

**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 2016



Success Stories to Stir the Soul from our Director Jenny Leaf

We welcome the warmth and new growth that each springtime brings. As we look forward to the newness that surrounds us, let's take a moment to remember all

that our guests go through to survive the winter, as well as the spring, summer and fall. Loaves and Fishes Ministries is here to serve our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness. No matter the season, we offer a place for our guests to feel safe enough to gather their thoughts, make plans, and go forward with their own sense of newness and hope.

While not everyone is able to move into their own housing after they leave the shelter, we make sure that those who aren't able to find affordable housing can celebrate other successes and progress they make during their stay with us. We would like to share some recent success stories!

(Names were changed to protect their identities.)

"Sally" came to the shelter after living in an abandoned house for over three weeks. While she was here she was able to sign up for subsidized housing programs and gather resources and referrals to various programs in the community. It had been difficult for Sally to access other programs because she was constantly focusing on staying safe and surviving. She was also able to use the shelter as a mailing address while she was here which helped her to follow through on assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services. Sally was unable to find permanent housing during her stay with us but she continued to return to pick up her mail. One day she was happy to report she received her subsidized housing voucher and moved into her own place. We haven't seen her since then because she now has her own address to get her mail.

"Monica" moved into Zacchaeus House (one of our long-term transitional programs) with her 3-year-old son toward the end of summer. She was pregnant with a due date shortly before Christmas. Shortly after she moved in, Monica was able to find employment and child care for her son. A week before Thanksgiving she went into labor and her second son was born, just over 4 weeks early. Thankfully baby and mama were just fine and both came home three days after he was born. Monica and her children used the time she was off of work to bond as a family of three, and she was able to access housing assistance resources. By the time she returned to work, her name had come up on a subsidized housing list and she was able to locate safe and affordable housing. After an eight month stay at Zacchaeus House, Monica obtained and maintained full-time employment, paid the minimal program fee every month, added a beautiful family member, and located and moved her family into their own apartment.

"Joe" stayed at the shelter for two weeks and while he was here, he was able to apply for subsidized housing programs available for people experiencing homelessness. The Guest Advocate was able to help Joe obtain the various documents he needed for these housing applications, such as identification, birth certificate, and proof of homelessness. With all of his documentation and his application complete, he was placed on a waiting list. Eight months later, Joe returned to the shelter because his name finally came up on the waiting list. During his second stay, the Guest Advocate helped him turn in yet another batch of documentation so he could receive his housing voucher and then helped him find a landlord. Joe was able to move from the shelter into his own affordable housing.

**IT TAKES MANY LOVING HEARTS TO DO THIS INSPIRING WORK
PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM**

For Where Two or Three are Gathered...



...there was much fellowship, laughter, and sharing, Sunday, April 24th, as our staff hosted a wonderful ice cream social celebrating the work that you, our volunteers, faithfully give to our shelter!

We heard a handful of stories of how some of you connected with Loaves and Fishes Ministries. Gayle shared that through his 1995 work providing disaster relief on the Gulf Coast, he found a personal need to continue supporting folks in need when he returned home. He found us and has been committed to the ministry as an overnight volunteer ever since!

Harriet connected with our shelter 18 years ago. When choosing a Lenten practice that year, she sought to reach out and experience a new spiritual dimension to her faith. When sharing the idea with her son, Darren, he said, "Not so fast, Mom! I want to join you!" Since then, both mother and son have worked the evening shift twice a month, Darren shepherds an overnight shift, and Harriet participates in meal preparation as well.

We also learned more of the work of St. Gerard's Social Committee that serves to reach out to the shelter. Connie, Kay, Harriet, Judy and MaryAnn are all "cooks extraordinaire" who provide wonderful evening meals to our guests. Connie learned of the work of the shelter from a brochure given to her from her mother.

St. Michael's of Grand Ledge has been active reaching out through their faith community to Loaves and Fishes. Joe shares with his church family, "Life begins when you reach the edge of your comfort zone." With that powerful call for action, Joe's message has touched the faith of many faithful volunteers like Pam and Donna. Pam shares, as a more recent volunteer, "If I don't start now, then when? This is important work for me now, not just at a later phase of my life when I will have more time."

Thank you, our precious volunteers, for sharing some of your many stories on the impact our ministry and guests have had in enriching your lives.

We are a blessed people!

April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month

Volunteers are a critical part of Loaves and Fishes Ministries. We are deeply grateful to all the women and men who so generously give of themselves by:

- Providing 2,920 service hours from 6-10 pm – getting meals ready, washing laundry and being present with our guests
- Providing 3,650 overnight service hours from 10 pm to 7 am – keeping our guests safe and preparing a hearty breakfast each morning
- Providing 5,475 individual evening meals for our guests
- Providing countless hours preparing mailing of Loaves and Fishes Newsletter (3x/yr) and of Crumbs and Minnow Volunteer Newsletter (12x/yr)
- Mowing lawns, raking leaves, shoveling walkways, keeping our grounds neat and tidy
- Cleaning attics and basements in our 3 shelter homes
- Preparing and sorting Christmas gifts for our guests
- Serving at Open House events
- Generously donating extra supplies when we are running low
- Providing skilled labor to keep our facilities up and running
- Serving on our Core Community Board of Directors

We could NOT do this without YOU!

Miracles really DO happen!

Last fall our L & F Ministries staff and Core Community Board of Directors (CCBD) found themselves trudging toward what looked like a HUGE RED budgetary close to 2015. Last November we had a \$54,954 budget shortfall, nearly mirroring our October shortfall. However, with the holiday giving, this shortfall miraculously eroded to \$13,648 by the end of December. In January 2016, we had an increase of revenue over expenses! Hearing this incredible news, we all breathed a collective sigh of relief and broke into huge smiles and cheers of gratitude. *Our conclusion? MIRACLES really DO happen!* We showed you the REAL FACTS in our fall newsletter. You read and responded with a generosity we could never have imagined.☺

Personal, Church, Civic Donors Our deepest gratitude to each of you who so generously donated to help create this incredible miracle! *Whether you gave a \$1, \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1000...or several thousand – ALL are precious gifts that made this MIRACLE possible!* We know that you annually receive hundreds of mail and online appeals due to the overwhelming humanitarian needs both here and around the world. So we know you had to do some deep prayerful soul searching to make the hard decision about which charities to fund. *In light of all this, we are MOST GRATEFUL that L&F Ministries merited your generous gifts...plus the encouragement we need to continue moving forward with our mission.*

Business Partners Our deepest gratitude to *all the businesses who so generously partnered with us*, not only helping with fundraising, but also helping us to get our Loaves and Fishes Ministries name before the public eye!

Creative Wellness in East Lansing named L&F Ministries as their charity for the February 2016 Lansing Women's Expo during which their physical therapists offered 10 minute chair massages. They collected \$1,588 and then rounded the total up to \$1,700. Co-owners Christine Reay and Irene Savoyat (L to R in picture) made time to visit and tour our shelter, and to personally present the check to our L&F Staff. Our Thanks to all the massage therapists!



Okemos Playmakers Fitness Foundation (PFF) Holiday FunWalkRun, December 24, 2016 hosted a 2 month online donation site for 3 named charities. The goal was for each to reach \$1,000. L&F donations totaled \$793.48, but after the event, the PFF staff generously raised the total to the full \$1,000. We were surprised, and so very grateful. It was a JOY seeing everyone come in raring to go. Some even dressed up as Santa...and others as the Holy Family!

Schuler Books in the Meridian Mall invited L&F volunteers to do Holiday gift wrapping at no charge to customers. Schuler provided the gift wrap, ribbon and tape. We worked in teams of 2 on several days for 2 to 4 hr shifts. In gratitude, customers made free-will donations which totaled \$604.00. Seeing their responses, we were filled with Christmas Joy!

Ben Rathbun Insurance Agency Each month the agency chooses a non-profit organization and every time they get a request for an insurance quote, they donate \$5 to the agency, whether the inquiring person purchases insurance or not – what a wonderful business model! So at the beginning of May, Ben and 6 of his agents visited L&F to present a check for \$435.00 for the month of April. Ben's mom has been a 6-10 volunteer for quite some time, so this is a double blessing!

Woody's Trowbridge and Okemos Woody's together gathered \$250.00 from customers donating \$1 or more with their meal purchases. This is the 2nd year in a row that the 2 Woody's Restaurants have hosted our Holiday Helping the Homeless Fundraiser...for which we are exceedingly grateful!

AND – for the added support services we received from:

Kelly Carpet Cleaning saved L&F a lot of money by cleaning Luke's House carpeting, to prepare for new guests.

Vacuum Cleaner Centers in Grand Rapids gave us a great deal on a new vacuum cleaner, and were so helpful in picking out a model that fit our needs. **O'Leary Paint Company in Lansing** gave us some really great discounts on paint for the fence and for The Gathering Place dining room, as well as stain for the outside steps/ramp.

May God bless each and every one of you!



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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



Help us continue the miracle through 2016

See "Miracles really DO happen" - pg 3

THANK YOU! The financial appeal in our Fall Newsletter must have struck the right note for many of you. You saw the REAL FACTS, you took them to heart, and then you generously came through...*creating the sustaining miracle we needed.* Following on that momentum, we ask you to prayerfully consider *helping us continue the miracle through 2016...*so that we can continue meeting our guests' daily needs. **Options to consider:**

GIVING SEASONALLY

"In our household we make it a practice to donate a financial gift to Loaves and Fishes during the spring and Easter season. Spring offers us a sense of new life and renewal. And as with the rebirth of life each spring, we give to support the renewal of our guests who are in such desperate need. We so appreciate your Christmas and year-end financial gifts; please consider making a donation this spring as well."

Jim Veurink, Core Community
Board of Directors Member



IRA Charitable Rollover Now Permanent!

If you have an IRA and are at least 70 1/2, you can now make a direct tax-free charitable gift to Loaves and

Fishes Ministries. Making a charitable distribution directly from your IRA *may lower your tax rate, and can be a wise choice for many.* This is especially true for those who must take required minimum distributions each year.

Getting Started - As with all gifts of this nature, you should consult with your financial services company that manages your IRA and with your financial/tax advisor. God bless you for considering this option.