of neighbor. Mercy Medicine is one place to see this love of God and love of neighbor in action. Continue to support this tangible expression of love of God and love of neighbor with a gift today. *Thank you for loving your neighbor.*

Palate Pleasers ... Frozen Date Delight

1 (8 1/2 oz.) can crushed pineapple
 1/4 c. pineapple juice
 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
 2 Tbsp. sugar
 1/2 c. chopped pecans
 1 (8 oz.) pkg. dates, cut up
 1 c. whipping cream

Drain pineapple; reserve 1/4 cup juice. Gradually add juice to softened cheese. Beat until fluffy; add pineapple, nuts, and dates. Whip cream and fold into mixture. Pour in 8x8 inch pan or 8 small molds and freeze.

Palate Pleasers cookbooks available for \$20



Angels Among Us

Every now and then as an organization evolves, a refresh is needed. As you may be aware, Mercy Medicine has been constantly evolving for a while now and it seems appropriate that the way we present ourselves evolves as well.

You may have noticed that we have a new logo on the front of the newsletter. It is based on a painting that we have hanging here in the office.

The colors are soothing blues and creams and you can even see the different textures, adding visual interest. But the really great thing is that it represents an angel looking down. Angels are God's messengers and He charges them with looking out for and ministering to us. That is incredibly appropriate for a medical clinic that is a Christian ministry. It indicates that we want to follow Christ's direction in showing His love by taking care of people.

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" ~ Hebrews 1:14

"For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways." ~ Psalms 91:11

From the Director's Desk

Wayne Jackson

One indicator of a healthy, forward-moving organization is its ability to grow and adapt to meet the needs of its customers in a positive, beneficial way. The Mercy staff, volunteers, and patients have witnessed this growth in the past eighteen months as several new clinical services have been added. Our patients can now be referred to in-house services such as physical therapy, nutrition counseling, and pain management. Mercy has also recently established a collaborative agreement with the McLeod Regional Medical Center Diabetic Center to provide counseling and life-style education programs to our diabetic patients in hopes of reversing the trajectory of this insidious disease.

The clinic has obtained the regular services of Pee Dee Mental Health through a program called "Highway to Hope." This new initiative provides "traveling" mental health professionals to key locations in the state to include the Pee Dee area. In our case, instead of counseling being rendered in a recreational vehicle, the Highway to Hope personnel have agreed to see our referred mental health related patients in our building every Monday morning.

This will allow prompt evaluation of a variety of mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, bi-polar disorders, as well as quick referrals to Florence's substance abuse centers. These services will fill an important in-house care gap that has been lacking until now.

God continues to bless Mercy through these new, improved services. I am so glad that so many of you have chosen to also bless us through your continued gifts, time, and prayers! There is still more to come.

"I was sick and you cared for me" ~ Matthew 25 ~



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Healthy Pursuit

It is likely that most of us know someone who struggles with depression, up to and including suicidal thoughts and attempts. This has been compounded by mandatory isolation since the pandemic began and no one knows exactly when our "normal" will return. That being said, it is as important as ever that we remind our friends and family how important they are and that they are loved.

One way we can encourage others is to call so we hear each other's voices. Another is to write a letter or send a card in the mail. Sometimes, knowing that you took the time to think about someone else can help alleviate a bit of despair.

Mental health is as important as physical health and is affected by any number of circumstances (such as loneliness, addiction, unexpected pregnancy, and abuse). It contributes to general wellbeing and even how quickly someone's body can heal.

If you suspect that someone you know is struggling with anxiety, depression, chronic stress, or any other mental health issue, please encourage them to seek help. In the box below is contact information to get started.

Circle Park Behavioral Health 238 S. Coit St Florence, SC 29501 843.665.9349 www.circlepark.com	Pee Dee Mental Health 125 E. Cheves St Florence, SC 29506 843.317.4073 peedeementalhealth.org (Check out their Highway to Hope program.)	Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault PO Box 1351 Florence, SC 29503 843.669.4694 peedeecoalition.org	A Choice to Make Pregnancy Resource Center 516 S. Coit St Florence, SC 29501 843.669.4673 www.achoicetomake.org
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