

The HOPE Letter

The Hope For The Future Ministries Newsletter



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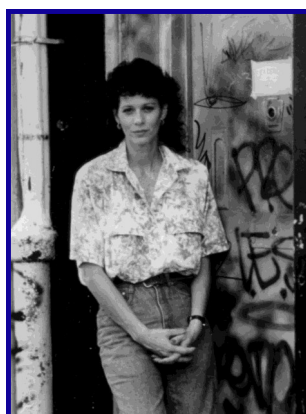
Rev. Diane Dunne



Revelation 14:13

"Then I heard a voice from heaven say, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. ... Yes, says the Spirit, they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from their hard work; for their good deeds follow them!'"

Special Tribute To Pastor Diane Dunne 1954-2020



It is with broken heart that we announce that Pastor Diane has passed into glory peacefully, in her sleep, on October 30th, 2020. Though unsure of the exact cause, we know that Pastor Diane had labored till she could no longer work. Up until the very last day of her life she fed the hungry and cared for those in need at the Farmingdale Outreach, Thursday evening. Here at HFTF we are moving forward with the ministry in which she spent herself. She truly left an example for each of us. She knew how to trust God for His provision. She knew how to sow and give. It was said of her heart, that it was as big as the size of Texas. Jesus came into her life and enlarged her heart for souls 40 years ago.

We know that during the current Covid crisis that many could not come out to join in the funeral arrangements. We have done our best to post on the ministry website the service that was held in her honor. (Also, we have posted some things on her Facebook page as well.)

To include all of you that have partnered with this work we have reprinted her eulogy and some comments of those ministered to by Pastor Diane's life and ministry.

Eulogy by Pastor Deborah Mitchell

Pastor Diane was born as Diane Patricia Dunne in Brooklyn, New York July 11th, 1954 to Robert and Hilda Dunne. The second born middle child, as she liked to describe herself, is survived by her mother, her brother Kenneth Robert Dunne and an older sister Denise Kathleen Dunne. Her beloved father Robert James pre-deceased her on September 8th, 2020.

Pastor Diane had worked in sales management and marketing in a cosmetic company during her early 20s. She experienced success in that field and began working in high-end places such as Bergdorf Goodman and the Chanel company. She was always proud of the fact that she was involved in the launching of the Coco Chanel fragrance. It



Tribute To Pastor Diane *(continued)*



became her signature perfume and wore it every day after.

At the age of 26 she became a born-again Christian. The journey to that experience was something to hear her tell. Suffice it to say that between an unrelenting roommate and a tireless employee in her department at work, witnessing Jesus to her, and praying for her, she finally gave her heart to Christ. After her salvation experience she felt as if her job was unfulfilling, believing that there was a greater purpose to her life. Because of her marketing experience she wanted to open up her own Christian bookstore. So she began to work in one in order to gain experience. That job would lead to her ministering to teens who would shoplift in the store. She would chase them, catch them, witness to them, pray for them, and then

buy them food and clothing when she found out that they stole because they were hungry.

Not long after this she realized she needed some training so she enrolled in World Challenge with David Wilkerson to train for street ministry work. After five years she had moved from the city to Long Island. She had heard of a street ministry going on in Tompkins Square Park. So she came back to the city to attend a meeting. This is where she found a woman named

Alaska who would alter her life from that point on. Alaska was screaming at the preacher,

"What do you know what it's like to be homeless?" Diane went to speak with her and wound up befriending her and gaining her trust.



At this time Tompkins Square, Park was nicknamed Tent City because of the amount of homeless living in tents. Those were desperate times. Diane began to take clothing and food to Alaska each week. One day Alaska told her she got an apartment. "Come and see!" she said. The apartment was in an abandoned building. It was cold and dark as they entered,

walking up rickety stairs that felt as if they would collapse, they came to the entrance of the apartment being blocked by a steel metal door. Alaska picked it up in her hands and moved it to the side. The first thing that greeted them was a metal 5 gallon drum filled with human waste. "This is my bathroom," she said. Water was dripping on their heads as rain came through the missing roof. Animals and humans were living in squalor. It was there that the Holy Spirit spoke to her heart, saying, "If you can see these conditions and do nothing, it's sin."

Pastor Diane would leave her job in high heels, change to put on sneakers and jeans and go clean construction sites in order to raise money to help feed the homeless. Word spread about what she was doing and so more people came for food. This is when she began to solicit donations for food from corporations as well as physical and financial support from surrounding churches and

food from catering venues. And so with the cry of one homeless woman, Pastor Diane's heart was broken open wide with compassion. And thus Hope For The Future Ministries was born. I loved to listen to her re-hash the stories of those early years of ministry.



Tribute To Pastor Diane (continued)



She had stories from riots being stopped to the dead being raised; From the demoniac being delivered, to countless single moms finding help and hope for their future.

From the start, Diane preached the gospel while she fed the homeless physically and spiritually. Knowing that often times homeless people have a hard time fitting in churches, she began Bible study so that people could have more than the basic gospel. Overtime this grew to Church Without Walls. She would have church services right in the park. It would be filled with people who

wanted to hear the word... as she never once required them to come to the service to receive food or assistance.

In recognition of ministry achievements and many years of biblical studies, Diane was ordained on December 3, 1995 at Full Gospel Christian Center, by 17 pastors from various denominations. Over the years with her reputation growing, Pastor Diane won numerous awards for her service to the needy, including:



Woman of the year for Excellence in Humanitarian Service from Women of Substance Ministries

Proclamation for Service at Ground Zero from New York City Counsel
Doers of The Word Recognition Award for her tireless work on behalf of the poor and homeless from Jesus alive Ministries
Gemstarr Entertainment "Dare To Be Different" Award

These are just a few of the awards received down through the years. As her work became known invitations to speak all over the world came to Pastor Diane including:

- Communist male prisons in Russia
- The underground church in China
- Churches across the States

She appeared on many Christian TV stations such as CBN, TBN, CTN, just to name a few. Diane and I hosted a cable television program called Glory to Glory and also a local radio program with Pastor Mary Elberfeld and myself on WNYG.



But, as with all successes, suffering is always in the mix.



There were many obstacles and challenges that tried to take her off her course. Anyone that has served in ministry for any length of time understands exactly what I'm saying. She was no stranger to betrayal, rejection, and endured a tremendous amount of attacks from the enemy of her soul that required strong spiritual warfare.

In 2009 the ministry was devastated by fire when an arson attack destroyed the warehouse and kitchen as well as thousands of pounds of food which had just been stocked for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday. What seemed like an end to the work, became a new beginning, in many respects. Many businesses, teams, Churches, Civic Associations and even political leaders came to help rebuild and raise funds. Even





though the building was closed down with the help of New York City food bank, UWNYC, Long Island Cares and Island harvest all the holiday outreaches continued. Turkeys were donated so that people could have a holiday meal. For one year she had to use another restaurant kitchen until her warehouse was rebuilt to board of health standards and operational again.

But Pastor Diane pressed forward. Over the years, Ministries that wanted to start soup kitchens and pantries have come to Pastor Diane for help and she gladly helped with advice and planning. Thousands of people from college interns, to stay at home mothers, to children in youth groups, to even the disabled, all came out alongside her to help with the ministry and gained training and experience in a Street evangelism helping them develop their own ministries. And this speaks to the character of this mighty warrior for the gospel and the kingdom.

She would tell folks, if you can put a plastic fork, spoon and knife, with a napkin in a plastic bag you can be used by Jesus. It didn't matter what disability you had what your limitations were. She believed everybody could be used by the Lord for His kingdom and His glory.

Pastor Diane, though a serious woman of with a great work ethic, also had a great sense of humor. I could tell some stories of some stunts she's pulled on me. I used to tell her, "Being around you, being you friend has made my life anything



but boring!" She was quite the prankster when she wanted to be. After a hard day on the street, she would take the youth teams and start water balloon fights with them or whipped cream fights to relieve some of the tension of the hard days labor. She worked hard, she played hard, and she prayed hard.



But as the years passed, her body literally was spent on this great work. She would often do way too much. And her physical ailments began to show the evidence of her hard labor. With a degenerative spine disease

and arthritis that was beginning to cause great pain, coupled with many other ailments, Pastor Diane lived in chronic pain. It was difficult for her to sit too long, lay down too long or stand too long. Her problems with her teeth caused her great weight loss. This made her extremely tired and anemic. The last six years of her life were the most trying, health-wise.

But during this time she was also doing her best to take care of an aging father. In her youth, alcoholism had separated her dad from the family. But after 23 years of sobriety that relationship was slowly restored. Her Dad's influence on her as a young child was profound, as he would take her to orphanages to give children presents. She remembered asking her Dad why these children had no homes of their own, he told her they had no parents, and no one else wanted them. It was the reason she prayed at the age 4 telling Jesus "I want to help the people no one else wants ..." And Jesus held her to that prayer.



Though she grieved the loss of her dad these last two months her life seemed to be a series of breakings. I remember telling her once before in the midst of a very devastating trial.... For someone who has instilled hope for the future for so many others, I've never seen anybody have to struggle so much to hold on to hope for her own future. She fought for everything. She had to fight spiritually in prayer warfare, emotionally to be healed of many rejections and betrayal's, and physically just to get up out of bed in the morning.

Diane would tell us that effective ministry begins with a broken heart. Well, I've never known anybody who had to struggle with such a broken heart while affecting so many broken people for their own healing.

I recall a song I heard on the radio by the Tally Trio, The Broken Ones. When I heard the words I thought of Diane. I said, "That's Pastor Diane." The lyrics read:

"Maggie came home one day with a Raggedy Ann
She said "Mama, look what i found in the neighbors garbage can"
It had a missing left arm, and a right button eye
Hanging by a thread

She carried it gently up to her room
And laid it on her bed, with her other dolls

She loves the broken ones
The ones that need a little patching up
She sees the diamond in the rough
And makes it shine like new
It really doesn't take that much
A willing heart and a tender touch
If everybody loved like she does
There'd be a lot less broken ones



Twenty years later in a shelter on 18th avenue
A seventeen year old girl shows up all black and blue
Needle tracks in her left arm
Almost too weak to stand
She says "I'm lost and I need help"
As Maggie takes her hand and says "come on in...."

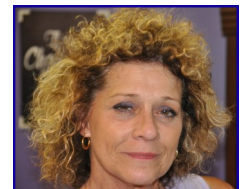
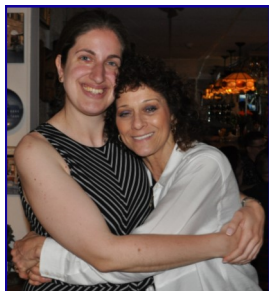


If you call her an Angel
She'll be quick to say to you
She's just doing what the one who died for her would do
Love the broken ones



The ones that need a little patching up
See the diamond in the rough
And make it shine like new
It really doesn't take that much
A willing heart and a tender touch
If everybody loved like he does
There'd be a lot less broken ones."

Songwriters: Jerry Salley, Jb Rudd, Carl Vipperman



I can still hear some of her favorite expressions ...

If you were in need of pastoral counseling, especially marital counseling, "Don't screw this up!"

If you were trying to cook her steak, she declared herself "Queen of the grill."

If you were a female who didn't feel very brave, she would lift both hands up, declaring, "Girl Power!"

If she couldn't go out to the outreaches in the park for any length of time, she would say, "I miss my guys."

If I felt like a task or project was insurmountable, she would say, "We got this! What's so hard?"

Or "Don't worry! I got your back!"

She was more than a friend to me... she was a close sister and became a beloved part of my family, accepted and loved for who she was. She saw me through so many things. Today I weep for us, not her. She is no longer in pain. She has no more tears. It will take a host of angels to bring out her crown. With a broken heart I say good bye to the best friend anyone could ever ask for.



Tribute.... (continued)

At night Diane and I would call to make sure each was safe home. Another expression she had was, "Sleep with the angels." And I would say to her "And make sure you come back to me in the morning." One last expression was.... "Can I go home now. I'm tired I want to go home now." Well, Diane you are now safe home, with the angels and this time I will come back to you in my morning." Ω



◀ Top Left Pastor Diane with her Dad, Bob Dunne

◀ Pastor Diane with brother Ken and sister, Denise

▲ Pastor Diane with Mom, Hilda Dunne

Comments From Lives Touched by Pastor Diane

Patti Cole Sullivan

It was an honor for Jim and I to know Diane Dunne for over 30 years. She ministered to the homeless in New York City. Through the years, we went into NYC with her and her team numerous times. She started out with two shopping carts full of sandwich bags and grew the ministry over the years to feed thousands. Many people came to Christ and were transformed through her ministry. She was a pastor to those on the streets. She led a church without walls. She was one of the most powerful examples of sharing God's unconditional love that I've ever met. Well done Diane! Rest in peace, my dear friend.

Terri Thomas Tupper/ Bobby Kellet

An amazing soul, full of lightning energy 4 Jesus. I am grateful our paths touched one another along our Journeys. You taught us to live like Mother Teresa - that giving was not enough unless it was your everything that you were giving. Just watched your funeral service - what beautiful tributes. Praying for every life you touched that they continue to follow in your footsteps, rejoice in your legacy and keep HOPE for the FUTURE. Your ministry will continue on because the beauty of your soul is everlasting. Rest in Paradise Dear friend to ALL.

Joan Born McQuillen

I remember those crazy late nights in the city feeding the homeless and I was in charge of keeping the Mexican gangs (at that time) from cutting the line for food!!! I was a Sergeant in arm...your ministry was just starting to take on a force of its own and I was so blessed to listen to your sermonette with everyone in the line.. you were most courageous warrior woman walking into squatter buildings .. dilapidated, dirty, scary places, but the Holy Spirit was with you and you barged right in... ready to minister to everyone you met. Because of you and your living testimony ...I have fulfilled my life long dream to serve full time in mission for the sake of the Kingdom...

Amaryllis Ortiz

Pastor Diane was a Proverbs 31 woman. She ran her race well, and now she's home. She was there when my Dad passed away, and now I'm here seeing her rest. I'll see you again Pastor Diane. Enjoy the presence of God in eternal rest. I will miss you greatly.

Jeanne Smith Gatto

I am so sad to hear of Diane's passing. I used to bring my Girl Scout troop and my kids with their friends to Hope for the future to make sandwiches and help in the warehouse. Diane was very dedicated to helping those in need. I remember when they had the fire at the warehouse and through many miracles she was able to rebuild it and continue serving the community. Diane thank you for teaching the kids about community service and making good choices. You will truly be missed as an Icon in the community and a helping hand for those who needed it. Rest In Peace.

Tito Santiago

As a teen, Pastor Diane pursued me with a Christ-like relentlessness and tough love. Little did she know that her life impacted and changed mine. I was unable to say, "thank you" and "good bye", but now with hope I say, "I'll see you soon". R.I.P warrior of Christ and lover of all people.

Mike Taff

Today I said goodbye to my dear friend. It wasn't a forever goodbye. I will see her when we are together in heaven I began my long road of ministry work with Pastor Diane Dunne and Hope For the Future Ministries back in 1997 working with the less fortunate. She showed me how to love God's children. She showed me that God put us here for something bigger than ourselves. If you would ever see Jesus in another human being it was Pastor Diane. While my heart is heavy today. Today is a happy day because she is with Jesus. And there is nothing happier than that. 'For I know the plans for you' declares the Lord, 'plans to give you a Hope and a Future.' Jer. 29:11

Amanda & Mike Dominguez-Oriundo

We lost more than just someone we loved. We lost someone who loved us more than we ever could love her back. May our lives reflect the love she gave and the example she set before us.



Going Forward Meet Drew Block

I want to introduce to you Drew Block. Drew has been a part of Hope For The Future for five years, primarily working behind the scenes at the warehouse. Whether the task was cleaning the kitchen, rotating the walk-in, or loading the vans for outreach, Drew has been there to assist Pastor Diane. During this time of transition, it is Drew who has a heart for this work, and is working towards a slow transfer from part-time, to full time. Without his service we could not have continued to operate these past few weeks. You will be hearing more from Drew as time passes. He and his wife, Frieda are looking forward to serve. Please keep them and all of us here at HFTF in your prayers for God's guidance and strength during this difficult time.



HELP MAKE THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON BRIGHT

Christmas Outreach Going Forward

With Thanksgiving just behind us we will be preparing for our Christmas Outreach to both Long Island and NYC with Turkeys, Hams, and all the fixings for a full nutritious meal for families to enjoy the Holiday. Along with this of course comes the need for toys for the children. Perhaps you can run a food drive or a toy drive. Perhaps you can sponsor a family for the holiday. With the challenges facing all of us this year, your help is especially appreciated. Thank you in advance for your support.



Enclosed, please find my contribution in the amount of:
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Special Tribute To Pastor Diane P. Dunne
July 11, 1954—October 30, 2020



Dear Friends,

My name is Pastor Deborah Mitchell. I have worked with Pastor Diane for almost 3 decades between our two ministries, Hope For The Future Ministries, and Love & Mercy Fellowship. We were closer than sisters, if that's possible to describe. This is the hardest letter I've ever had to write.

Here at HFTF we have labored hard to keep the vision going, even in the midst of the craziness of 2020, especially with such a lack of volunteers during the Covid outbreak. Food ministries have been busier than ever due to the unemployment and cut hours during the Shut-down. To think we would be facing the loss of our beloved founder and director was beyond anything we could have expected this year.

The passing of Pastor Diane was a personal heartbreak to me, as well as a shock to all of us. Even though she suffered from severe pain in her body, she was such a fighter that I often thought she would outlive me! Anyone who has ever worked side by side in the warehouse with her knew she was a work horse that would stop only when the job was done.

Thirty-three years ago pastor Diane went down to the Lower East Side with a push cart and 90 sandwiches to help the homeless. Little did she know that from such a humble beginning would grow a ministry that was truly beyond her. Ravi Zacharias once said, "A calling is simply God's shaping of your burden and beckoning you to your service to Him in the place and pursuit of His choosing." He chose Diane to walk through Tent City, as it was known back then, because of the homeless living in tents, and to burden and beckon her to labor in that vineyard for souls. And labor she did.

We recognize that these are some mighty big shoes to fill. She was a force to be reckoned with in many respects. However, I wanted to assure all of our partners that Hope For The Future is a ministry that will live beyond Pastor Diane's life, because the work itself was beyond her. Though of a necessity there may be that some changes, because none of us are Pastor Diane, let me assure you that the heart she had for this work will continue and live on.

The work has continued during this time, though not at full capacity as of yet, but as we regroup and come to grips with the change that has been thrust upon us, the work will continue. Going forward, we have a cook willing, a warehouse manager willing, a director willing. We need your continued support to be willing.

If ever there was the need for your generous, and continued support it is today. Every life that was able to be helped through Pastor Diane's vision has not only been credited to her heavenly account but to yours as well. Help us keep extending hope for the future for so many that are currently without it. Through your consistent prayers and help we can continue to make the difference in so many people's lives. May the Lord richly bless you.

Sincerely In His Service,

Pastor Deborah Mitchell