

Loaves and Fishes



Ministries

**Emergency Overnight
Shelter and Services**

831 N. Sycamore St.
(Corner of Oakland & Sycamore)
Lansing, MI 48906

**Transitional Housing
and Services**

Zacchaeus House for women
with children
Luke's House for single men

Telephone (517) 482-2099 Fax (517) 482-6848

loavesandfisheslansing.org

Fall 2013



**We reflect in gratitude...but the
Ever-growing needs go on**

By Jim Veurink, Core Community Member

"While offering up to God those ascriptions justly due to Him...with humble penitence, we commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners and sufferers in our lamentable civil strife..."
~Abe Lincoln

May Every Day be One of Thanksgiving

Not long after the Jewish people had escaped the grips of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, they ran out of food that they had brought along with them. They began to grumble...recalling the meals they had when they were slaves.

God, in his graciousness rained down bread from heaven...manna for six days. God understood their need for security, and in his mercy, provided for their day to day needs. God provided. The manna came during a time of unimaginable vulnerability for the Israelites who were living on the edge, and were in a state of transience and flight.

AND Today, God still provides...while we lament our government's unwillingness, stubbornness, and increasing incivility toward caring for the least among us. We at Loaves and Fishes Ministries remind ourselves that God, *in surprising graciousness, through your generosity*, fills our stomachs, our souls, and compels us who serve the poor to use our resources as a kind of 'holy communion' ready to feed and serve those who are transient and live day-to-day in quest of a Promised Land – stability with a roof over their heads, food for their bellies, security for their children, jobs and health care for all.

This Thanksgiving, may ALL OF US who have experienced the extravagant generosity given by God, be inspired with equally extravagant generosity to support the ministry of Loaves and Fishes to those who are living on the edge. Please send your Thanksgiving Gift in the enclosed envelope so we can continue to lovingly respond to the ever-growing needs of the poor who daily come to us for help.

May God Bless YOU!

**In Thanksgiving to
building repair donors**

FACT: L&F Ministries is at a \$50,000+ shortfall in our 2013 OPERATIONAL income, due to the economic instability which has caused serious reductions in grants and personal donations. So we have had no money for major repairs or other needed purchases.

In light of this, we are enormously grateful to have received very generous responses to our appeal for help in doing major repairs of our 3 aging shelter homes – to insure the health and safety of our guests, staff and volunteers.

Rotary Club Grant

The Rotary Club of Lansing has generously given L&F a \$21,000 grant to fund needed repairs and replacements including: the sewer system overhaul plus replacement of mattresses in the Overnight Shelter; a new furnace for Zacchaeus House; the repair and replacement of siding and windows in Luke's House; a dish sanitizer for the Gathering Place kitchen.

Other Donor Gifts

In response to our 2013 summer newsletter article, *"Remember L&F when planning your charitable giving,"* we received generous donations from 2 donors totaling \$350.00 to remove and replace the outdoor steps at the Sycamore entrance of L&F Overnight Shelter.

OUR DEEP THANKS TO ALL

Homeless Awareness

By Erma Chastine, Director

October and November are significant times for the homeless and local communities. **On October 10th people around the world marked "World Homeless Day"** in many varied ways and changed the lives of homeless people in their local community. The concept of 'World Homeless Day' emerged from discussions between people working to respond to homelessness from various parts of the world. The inaugural of the day started in 2010. Since its founding, the Day has been observed in over 100 countries. The purpose of World Homeless Day is to draw attention to homeless and their needs. It provides the opportunity for local communities to get involved.

The month of November marks **"Homeless Awareness Month."** Every year, hundreds of thousands of American families become homeless, including more than 1.6 million children. **Children make up 60% of all people in homeless families.** Local communities mark the day with activities to educate communities about the plight of the homeless.

According to Phyllis Harrison, writer of The National Homeless Awareness Day petition to the United States Congress, **in any given year 3.5 million Americans will experience homelessness. About 16% of the homeless in the U.S. have severe chronic mental illness.** From the 1960's to the early 1980's 367,000 patients were released from mental institutions, and ended up homeless for lack of having anywhere to go. About 26% of the homeless population suffers from some form of drug or alcohol abuse.

So as we take comfort with our families this year at our Thanksgiving meals and all upcoming holidays, we can also take comfort in..."but for the grace of God there go I." **And let us remember that the scourge of homelessness is not just a day...or a month...for people experiencing homelessness.**

Let us remember that our manna of abundance has to be shared every day and every month of the year. It is our social duty to bless the homeless in any way God guides us...throughout the year.

Farewell & Much Gratitude to our Guest Advocate

Thank you, Mark!



It is with great sadness that L&F is saying good-bye to Mark Bonello as he takes on another position. In Mark's short time at L&F he was instrumental in improving our casework reporting to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

With his dedication and years of experience as a social worker, our guests became very successful in securing housing and work. Each year L&F's number of successful placements of our homeless guests improved. In fiscal year 2010/11 we had 38 people out of 201 leave for stable housing. In 2011/12 we had 56 people out of 190 leave for stable housing. In 2012/13 we had a 76% increase of guests going into stable housing. Thank you so much, Mark!

INTRODUCING New Facilities Managers

ANGHARAD MCGAUGHEY
Weekend Facility Manager



I am very excited to be the newest member of the L&F team! I have been waiting to find a job where I felt I would be making a difference in people's lives specifically in a positive manner. I am so glad to be involved in an atmosphere of helping and mutual empathy and team work. I assure you, I appreciate being able to have a job where I can make a difference in society.

AMY MORRIS
Weekday Facility Manager

I started out as L&F Weekend Facility Manager and recently transferred to the Weekday position. I come to L&F with a strong background of working within the Adult Foster Care system. It is my pleasure to work with the L&F staff and serve the homeless.



MOVING PAST HOMELESSNESS: Our Wall of Success Stories

ANNOUNCING: *In the Gathering Place dining room of Loaves and Fishes Ministries there is a "Wall of Success Stories" which illustrates those who have "Moved Past Homelessness." This special wall was created to introduce visitors to those we have served over the years. These stories honor the success of many guests and residents who lived in our shelter and transitional houses. We plan to feature one of these stories in each of our L&F newsletters for those of you who cannot come to the shelter to read them for yourselves. We trust that these stories will help to keep hope strong in all who support our ministry with prayer, volunteering time, talent and financial donations.*

Thank YOU for helping to make these successes possible!

Mark's Story

To put things into perspective, I am a 40 year old white male, heterosexual, no children, never married and grew up in East Lansing, in a middle to upper-class family. I first sought shelter and food following a collapse in my life, culminating from a 20 year bout with alcoholism. No job, no food, no shelter, limited family ties – just a desire to drink and stay warm. I only had 'street' knowledge and the clothes on my back. Some of the street knowledge that I picked up along the way taught me where to get food - generally from garbage cans and dumpsters at local restaurants. I sought shelter, in closed buildings on the MSU campus in stairwells and elevators. Warmer weather allowed me to stay outdoors, usually along the River Walk, in the woods with other homeless people.

A typical homeless day started with a need to use the bathroom and drink water. Locating a restaurant or gas station would take care of both of those needs and next the

alcohol. Thirty-five returnable cans would get me started with a pint of Vodka...and then another pint...(often only) to wake up the next day in jail or in the hospital, covered with bruises and with soiled clothes, with no clue of what had happened.

Those typical street days would turn into weeks, then to months and then into years. With God's guidance and with people willing to help me I was able to get off the streets. Without first 'getting off the bottle,' I knew there was little chance of getting back on my feet. I attended AA meetings. It was at the East Club where I first learned about Loaves and Fishes Ministries.

Thanks to the staff, volunteers and food providers I was able to get into a daily routine that has allowed me to continue daily meetings at AA, pursue employment, eat healthy meals, access local and state resources and once again smile and truly enjoy life and help others.

IN TRIBUTE: Much of the success of our guests can be attributed to our **Guest Advocate, Mark Bonello**, who has worked tirelessly with the "Mark" in this story, and with each and every person who has come to our shelter for the past few years. We can never thank him enough and will remember him forever in our hearts as part of our Loaves & Fishes family. *Mark, you have made a great difference, and these stories are as much a tribute to you as they are to the former L&F guests who wrote them. God go with you, dear Friend. ♥*

Consider including L&F Ministries in your Legacy Planning



831 N. Sycamore
Lansing, MI 48906

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lansing, MI
Permit No. 362

Core Community/Advisory Board

Carol Baker, Co-President
Barbara Curtis, Recorder/Secretary
Jack Finn
Vern Johnson, Financial Steward/Treasurer
Mary Spencer
Donna Stone
Mary Tardif
Joan Tirak, Co-President
Jim Veurink

L&F Staff

Erma Chastine, Director
Mark Bonello, Guest Advocate
Beth Young, Volunteer Coordinator
Amy Morris, Weekday Facilities Manager
Angharad McGaughey, Weekend Facilities Manager.

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



*Thanksgiving
Blessings*

For your kindness, compassion and love for the homeless poor...may God bless you.

For being our companions on the journey offering hope and safety to thousands who grace our shelter...may God bless you.

For your gifts of service and volunteerism with our L&F guests...may God bless you.

For your generous donations, helping us keep L&F going in these dire times...may God bless you.

For designating L&F as a recipient of memorial donations when your loved ones pass away...may God bless you.

For naming L&F in your wills, insuring that we will be able to serve the homeless for years to come...may God bless you.

For keeping L&F in your prayers, asking God to watch over us and guide us along right paths...may God bless you. So be it!