“Thank you!”
By Rev. Rick Reynolds

One of the folks getting help from Nightwatch had a problem with her truck. Not the first time. She depends on this vehicle to get to work and school. The radiator was cracked.

I found a deal for a new radiator, with the help of friends. It was delivered to her late on Friday.

Sunday afternoon she called me, so excited. “I put the radiator in myself!” You could hear the pride of accomplishment in her voice. “I can get to work. I just wanted to thank you!”

This beautiful moment is actually for all of you who help to make the work of Nightwatch possible. We rely on the generosity of people like you. Most of our support is from everyday working class people and retirees.

Your support — financial, food, socks and supplies, volunteering, and prayers — are the only way we can keep on going. We cannot say it enough: Thank you. You have brought blessing into the world, and renewed self-confidence and hopefulness in so many people.

Lord, you have freely given us what is most important. Thank you, and help us to bless others every day.

Connected
By Ben Curtis, Street Minister

I hadn’t seen ‘Marvin’ for a while. The last time I saw him, he was weary from being stuck in the rut of street life. I had also heard that he had run into some trouble with the law.

When he rode up on his bike in the park on this particular evening, he greeted me. “I need to shake your hand,” he said.

I had referred Marvin to another agency that was able to help him get his legal issues sorted out and get him into transitional housing. He was so relieved to be off the street. Now he could focus on moving ahead; getting a job, and returning to school.

In Street Ministry, we work to engage with people when we are out there walking around. When it serves them best, we connect them with other organizations which can help them make progress in ways we can’t.

Through our actions, our words and our presence, we are trying to connect people experiencing homelessness to the knowledge that they are loved by God. It is this love that binds us all together and shows that we really are all connected in some way.
Like family
By Ann Sakaguchi

“John” lives in our apartment building. He’s a big, tall bearded guy; he’s a presence.

John is also severely hearing impaired. Whenever I see him, I try to make eye contact, and greet him with a loud “Hi John!” He has never responded; never looked me in the eye or acknowledged my presence. Maybe he can’t hear me.

We don’t require that the tenants be nice to us. However, we expect them to get along well enough to live comfortably, while sharing kitchens and bathrooms.

It’s like living in a home with family.

We’ve worked hard at building community and encouraging good relationships between the residents. But again, it’s like a family. There are squabbles and disagreements followed by grace and hugs.

And then there’s John.

Marlene, our Housing Coordinator, has been working with John. Over many, many months, in her own unique way, she has introduced basic social skills to him. He talks with her now. He says he trusts her.

Recently, big, angry John got into the face of another resident. She was rightfully frightened and retreated to her room for safety. After some time passed, John went knocking on her door. She did not answer, knowing it was him.

Marlene investigates.

Marlene (to John): “Why did you go knocking on her door afterwards?”
John: “I wanted to apologize.”

This would not have happened a year ago. This is evidence of Marlene’s efforts; her daily, “never give up” approach to her people. It’s like family. We grow and we never give up.