

**Emergency Overnight
Shelter and Services**

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



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 2021

COVID-19 WILL NOT DETER US AT L&F

By Dr. Thomas Woods, (Dr. T) Director



For over a year, Covid-19 has affected so much of our daily lives from a personal and professional perspective as well. In the past year we have had to deal with this affliction and along the way we have had to learn, practice and, as best we can, develop consistent ways in which to protect our families, friends, workmates and the clients, guests, and shelter associates that we work with each day. We will always find a way with the help from God to continue providing services to those who come to us for help and assistance in the safest manner possible at Loaves and Fishes Ministries (L&F). I have been amazed at the strength, the resiliency and bravery of our volunteers, staff and our Board members who will not allow this disease to deter us from serving others in need. We had to figure out how to go around the mountain when going through was an impossibility. Covid-19 refuses to relent to anybody who is in pain physically, psychologically, and emotionally...it couldn't care less. It just wants a human vessel to attach itself to so the virus can survive and mutate. It does not care that by doing so it can slowly drain the person of their strength and vitality with possible ongoing health problems or worst yet, death.

So why do we do it? We do it because the need is still there.... It will always be there despite the virus. People who are less fortunate need an organization to be there for them, to provide essential services so they can ultimately survive.... yes, I said survive! For our guests to be able to survive, even temporarily, they will need some assurances that they can have a roof over their heads, a hot shower, clean clothes, a warm bed to sleep in and a hot meal, along with an encouraging word and sound case management. That is what L&F can offer and we have seen our services make a huge difference in the lives of so many of the guests who seek us out for assistance. So, we cannot afford to stop...we don't want to stop! We cannot let this virus beat us, because if it did, it could cost a guest, potentially, their path to well-being through our programs and services and ultimately it could cost their lives.

L&F has been serving this community for 40 years. For 40 years we have played a role in saving lives *such as the next person I will share a story about...and how L&F helped her - a relatively young female afflicted with drug addiction. She was educated, had a good job and a family and she lost it all. She had problems staying awake due to working a lot of hours, which was the start of her problem with drug addiction. She began using pills to help herself stay awake. Her pill use became even heavier as she started to use stronger opioids to satisfy a growing addiction. Because she was being functional at her job despite her drug use, she did not feel that she had a growing problem even when she started using even stronger and more addictive drugs to satisfy what was becoming a growing habit. Her misuse of prescription opioids became extreme, and the result was that she lost everything that was near and dear to her, including her children. She wound up homeless for a little over a year before coming to L&F for sheltering. We worked with her and it took time for her to admit that she had a problem, but through our program she overcame her affliction, eventually she accepted treatment, found a job but lost it due to Covid, but found another job because she was determined because of the assistance she found through L&F to get her life back. The last obstacle of her case management goal was to find a home, which she did and so she able to have her kids returned to her in a joint custody.*

The burden of non-profits is very heavy at this time. Non-profits are facing the tasks of keeping their staff and volunteers safe while doing their best to maintain their services during these troubled times. Demand for services increases but unfortunately financial support decreases. So, please give to L&F. We appreciate and will use every dollar that we are fortunate to receive so we can continue to do what we love...serving those who are less fortunate.

Thank you and may God bless!

It takes a Village

By Jim Veurink, L&F Volunteer

We, at Loaves and Fishes Ministries, are familiar with the many conditions that bring guests to our doorsteps. Circumstances range from personal domestic crises, job losses and substance abuse, to name a few. We offer folks temporary housing and when personal conditions stabilize, L&F works with guests to develop individual plans to bridge the transition from homelessness towards stable housing and purposeful living.

Our Guest Advocacy Manager Brent Anderson, along with Volunteer Coordinator Dorothy Moore and Director Dr. Thomas Woods (DR T), assist guests first with the necessities to succeed. Our residents often need support obtaining birth certificates, social security cards, state of Michigan ID's and securing the financial resources necessary to find stable housing. From there, the challenging work towards positive personal change begins. Brent makes it a priority to develop bonds of trust leading to personal growth and change. Through nurturing trust, guests are more open to see new possibilities for their futures.

Support continues from our vital partners who make housing possible. **One of our overnight volunteers, Margaret Morath**, has secured grants through her parish, **St. Thomas Aquinas** and the leadership and guidance of **Marge Andrews**, Vice President representing St. Thomas Aquinas Church for the Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Parishes "adopt" guests and assist them to make the transition as smooth as possible. With their financial assistance and support, storage of personal belongings is provided until new housing is in place, pots, pans, and furniture are purchased and personal food pantries are stocked.

Our guests need the logistical support to move their personal belongings from Loaves and Fishes, storage units and garages to their new apartments. We have been incredibly fortunate to receive the assistance of **Wesley Allison, owner, and operator of Helper Moving, LLC., helpermovingllc.com** who has provided a truck and labor to aide with these

moves. (Check out their website for an inspiring story.)



Anna and Dwain, two of our recent guests, have benefitted from the support of Loaves and Fishes and our supporting partners to secure a stable apartment. Their place is now fully furnished and is indeed a comfortable place they call home. Anna and Dwain told me how incredibly fortunate they

are to have Loaves and Fishes there for them through this journey from homelessness to stable housing. They were overjoyed to show me their lovely place, and their full pantry! *With an outpouring of gratitude, Dwain gives back by helping out at L & F, providing time and support for our current guests.*

Along with supporting our guests individually, *our Guest Advocacy Manager Brent plans to facilitate a support group for former guests to share with current guests their personal experiences, along with the ups and the downs, to make living independently a reality.* The journey is ongoing, and Loaves & Fishes is ever ready to provide support!

"Meet Our New Laundromat!"

Kim Dillon, our Weekday Facilities Manager, along with the other staff and volunteers can now do guest and household laundry on the 1st floor of the Gathering Place, instead of having to use the 100+ years old staircase in the original Overnight Shelter. This was thankfully made possible, because of another **Granger grant which CCBD Secretary Barbara Curtis wrote**, along with two of our long-time supporters and volunteers who **anonymously donated their \$600.00 stimulus checks** to be able to complete this project. **Barbara engineered the entire project – a tribute to her lifelong service to L&F as one of our original co-founders.**



Kim Dillon, L&F's Weekday Facilities Manager

God bless you, Good and Faithful Servants!

MEETING THE COVID CRISIS CHALLENGE

By Joan Tirak, President, L&F 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.”

**OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE OF YOU WHO SHARED PART OF YOUR
STIMULUS CHECK(S) TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF L&F MINISTRIES ~
YOUR MERCY IS INDEED “WIDER THAN THE SEA”!**

Our humble GRATITUDE as well to ALL of you who shared your hard-earned savings during this ongoing CHALLENGING COVID CRISIS! Whether you sent a \$1.00 or several hundreds, or several thousands, you helped create the needed bulwark for L&F to continue serving through this COVID CRISIS. Going forward, we look forward to your continued partnering with us in offering the essential services we provide to our sisters and brothers, who would otherwise be living on the streets or under the bridges. *The social justice ethic of caring for our neighbors is what L&F Ministries was founded on over 40 years ago. Jesus said, “Feed the hungry, shelter the homeless.” We heard that then, and continue to hear that now. Our mantra during this pandemic has become: “Lord, lead us where we need to be.” Thank YOU for helping us get there!*

May God bless your generous and loving hearts!



L&F HOSTS COVID TESTING & VACCINATION CLINICS FOR GUESTS & VOLUNTEERS

Ever since the COVID testing and vaccines became available, Director Dr. Thomas Woods has worked tirelessly to secure a Strike Team to offer testing to the guests in all 3 of our shelter homes, as well as to our staff and volunteers along with their families and friends. Then the seemingly impossible became possible! On March 23, L&F became a COVID vaccination center for these same groups. We were all so happy to be part of the solution in preventing the spread of the virus! *Thanks to the Ingham County Health Department for making this possible...and to Dr T for his relentless pursuit of getting this done!*

Please consider helping to sustain L&F by:

Donating NOW using the enclosed envelope
OR
making secure donations through our website at www.loavesandfisheslansing.org
Click on “Donate,” then click the “Network for Good” button.



Another Option: **ADOPT-a-project**

Our aging shelter homes often need critical upgrading. We have just learned that we need a new air conditioner for our Overnight Shelter.

Estimated Cost: \$3,300

If anyone can help with, OR contribute to this project, please contact our Director Dr. Thomas Woods at 517-482-2099 or email him at director@loavesandfisheslansing.org



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Lansing, MI 48906

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CURRENT RESIDENT OR

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***



Volunteers Needed! 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 the guests get settled when they arrive to the 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 and plough. We also have minor repairs which have to be done both inside and out of our 3 aging homes.

**To volunteer, contact Dorothy Moore, our Volunteer Coordinator at
volunteers@loavesandfisheslansing.org**