

**Emergency Overnight
Shelter and Services**

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

Loaves and Fishes



Ministries

**Transitional Housing
and Services**

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

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

Spring 2019



A story of healing that stirs the soul

"With a little love and respect, we just showed him that he's worth it."
By Jenny Leaf, Director

Loaves and Fishes Ministries has been providing shelter for our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness for 38 years. Much has changed since we first started – both here at Loaves and Fishes Ministries and with the issues surrounding poverty and homelessness on a broader scale. Throughout the years, we have worked hard to provide support and advocacy for our guests, as well as collaborated with other local agencies to coordinate services and work toward ending homelessness for all. *Without a doubt, the most important part of our work has been the respect and love we have for our guests.* We ask all who are at our table, whether staff, volunteers, or guests, to welcome one another and celebrate our strengths, build on our weaknesses, and learn from the wisdom and experiences of others. We do our best to provide a physical space that we feel will be welcoming for our guests. Many describe the shelter as "homelike," which to us means warm and safe - a place to decompress after a long day and recharge for tomorrow.

We welcomed a guest, Ronald, to the shelter. Ronald (*name changed to protect his identity*) had been homeless for quite some time and had mostly been staying on friends' couches for a night here, a night there. He came to Loaves and Fishes because he had some business to take care of before an impending court date. When he came to the shelter he was newly sober which was important because his date with the judge was due to a drunk driving arrest. He knew he would likely be sentenced to jail, so his goals while at the shelter focused on getting his affairs in order...knowing he might be in jail for a while.

The first few days at the shelter Ronald was withdrawn and kept mostly to himself, shoulders slouched and barely making eye contact. Our Guest Advocate, Teresa, met with him on a regular basis to see what we could do to help. The volunteers talked with him in the evenings – asked him about his day, made sure he got enough to eat at dinner. Ronald made progress on his goals and remained sober. After about a week, Ronald cracked a joke and we heard him laugh for the first time. He began to interact with the other guests. He would spend the morning chatting with Teresa and myself, telling us stories about his life...the good, the bad and the ugly.

Another week went by and we noticed he had become a leader amongst the guests. If anyone had a question about something, he would offer to help find the answer. If there was a disagreement between guests, he would step in and mediate. Ronald cracked more jokes and laughed full, roaring belly laughs. He walked with a bounce in his step, his head held high as he hurried around making coffee and getting ready to go for the day. On the morning of his court date, he was ready. He had taken care of everything he could think of. We said goodbye and asked him to keep in touch. *Imagine our surprise when he called us the next day from his daughter's house. He said that he had shared with the judge all that he had accomplished at Loaves and Fishes Ministries, and the judge didn't sentence him to jail after all.*

Months later I answered the phone and immediately recognized his voice and his big laugh. He wanted to let us know that he was still living with his daughter and continued to maintain his sobriety. He thanked us for having him over to our place and said he couldn't have done it without us. Well, we know that he did all the really difficult work.

With a little love and respect, we just showed him that he's worth it.

The Gift of Volunteering Transforms Our Guests and Ourselves

By Jim Veurink, Co-President, Core Community Board of Directors



Eric Schneidewind (*shown in photo*) has been a long term 6-10 pm volunteer with our shelter. In the mid-1990s, Eric's wife, Ann, embarked on a mission to find a fitting volunteer opportunity for their family. Through her thoughtful quest, she and Eric decided that Loaves and Fishes provided just the right setting that would serve our Lansing community and offer a meaningful experience for their family. And the Schneidewinds were intentional about serving our shelter as an entire family! During their 6-10 shifts, Eric and Ann included both of their sons with volunteering: one in elementary school and one in middle school.

Volunteering as a family unit was transformative for both children. Eric and Ann's sons never once protested spending an evening helping Mom and Dad at the shelter. Our residents, particularly the men, relished talking sports with the boys. Their presence was a highlight of the evening!

The sons' volunteer experiences have had a significant impact on their lives as well. Eric believes that no number of dinner table discussions could substitute for the family's quality time at Loaves and Fishes Ministries. Eric added that both sons are now employed in meaningful professions serving others. One serves as a not-for-profit program manager for disenfranchised communities in sub-Saharan Africa. Their other son serves as a public high school teacher in North Carolina.

Through volunteering, Eric has found his life has been impacted as well. Though his dear wife Ann passed away nine years ago, he continues to make service at Loaves and Fishes a personal priority. Eric has had a fulfilling and distinguished career as an attorney specializing in renewable energy and recently, as national president of the Board of Directors of the AARP. However, Eric continues to find joy by listening to the stories of our guests during his evening volunteer stints.

Thank you, Eric, for sharing yourself and your family in service to our shelter!

**To join our L&F volunteer team, contact Beth Young at
voluteer@loavesandfisheslansing.org**

SEE COVER PAGE FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please consider helping to sustain L&F by:

1. using the enclosed donor envelope OR
2. make secure donations through our website at www.loavesandfisheslansing.org
Click on "Donate," then click the "Network for Good" button.



OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO



**ERIC SCHNEIDEWIND
and FAMILY!**

**WE HOLD ANN'S MEMORY
IN OUR HEARTS AND
PRAYERS.**

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL

"Gratitude" & "Need" Resounding themes at L&F

By Joan Tirak, Co-President,
Core Community Board of Directors

**"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
Which transfigures you and me."**

These stirring words from an old hymn are what come to mind as I contemplate the goodness of **ALL OF YOU** who have been such an integral part of our Loaves and Fishes Ministries family over the past many years.

IT IS YOU who have contributed so generously of your "time, talent and treasure"! Whether you donated \$1 or thousands of dollars, **IT IS YOU** who have helped to keep our doors open to our sisters and brothers experiencing homelessness over the past 38 years. Yes! It has been that long! And we plan on sustaining our ministry long into the future...until the time when our social structures benefit ALL God's people equally!

IT IS YOU who have given hours and hours (some of you spending years(!), volunteering with our guests, doing either the 6 pm to 10 pm OR the 10 pm to 7 am stints...showering them with the wideness of God's Mercy!

IT IS YOU who have shared your talents with us when we needed you to help with repairs, deep cleaning, gardening, snow blowing, shoveling, writing thank you letters, helping with fundraising and newsletter mailings, or serving on the Core Community Board of Directors.

Special Holiday Gratitude Goes to...

Lansing Air Traffic Controllers

...who once again generously "adopted" all the residents in our Zacchaeus' and Luke's transitional houses for Christmas...bringing an abundance JOY to all!

Mackinac Island Grand Hotel/Okemos Office

...which once again "adopted" the Emergency Overnight Shelter guests, bringing loads of gifts to brighten their souls...showing them the wideness of God's mercy!

St. Michael's MOM Group

...which annually brings a big donation of items from our "Wish List" for Christmas ~ an amazing gift of grace!

State of Michigan Vital Records

...annually drops off a Giant donation of Christmas "Wish List" items. They give us so much every year!

Mid-Michigan CPCU Society

...which chose L&F Ministries for their December charity. Mid-Michigan CPCU (Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriters) represents local members from different areas of the insurance industry, including underwriters, finance and IT, who generously donated \$2,303.00. A most welcome Christmas blessing!

ADOPT-a-project

All Numbers Rounded

Replace washer & dryer in the Emergency Shelter
COST - to be determined

Replace the furnace at Luke's Transitional House
for single men
COST- approximately \$2,300

Annual contract for Rose Pest Control for 3 houses
COST \$1,400.00

Annual budget for shelter residents' prescriptions,
I.D.'s, & transportation COST \$650.00

Annual child care budget so Zacchaeus House
moms can work or attend college
COST \$5,000.00

Donations for spring clean-up, landscaping &
planting flowers, creating a more welcoming and
relaxing place for moms with kids to come and sit
near the peace pole.

COST- to be determined



Other Options

~JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM (See pg. 4)

~INVITE L&F TO MAKE PRESENTATIONS
to organizations, schools or churches

~MAKE PERSONAL DONATIONS or donate in
honor of birthdays or memorials

**Contact Jenny Leaf, Director: 517-482-2099 or
loavesandfishes@voyager.net**



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Volunteer Appreciation Month!
*Our deepest gratitude to
ALL of our L&F volunteers.*
**"Blessed are the merciful, for mercy
shall be theirs." Matthew 5:7**

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



Volunteer Opportunities – please consider joining our team!



Evening Volunteer: Volunteering in the evening from 6-10 PM offers the opportunity to spend time with our guests. Part of your evening will be spent helping guests get settled when they arrive at L&F. Once dinner is served to the guests, you can sit down and enjoy dinner and lively conversation with the guests.

Overnight Volunteer: The Overnight Volunteer position is a sleep shift from 10 PM - 7:30 AM (8:30 AM on weekends and holidays). You will spend time with the guests until quiet time, from 11:00 PM - 6:30 AM. Part of this shift also includes making breakfast for the guests and tidying the kitchen afterwards.

Dinner Provider: What a great opportunity to try a new recipe! Dinner Providers buy the ingredients and prepare a complete nutritious dinner for 15, then deliver it to L&F by 6:30 PM. What a great way to help those experiencing homelessness!

Clerical Volunteer: The volunteer with clerical skills will always have a task waiting for them. Thank you cards are written to all of our donors. We send out newsletters to our volunteers each month and to our full group of support people three times a year. These are just a few ways you can help.

Yard & Maintenance Volunteer: L&F works to be a value to the community by maintaining its properties. If you like working with your hands, this is the place for you to volunteer. We have grass to mow, flowers to plant and snow to shovel. We also have minor repairs which have to be done both inside and out.

*For more information, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Beth Young at
volunteer@loavesandfisheslansing.org. To start the application to be a volunteer, please complete the
Request Volunteer Information form at https://www.loavesandfisheslansing.org/volunteer_info.php*