



# Is the *Light* on in Your Home?

Since learning about Bless Every Home at the 2018 SBC of Virginia Annual Homecoming, Larry and Sue Mason, members of **Salem Baptist Church** in Crozier, have embraced this outreach ministry tool. Residents of a rural community in Goochland County, the Masons “adopted” their neighbors through Bless Every Home. Larry and Sue signed up as “lights” to receive daily prayer prompt emails with lists of neighbors in order to broaden their reach and pray for more families.

Larry explained, “Bless Every Home helps us to be much more intentional about keeping up with our neighbors. We now look for specific ways to pray for each family/individual and opportunities to minister to their needs in such a way

that it will lead to Gospel conversations. Our heart is to see God work the miracle of salvation in the lives of each one of our neighbors.”

For the Masons, blessing their neighbors was and is not always easy. It certainly requires a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit’s leading, their obedience and sometimes sacrifice, and stepping out of their comfort zone by showing consistent, genuine care. Sometimes Larry would ask his wife to drop him off some three miles away so that he could walk and pray for his neighbors all the way back home. He would simply pray, “Lord, these people need You!”

The Lord has certainly been faithful and blessed their persistence. Read the Masons’ testimonies of how the Lord has been at work in three of their neighbors’ lives.

Larry and Sue Mason



## **THE ANNOYED NEIGHBOR:**

*One neighbor became annoyed with us because our dog was barking during the day while our shift worker neighbor was trying to sleep. The confrontation was*

considerably heated, and I was led to speak the truth in love. Of course, I was concerned that this would be a roadblock to us ever talking to him about spiritual matters. So, I kept walking by his house and would pray, "Lord, he needs You!" Several months later while the neighbor was mowing his lawn one day, he motioned to me to come closer. He shared with me that he was saved and recently baptized and was attending another local SBCV church. We have been friends since and help each other out when needed.

## **THE SICK NEIGHBOR:**

We knew a couple on our Bless Every Home list as acquaintances and had invited them to join us at church several times. However, there was a definite wall against attending church or talking about spiritual matters. The husband was a quiet and gentle man, but the wife was much more guarded. When the husband was diagnosed with neck cancer, it was a time for us to reach out to them. I readily identified with him because I had experienced the same type of cancer seven years earlier. We knew firsthand the journey the couple was beginning. So, through weekly visits and telephone calls, we walked with them on their journey. During each contact, we prayed for the opportunity to share Jesus with both, but the wife was not interested and would say so. The day before his surgery, I called to see if I could visit, and I told his wife this was a visit to talk about spiritual matters. He was heavily medicated, alert but not talking. I told him I came to pray with him before his surgery and he nodded, "Yes." I prayed and

he seemed to be more at peace. I learned at the time that he was saved and a member of a local SBCV church. During this visit, his wife mentioned nothing about her church experience. Following his surgery, he was in the hospital and nursing home. He lost his ability to talk and eat. With his wife by his side, Sue and I cared for them by taking care-baskets weekly to the nursing home and, with two other neighbors, we took care of their yard and property. Sadly, he passed away. His funeral was held in his home church, and I was asked to give the benediction. Our friendship with his wife has become more like family today. In this growing relationship, she has shared about the wall she had built up against the church and God. In her previous marriage, her four-year-old daughter had died of leukemia and she could never understand why God had allowed such a tragic thing to happen. She never had more children. But with tears and prayers, she is beginning to heal. She has started attending the church where her husband was a member and has gotten involved by preparing food for church activities. Praise the Lord!

## **THE SAD NEIGHBOR:**

We had been friends with the neighbors directly across the street for some time, but it was more of a surface friendship than a spiritual kinship. We talk about the Lord openly and often, so they knew our beliefs and spiritual disciplines. Each morning I get up at 5:00 AM to read my Bible and pray in the front living room. As I turned on the lamp in the front window one morning, my phone rang, and it was my neighbor

from across the street. She said to me, "Larry, I was waiting for your light to come on." My husband passed away during the night, and I was wondering if you could go with me to the funeral home to help make arrangements. Of course, I did, and we took the opportunity to minister to yet another widow neighbor. Her health also began to decline, and the Lord called her home too. An alcoholic daughter had come to live with her mom and now remains in the house. This was a situation we were not thrilled about, yet the Lord would have us to minister to her too. Sue will make and take her soup and transport her to the doctor and the grocery store. When we heard a knock at our front door, we were surprised to find that she had managed to cross the street and was excited to tell us that she had stopped drinking a month ago. Our prayer is that she will be able to withstand this addiction with the Lord's help.

The Masons are a lighthouse in their community. Bless Every Home has led them to be more fervent in prayer, to be willing to care for neighbors when needs arise, and to have an urgency to share the Good News of the Gospel. What an example they are for us all! But the real question we must ask ourselves is **how many of our neighbors are waiting for our light to come on? ■**

### **RESOURCE:**

Learn how to become a lighthouse in your community, just like the Masons. Visit:

 [sbcv.org/blesseveryhome](https://sbcv.org/blesseveryhome)

