



The Lamp newsletter

June 2018

A LIGHT UNTO YOUR PATH

IN THIS ISSUE

Better Together

by Jessica Jemmott

The past few months have been just as enjoyable for us at *The Lamp*, as it has been impactful for various communities. This second issue of The Lamp newsletter will provide insight into the various partnerships and connections that we have made to build community, embrace the arts, spread mental health awareness, and increase food security one step at a time - as we embrace the collaborative idea that we are *#BetterTogether*.

A special THANK YOU to everyone who has donated to The Lamp. Your support aids us in fulfilling our mission as a pay-what-you-can Community Café and Life Center!

"One can make an impact, but together we can change the world!" – Founder, Jessica Jemmott

Be A Lamp!

Our Mission: *"To be a light unto the path of every individual while building the community through holistic wellness, one step at a time."*

Our Purpose: *To provide unity and holistic approach to overall wellness mind, body, and spirit while impacting the local/global community with food security, mental health awareness, cultural & expressive arts, and diverse therapies.*

Our Slogan: *A Lamp unto Your Path*



Community Building

We are excited to partner with the Ghana's hotspot and amazing café Tea Baa, this July, as we travel to Accra!

[More Info](#)

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Serving Others

Initiated in April to serve the community, *Lamp Lunch* has become a weekly service in efforts to build community and decrease hunger.

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"...I will also make you a light of the Nations, so that My salvation will reach the ends of the earth."
Isaiah 49:6

Everyone Deserves Good Food

We are excited to inform you that The Lamp has recently been invited to travel to Africa in **JULY 2018** to share our pay-what-you-can Café & Life Center model with Tea Baa, one of the top cafes in Accra, Ghana whose food is sourced from a local ecofriendly farm.

The Lamp's desire is to improve food security by providing accessibility and increased dining choices. Despite many societal norms, we believe that 'everyone deserves good food'. It is unfortunate that sustainable and handcrafted meals are not accessible to all, leaving options such as overly processed foods as the daily nutrition for individuals and families. As a pay-what-you-can cafe we are the solution to that disconnect. As a cafe under the *One World Everybody Eats* network, the other 60+ cafes are proof that the model works. What makes us unique is the other facets to The Lamp including mental health assistance and advocacy for the arts.

While in Ghana, The Lamp will assist in hosting a Pop-Up brunch with their beloved creative menu and our suggested donation payment method. We will also collaborate on an event that celebrates the **arts** while implementing **mental health awareness** for the community to decrease stigma and discrimination. Our goal is to shine a light on various communities who benefit from our mission and model to feed the body, mind, and spirit.



According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, it was reported in 2016 that "hunger costs Ghana Ghc \$4.6 billion per year." Their reports find that each year, West African countries are faced with reoccurring food security and nutritional crisis. Together Tea Baa and The Lamp will provide food security for some who would not otherwise be able to fully pay for their gourmet meals; while also creating opportunity for individuals within the community to get involved by paying above the suggested donation, to cover the cost of individual another in need.

It is reported that the doctor to patient ration in Ghana for individuals receiving mental health treatment is 1:1.7 million. With an

estimated treatment gap of 98% due to a shortage in resources [for every 100 individuals suffering from mental illness, only 2 possibly have access to treatment] (Scientect), Tea Baa's owner Dedo Azu, found herself immediately compelled to partner with The Lamp as an opportunity to extend our model while allowing Tea Baa to become a gathering place for community and shedding light on various needs, as Ghana aims to increase community based treatments including talk therapy and behavior modification.



Our Founder, Jessica Jemmott, volunteering at The Brass Hat Café, a community café serving free meals for all in Westminster, MD.

We Need YOU!!

While we don't have much time, we want to invite you to assist us in expanding our mission and raising the funds for our team's travel expenses. Tea Baa has committed to playing an active role in the community by implementing their resources to host The Lamp.

Other cafes in our pay-what-you-can network report that most popup event attendees often pay above the suggested donation price, which covers the cost of food for those who pay less. Together, we are looking forward to collaborating with various mental health providers, community leaders,

influencers, and artists to ensure that these events are a success toward our mission to continue to build community, increase food security, and implement mental health awareness while being a light to nations - because 'Everyone Deserves Good Food.'

[Click to DONATE](#)

check Tea Baa out on Instagram: [@teabaagh](#)



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



You Are Not Alone

The Lamp joined several organizations to spread awareness of mental health during the month of May. As a mental health professionals and advocates, it is our desire to increase holistic health and build support for everyone – including the [helpers](#)!



Food insecurity vs wholeness

A poor diet not only negatively impacts physical health, but also impairs mental and behavioral health at every stage of life.

FAST FACTS

43.8 mil

43.8 million 1 in 5 Adults will experience mental health related illnesses in a year, while 1 in 5 children have a current diagnosis or will have experienced mental health disorder in a given year

45%

45% of the homeless population have a history of mental illness diagnosis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on The Lamp or how you can partner with us go to bealamp.org or contact us

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU
info@bealamp.org



The Lamp directors and volunteers served over 100 in Westminster, MD while celebrating The Brass Hat Café 1-year anniversary of feeding the community.

...but together, WE can change the world!

The Lamp team has been busy since our last newsletter! We now have an informative and interactive [website](#) and social media presence, to stay connected with you as we continue to build our community. We are also excited to share that we have made two very significant partnerships to fulfill the purpose and each facet of The Lamp. It is with great pleasure that we announce our partnership with **Life Choice Counseling Center (LCCC)** as well as **One World Everybody Eats**.

The Lamp and Life Choice Counseling Center are connected as both a partnership and coworking space to provide professional counseling services and life coaching into our daily program. In doing so, we not only meet a need in our immediate community but also by filling a gap in the state of Virginia. By partnering with LCCC, we are expanding our community to be a part of individual change which drastically affects generational transformation. Check out our [site](#) on what you can look forward to seeing and experiencing through The Lamp and LCCC partnership.



The Lamp is proud to serve alongside the growing number of pay-what-you-can cafés within the global One World Everybody Eats network.

Patrons of the pay-what-you-can café:

- Pay what you can afford.
- Pay the suggested donation.
- Pay suggested donation, plus an extra donation.
- Pay specifically for someone else's full meal.
- Pay by volunteering with us.



View [video](#) of our mentor Denise Cerreta and 2017 James Beard Humanitarian Award Recipient, discussing the OWEE organization.

Lamp Lunch

Get used to hearing us say "Everyone Deserves Good Food" because at The Lamp, that is what we believe. While we are working diligently to gain the necessary financial support and sponsorship to find a location to call home and open our doors in Prince William County, The Lamp has begun to make an impact in the community through our weekly Lamp Lunch which launched in April.



Every Thursday, we prepare a creative, delicious, and healthy homestyle meal for community members who may not have accessibility to meals such as the ones provided. Through funding and in-kind donations, we have the privilege of serving Lamp Lunch in insulated lunch totes to protect the temperature of the food and provide each meal with care and dignity.



Lamp lunch has provided us with the opportunity to serve and connect with

some amazing people that many may pass by daily. Lamp Lunch is beyond serving a meal, rather it's about **connection, conversation, and compassion** – what we hope to see and desire to embrace at our future community table "The Gathering Place."



Our Lamp Lunch meals have included sandwiches and entrees such as: Thai Hummus Wraps with homemade Peanut Sauce, Hand Rolled Potato Gnocchi with Tomato Basil Sauce and Garlic Bread, Jerk Chicken & Plantains, scratch made Olive Oil Banana Bread along with sides including fresh fruit, snack/dessert, and an ice-cold bottle of water.



We look forward to partnering with community members who are interested in supporting Lamp Lunch as well as support for meeting our goals.

If you would like to support Lamp Lunch with monetary contributions or in-kind donations, email us at info@bealamp.org

"I want to be a blessing to people like you, who are a blessing to others"



WHEN THE SERVED SERVES

Today's community #lamplunch was served to a group of business men who stand outside for several hours each day waiting for someone to request their manual services.

While everyone was enjoying their lunch, I had the amazing opportunity to engage with Juan and Noel to share about The Lamp and our pay-what-you-can cafe model.

They were so intrigued by our work and compassion for others that they verbally dedicated any services that we need moving forward as a donation towards our mission,

Juan stated "I want to be a blessing to people like you, who are a blessing to others" 🙏

Fight for Freedom DMV

According to the International Justice Mission, more than 40 million individuals worldwide are victim to Modern Day slavery. Here in the US, we recognize January as *National Human Trafficking Awareness Month*. With The Lamp's mission aiming to be a light in darkness, we were honored to partner with **Mona's House** (Buffalo, NY) to bring various field experts, advocates and artists together to enlighten the community and spread awareness of the alarming trends in our own backyards. We collaborated with an amazing group of extremely knowledgeable and talented organizations and individuals including NOVA HTI, International Justice Mission (IJM), Polaris, Effective Communications Strategies, Inc, RIJI Green, the MOSAIC Theater Company along with an internationally respected spoken word artist, award-winning musicians and performance artists, as well as a local visual artist who painted an auction piece throughout the duration of the event.

After the screening of an intense film titled **BOUND**, we heard an emotionally charged plea for everyone's responsibility to no longer turn a blind eye to this ongoing tragedy in our country from the Founder of Mona's House and modern-day abolitionist, Kelly Diane. One of the amazing things about Mona's House is that although located in Buffalo, NY there are Mona's Groups being initiated nation-wide to support women who have been victim to human trafficking or have worked within the sex industry with their goal of providing a safe place for women to learn, heal, and grow.

For more info on Mona's House and Mona's Group visit their website



Jordan Labbe – Fight for Freedom DMV's Featured Artist and Performer



The Brokenness, The Beauty

By Jordan Labbe

I have been captivated by the sound of Rivers.
I see them as they rush down mountaintops and into dry valleys.
The connectivity of their veins that stretch across space
has met with my eyes, time and time again.

There is medicine in this picture of togetherness.
There is healing in the waters that we embody.
There are soul-dreams of holding the air with our hands—
pictures of human essence, flowing from within.

I too, have joined in this process of this journeying, and healing—
Where I listen with intent to the sound of escape.
Alone in a space where glory speaks
clear words of divine artistry, and traces outlines of grace
with pens that are mercy-full.

Day to day we are witnesses
of a spirit-filled system that pervades our hearts with freedom.

There is a three stand formation
that breaks a cycle of depravity, and brings clarity.

Like moving earth on land and in the body,
we are change and reparation in motion.

Green is no longer as appealing, and instead the vastness of blue
calls out—

Saying,
Love is beauty. But right now, it rains down like a perfect storm.
You can hear it falling.
Breathing breath into what is dead.
Breaking chains and healing what is broken – taking back what has
been stolen.
Love, is going to break what needs to be broken, but rebuild it in the
very same motion.

Better Together

Fight for Freedom DMV

The Lamp partnered with Mona's House of Buffalo, NY and The Zoe Center Ashburn, VA to bring together a host of field experts, advocates, artists and performers, and film screening to raise awareness, educate the public, and ignite change for human trafficking and how it impacts our neighborhoods. For more information on how you can make an impact in your community as an advocate through Mona's Groups go to

<https://www.projectmonashouse.com/mona-s-group>



Community Day

The Brass Hat Café - Westminster, MD

The Lamp partnered with The Brass Hat Café during their 1-year anniversary celebration by serving over 100 diners and community members with one of our very own directors, Nina Christian and a host of volunteers. We are honored to support the work that Nina is doing to #BeALamp and increase food security in Maryland.



Free Listening

"We Believe People Need to be Heard. So...We're Here to Listen."

The Lamp partnered with Urban Confessional by joining many nations on the mission to provide non-judgmental, compassionate listening to the world during Free Listening Day. "A piece of cardboard is all it takes to bring people together. Something so small. Something most of us throw away. What will you use to change the world?"

Empower Future Leaders

The Lamp was invited to host the post-film discussion in Lynchburg, VA with the local youth who attended a private screening of Black Panther in support of The Listening Inc.'s Freedom Schools.



Help for Helpers

by Brittney S. George

I read a book* recently about how community helpers are susceptible to vicarious (meaning, indirect) trauma due to being in close proximity to others trauma and mental health needs for an extended period of time. Completely rocked my way of thinking about my job as a therapist and the importance of a helper receiving adequate support.

My ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) score is 2 (Find out more about this scale at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>). Other than grief/loss through divorce and familial death and growing up in a culture of racial microaggressions and systemic racism, I consider myself one of the lucky ones when it comes to Trauma.

So, what does it mean when I find myself wanting to avoid my clients, when I battle anxiety and irritability on a daily basis, or experience a steady decline in passion and purpose connected with my role as a therapist/healer...especially since there are no other personal traumas to correlate to my symptoms? It could mean that I'm experiencing compassion fatigue, better known as vicarious trauma or secondary traumatization.

I completed an informal poll on social media recently, asking those who consider themselves "helpers", what they needed most. The answers varied, but I did notice a pattern: the themes of "rest", "support", and "increased resources to do my job effectively" tended to show up more often. Research I've found correlated these deficits with the likelihood of helpers experiencing vicarious trauma.

Working in community mental health is especially draining/challenging. The expectations often focus on maximizing quantity of services provided, rather than providing adequate training and daily support to provide quality services. "How can we get the most out of our helpers?" rather than "How can we inspire the best within our helpers?" is often the agenda. We are encouraged to be more fiscally minded in order to strategize service to a maximum amount of people. But, what I've found is that this often does a disservice to clients in need, essentially, due to high employee turnover (overworked employees do not stay at the same agency and clients may have an average of 2-3 different people performing

the same role), and high levels of absenteeism (because helpers are sick more often or use more mental health days due to burnout). The culture within these types of agencies cause a deep divide between helpers; a face-off occurs between those who value competitiveness and the bottom line and those who value balance and feeling purposeful over feeling useful. It's possible that the former will thrive and the latter will silently suffer.

But, this isn't just about my job. It's a common occurrence across our entire country; stemming from a struggling system of mental health/human services that is called upon to constantly prove itself. Insurance companies and legal entities look for value in what we offer to people from the gate; often refusing to reimburse providers if persons having never met either therapist or client are not convinced that this treatment is worth the cost. Therapists at private practices are left to become like salesmen before insurance boards; "selling" themselves in order to be credentialed. This trickles down into how supervisors see value in their supervisees within agencies. Those who bill more are automatically seen as more valuable over the employee who bill below average. Again, quantity is preferred over quality.

Meanwhile, the people around us continue to struggle. We see after tragedies, such as school shootings and drug crises that helpers are essential to the thriving of our communities. We are the white blood cells of the community's body, as it were. But imagine the priorities shifting every few years (or even within each fiscal year), where helpers are never sure if they are truly valued – both within their perspective agencies and from the viewpoints of local, state, and federal governments. We are now in a country where it is more feasible to spend money to arm teachers with weapons, rather than ensuring they have adequate financial support to purchase classroom materials. The priorities are indeed different, and the rate of this shift is unsettling.

So, that leaves me with an inner conundrum; how hard should I work to change the narrative? Where can I find a better sense of balance? And what, if anything, can I do to better assist the helpers that will arrive after me? The ones that desire, albeit naively, to change the world for the better? I believe my burden lies, not just in changing my own situation, but to alter the culture so that future helpers may not struggle so frequently. EAP support (that's mental health support found with most benefited

positions), though typically suggested for helpers with internal struggles, doesn't seem to help employees shoulder the daily load of helping. There is a problem with work culture.

Then there are our immediate supervisors, who are more overloaded than we are, often provide little or inconsistent encouragement and are left to be our administrative monitors. Even the most well-meaning ones will have an "open door policy" that accepts questions and will give guidance to supervisees that ask, and yet fail to provide a balanced environment of noticing strengths and actively building weaknesses of their employees. We are supported by way of checking off boxes, compliance with paperwork requirements and are monitored so not to steal company time and resources. The term "gatekeeper" has taken on a different meaning, because what it means to supervise a mental health worker has differing priorities. For example, resident counselors are forced to have two different supervisors during residency – one is more administrative and required for your employment at your place of residency and another for guidance with clinical skills. You are lucky if they are one in the same.

I have had the supreme privilege of having amazing licensed/unlicensed therapists, professors, colleagues and peers that have guided me through this road to becoming a better therapist, and I can say without a doubt that it was their impartations that aided me developing my own theoretical orientation, uniqueness, and competencies. From my experience, it is clear where building quality helpers is a high priority and where it is secondary...or even nonexistent.

So, if you have accepted the call to be a helper (I wrote from the perspective of a mental health therapist, but you may be a caregiver for the elderly, a pediatric nurse, or run a community-based non-profit), I encourage you to examine the culture around you. Find resources, programs, and relationships that actively BUILD YOU UP. Ask yourself what/who replenishes you and find a way to make that a priority. Out of many others in our communities, YOU are needed most. And there is a mandate for helpers to be the first to seek health and wholeness. We are all works in progress, of course, but we can show our communities what it means to live out true resiliency.

* Trauma Stewardship by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky and Connie Burk

Journey Within My Soul

By Sarah Goshorn

Up and coming Christian artist, Justin Gambino, recently had his album release party at The Clarion at the Brazosport College in Lake Jackson, Texas. His album, *Journey Within My Soul*, reflects tones and emotions from the past 6 years of his journey pursuing music as a career. His music genre reflects acoustic, folk, and rock tones. The songs are written to inspire and connect with believers and non-believers alike.

I had the honor to represent The Lamp while attending his album release party for *Journey Within My Soul*. This was no ordinary release party, God laid it on his heart to provide this event, entirely free to the public. Thousands of his personal income was invested into the whole event. He walked in obedience to the calling that God laid on his heart and it was not in vain. Even though there were moments that came against him, with rescheduling the whole event to other minor details, God's promise was fulfilled.

To be a part of the intimate details that go into an event like this, was an experience I will never forget. Justin's wife, Ashley Gambino, effortlessly conducted the flow of the event. From preparing a space for the guest performers, DJs, radio stations, merchandise, videographer to the photographer and all the fine details in between.

The event started off with Whitlee Casey opening and Jason Fowler followed with original and worship songs. The stage was set, the lights were low and the band started playing, this is the moment that has been in preparation for 6 years. Justin walks onto the stage, all the hard work and dedication led up to this very moment, is finally coming forth. For the next two hours the crowd worshipped and celebrated with Justin, for this was not the end but the beginning stages of the harvest God has promised.

If you would like to keep up with Justin's journey, you can follow him on Facebook, Instagram and at www.justingambino.com.

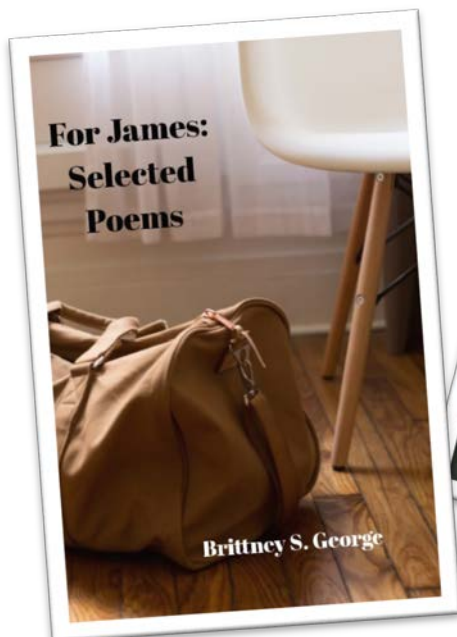
All his tour information is up on his social media accounts. If he comes to your town, check out his show and be prepared to sit back and enjoy a night of songs birthed straight from his heart.



National Poetry Month

In recognition of National Poetry Month (April) we hosted an online giveaway of a book of poetry titled, *For James: Selected Poems*, written by one of our very own directors Brittney S. George. Congratulations to the winner Ashley N.!

We honor every self-proclaimed and/or acclaimed poet, and we encourage you to KEEP WRITING...others are depending on you!



SUPPORT OUR CAMPAIGN

The Lamp's desire is to improve food security by providing accessibility and increased dining choices. Despite many societal norms, we believe that 'everyone deserves good food'. It is unfortunate that sustainable and handcrafted meals are not accessible to all, leaving options such as overly processed foods as the daily nutrition for individuals and families. As a pay-what-you-can cafe we are the solution to that disconnect. As a cafe under the *One World Everybody Eats* network, the other 60+ cafes are proof that the model works. What makes us unique is the other facets to The Lamp including mental health assistance and advocacy for the arts. Help us share our model with the thriving community of Accra, Ghana this July by [donating](#) towards our efforts!



Everyone Deserves Good Food

Help us increase food Security & Affective Mental Health Awareness this JULY in Accra, Ghana.

Expected Fund Raised: \$6,500

		
<p>The collected funds covers travel expenses for The Lamp team to partner with Tea Baa Cafe in Accra implement our model to increase food security and mental health awareness.</p>	<p>"Hunger costs Ghana Ghc \$4.6 billion per year." Reports find that each year, West African countries are faced with reoccurring food security and nutritional crisis.</p>	<p>With an estimated treatment gap of 98% due to a shortage in resources for individuals with mental health illness, Tea Baa has partnered with The Lamp to increase community awareness</p>

For More Info, go to bealamp.org

You Can Have A #REALCONVO With Me

As we closed out #mentalhealthawarenessmonth, we would like to spotlight a very special campaign originated by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

We emphatically believe in this mission: to have a #RealConvo with anyone who needs it regarding their mental health. We pledge to be intentional with our time, attention, and resources; our desire is to be available and aware to the needs of our community, friends, and family. We are the ones we have been waiting for. Will you join us and the AFSP in this pledge? #bealamp
#youarenotalone
#mentalhealthawareness



Special Thanks...

- BJs Wholesale Club of Woodbridge
- Staples of Woodbridge
- The Zoe Center
- The Salvation Army, Prince William County
- NOVA HTI
- International Justice Mission
- Polaris
- Effective Communication Strategies, Inc.
- Healing Hands Christian Ministry
- Cokesbury United Methodist Church
- Holiness Tabernacle
- Norview Community Center
- Dulles Embassy Suites
- One World Everybody Eats

The Lamp
newsletter

Woodbridge VA, 22193

bealamp.org