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Dear Friends of Hinton Rural Life Center,

I'll be honest. There have been many times this year when we've been disheartened, discouraged, and disappointed because of the impact of the pandemic on our ministries and work here at Hinton. And, because we serve and work with individuals, groups, churches, and organizations both locally and regionally, this impact has affected our neighbors waiting for much-needed home repairs, as well as the mission teams, retreat groups, and individuals from across the Southeast and beyond who come to Hinton to retreat, reflect, renew, and to serve. The biggest hits:

- Spring and summer Conference Center/lodging **revenue dropped to almost nothing**; loss of group bookings for lodging and events continue to impact our fall revenue and, likely, winter and spring 2021.
- Of the 800+ summer mission team participants expected, we had 25 total.
- Due to understandable **volunteer shortages**, many on our list for home repairs have had to wait longer than expected for repairs or for wheelchair ramps to be built. Many will be waiting until next summer. We've also noticed an increase in requests, and the types of repairs seem to be more serious.
- Anticipated grants to support new ministries and help with operational costs were not received, with grantors awarding more funds to projects meeting immediate needs. Again, this is understandable.
- **We had to lay off 33% of our staff**, with those remaining working reduced hours and/or pay reductions.

At times when it feels overwhelming and even scary, there's a Bible verse that often comes to my mind. It gives me hope.

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

I believe – as I'm sure you do – that God has a purpose for Hinton Rural Life Center and calls us to do good work. To love and help our neighbors in need. To serve our community. To call and equip clergy, congregations, and others to do God's good and transforming work.

Here are ways that I've seen God at work for good during these difficult times:

- **The generosity of others.** Hinton's Spring Appeal raised \$35,000 – almost four times more than 2019's. Grantors offered flexibility in the use of funds. Individual, church, and group donations are coming in steadily. THANK YOU!
- **Greater creativity; expanding our reach.** We now offer virtual options with our mission outreach and training ministries. We're doing things in new ways and are reaching new people. These include virtual training for summer missions staff, virtual summer mission outreach participation, webinars on rural ministry in pandemic times; virtual Mental Health First Aid training, and virtual youth leadership training events. **To hear how one of our summer college staff, Alexis, was challenged and impacted, view her brief video at www.hintoncenter.org/donate.**
- **The passion of volunteers and new mission opportunities.** Local volunteers and volunteer groups, such as our Woodchuckers and United Methodist NOMADS, enable Hinton to continue serving our neighbors in need and to provide radical hospitality for guests. Adapting to the pandemic has inspired new mission opportunities, such as Family Mission Getaways, as families are coming to Hinton to spend time together AND to serve.

There are many ways you can help Hinton continue to do God's good work. Please let us know by completing and returning the online Response Card at www.hintoncenter.org/donate or call us by December 1st.

Thank you for all the ways that we can "work together" with God, for good.


Jacqueline K. Gottlieb, CEO and President

*How do you see God
"working for good"?
Will you help Hinton
be a part of God's
ongoing work?*