

Dear friend of Circle of Concern,

***“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18***

This verse came to mind today, not only because it is our Thanksgiving Season, but also because of the challenges facing our nation and world. I know **when I choose** to be thankful in the midst of difficulty, it allows the Lord to change my mindset and my heart. Instead of being critical, I can find the positive. Instead of anger, compassion; instead of anxiety, peace. Whatever challenges each of us are facing, it's an important lesson and reminder.

So, even with this update, I am thankful! And I trust the Lord has all things in His hands. The mission of Circle of Concern to help children, single moms, the poor and needy, remains focused and strong.

OUR THRIFT STORE IS CLOSING DUE TO COVID-19

COVID-19 has had its effects on so many in our world, and what is happening with us does not even compare to the loss of a family member or serious illness, but closing our Thrift Store in Long Beach, which has been open since the early '90's is really tough, especially as it has meant the loss of jobs for its employees, and a major loss of income for COC.

Ken Myers, who started the Thrift Store had the difficult decision to make, and the voicemail message he now leaves on the 800# for donation pick-ups really says it all. If you call, here's what you hear:

“Thank you for calling Circle of Concern.

For the past 30 plus years I have led off our voice mail message with that greeting and it's what you have heard each time we have answered the phone when you have called us to schedule your donation pick up.

Sadly, we will be unable to take your donation calls any longer. We have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus to the point where we must close our doors. We tried to recover from the enforced three-month shutdown from March to June of this year, but we just could not manage to do it. The expense of our building rent, truck lease, employee wages, etc. have proved too much.

Words cannot express the gratitude we feel for your generous support over these years, decades even. Thank you so very much.

While we will not have the means to do donation pick-ups any more, Circle of Concern, the charitable organization, will continue with its endeavors. I would like to refer you to the website at circleoc.com and specifically circleoc.com/donate if you would like to continue with your support.

As I have always ended these messages... Once again, thank you for calling Circle of Concern.”

I was able to hear firsthand many voicemail messages that donors have left on the line after hearing Ken's message and was touched by how sorry they are (many actually in tears!). They also said they have been giving donations to the Thrift Store for years and years. A big shout out to Ken's team having done a fantastic job for the past three decades.



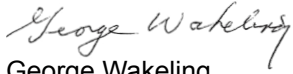
Ken Myers (in shorts) and his team

END OF AN ERA BUT NOT THE END OF COC

I asked George if he would share a little history of how the Thrift Store first began:

"About 30 years ago, through a mutual acquaintance, I met this young eager guy, Ken Myers. We both talked Thrift Store talk together and quickly became partners and friends. Thrift Stores in California must have a nonprofit to collect used items to sell and Circle of Concern was willing to partner with Ken's company. He did all the hard work and we only had to deposit a check once a month. From the very beginning we hit it off and became good friends and enjoyed each other's company. We are still great friends today and hopefully continue that relationship."

Thank you Ken for all the people you have helped through us and we wish you well in the future."



George Wakeling



Let's Continue to Partner Together and Make a Difference

Our mission and heartbeat remains strong. When George and Betty Wakeling founded Circle of Concern, they did it because they saw so many needs, and an opportunity to make a difference. Nothing has changed. The needs are even greater, and we have developed strong relationships with amazing partners doing God sized things!

The work being done in Zona Norte, Tijuana alongside Keith and Maya Durkin is changing lives. This semester they are educating 32 elementary and middle school kids from five nations. This ministry is changing destinies, giving people the opportunity for a bright future. They are also currently involved in four "rescues" of children from trafficking, neglect and drugs. We are working with other partners in Mexico as well, who are church planting, running English classes, feeding and helping the poor, working with orphans and more. We will not give up, we will press on. *But, the honest reality is COC will lose 50% of its income through the closing of the Thrift Store.*

Next year, as we prayerfully see the light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel, we will bring teams to Mexico: Tijuana, Sayulita, and install a playground in a new area for COC, San Luis de La Paz, Guanajuato.

It is a privilege to serve the mission of Circle of Concern, one George, myself and the COC Board don't take lightly. We are thankful for so many things... for Ken Myers hard work over the years, for George and Betty's vision to helping the needy, for our selfless partners who are laboring in the harvest for the Lord, and for our donors who have faithfully partnered with us, some for more than 25 years.

May this Thanksgiving be one of thankfulness in your families, and around you dinner table.

Yours truly,
Carol DeGraff



Executive Director
carol@circleoc.com

WE NEED YOU MORE THAN EVER

- If every monthly giver doubled their gift, we would make up the gap.
- If you are not already, would you prayerfully consider becoming a monthly supporter?
- Or would you consider COC for a year end or one time gift?
Every gift is a blessing.

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)