

Emergency Overnight Shelter and Services

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

Loaves and Fishes



Ministries

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

Transitional Housing and Services

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

Spring 2014

Above and Beyond: Managing the homeless overflow this winter ~ By Erma Chastine, Director

WOW! How does one describe this winter? For the homeless it has been especially challenging. Loaves and Fishes Ministries worked at full capacity and overflow during the ice storm and the frigid blizzard temperatures. The shelter never lost power but one of the transitional houses did, Luke's House. The residents had to be bedded down at the shelter on air mattresses.

Staff and volunteers were challenged to keep the shelter running smoothly and they met the challenge. L&F staff and volunteers pitched in to make adjustments to help extra people. Luke's residents became part of our overflow at the shelter.

We have an agreement with the City of Lansing to provide six extra beds during severe weather. On normal nights L&F sleeps 14 people. During the overflow we had up to 17 people and were prepared to sleep 20. Even though we are zoned to have people leave each day at 9am, with the permission from the City of Lansing we have been encouraging our guests to stay during the day when the temperature drops so severely. Most guests stay and some will wait at least until the temperature elevates a bit before venturing out. When guests stay all day it makes things a bit different for staff as we have to clean the shelter without disturbing the flow of others and provide more food, water and heat for comfort.

In spite of the weather volunteers made every effort to be at the shelter for the 6-10 pm and overnight shifts. Some volunteers were not able to come as scheduled but others stepped up to the challenge. Those that helped out never seemed fazed about having extra guests in the shelter to feed and offer comfort. Volunteer meal providers continued to bring meals during the storms which helped a great deal.

Because of the extreme weather, our Dec-Feb costs escalated in the following areas:

- We had snow removed and the drive salted **23 times**. On two different occasions we had to have the drive plowed and salted **twice in one day** – COST: \$1,505.00
- Electric, water & sewage – COST: \$1,776.24
- Food – COST: \$2,014.18
- Heating – COST: \$1,162.62

We are so grateful to all our generous financial donors, those who support us monthly and those who support us when they can. Also, to the wonderful donors that always drop by to bring needed supplies. Without all of you, we could not continue to do God's work!

Feedback from L&F Guest Surveys

What one thing do you like best about Loaves and fishes?

- Lots of smiles
- Meals, volunteers, cleanness
- Safe place
- Feels like home
- The respect I received from the staff and volunteers
- Feels like family
- I love this place
- Meetings on Monday morning the talks keep me going
- I don't want to leave
- This is the best homeless shelter that I have stayed at
- Loving care, wholesomeness
- The staff does a really good job assisting with problems
- The nicest volunteers in the business
- Warm beds and hearts
- The way they treated me was so uplifting
- The many resources provided

With Much Gratitude

Critical work continues on repairing our three aging L&F shelter homes. Since our fall newsletter, we have received a \$6,000 grant from the Granger Company of Lansing. We are deeply grateful for this gift which makes it possible to insure the health and safety of our guests, staff and volunteers. May God bless you!

Consider including L&F Ministries in your Legacy Planning

Countless Ways to Give

*As many of us have experienced over the years,
there are countless ways to follow Christ's mandate to share with others.*

Undoubtedly you have given of yourself in many ways. Through sacrificial dedication, you may have given time through raising children, caring for foster children, caring for your aging parents, or going above and beyond at your work place. With gratitude, each of us is here today...standing on the shoulders of someone special. You may recall a special teacher, an aunt, a parent, a Girl Scout leader, a pastor. You may continue to give of yourself through outreach in your faith community, a passion to protect our fragile environment, or tutoring a child. You may have a heart for pets and have taken home a stray animal that has been neglected.

As you have demonstrated through acts of gratitude, you have given financially to support those who are poor and homeless. Many of us have chosen our own Loaves and Fishes to be a focus of our giving. We know the many benefits of giving in the present. As we have received financially...we respond by giving back.

As time moves forward, we have the opportunity to look back and reflect on our priorities. As we read in the Scriptures, the ancestors of our faith practiced *giving back during a Year of Jubilee*. In doing this they cleared out their accumulated wealth every 7 years.

We tend not to follow that practice in these times, but similar opportunities are available when we consider our bounty and our blessings. We have the occasion to designate our priorities through a will or estate planning. This is our opportunity to reflect on our personal accumulated possessions and to respond accordingly.

We humbly ask that Loaves and Fishes Ministries be the recipient of your present giving, *but also that you consider naming L&F as a recipient of your gratitude giving in your Year of Jubilee through your will or estate planning.*



(You can make secure donations NOW through our website, www.loavesandfisheslansing.org

Just click on "Donate," then click the "Network for Good" button...OR just send your donation along with the enclosed envelope.)

May God continue to bless and guide us ALL...as we consider giving back!

Randy's story: Redemption is knowing we are loved by God

Former Luke's House Transitional Housing Resident joins L&F Core Community

This is my journey back to a more normal life. I can't get into a lot of details it would require my statement to be pages and pages long. I was married for 20 years and had 2 children: 1 girl the oldest who is now almost 36 years old, and 1 son 29 years old...who doesn't stay in contact with me for reasons I do not know. Like all married couples there were struggles. My wife at the time wanted me to earn more so I found 2 part-time jobs, each 6 hours a day. I was working 12 hours every day with only about 1 hour in between jobs. When I came home from my second job, I needed to sleep. My wife felt I was neglecting her emotional needs, so she would go out with the girls from work. Some of the girls were single and they would meet single

men. To make a long story short, my wife hooked up with one of the single guys and divorced me and married the guy. After 20 years of marriage I was devastated. To ease the pain I hit the bottle, which was not the smart way to deal with my situation. I lost everything, my job, my money, my self-esteem, my stable life. Finally after being homeless, with no money, no self-confidence, I turned to God, my last resort, my savior - the only one who believed I was not a worthless person. I was loved and cared about no matter what I had done. Slowly I found a job, my self-esteem returned, and I could love myself once again. I was the person God intended me to be. I am one of God's children and I will always be loved. ☺

Randy has been invited to serve on the L&F Core Community (Advisory Board) – bringing his experience of homelessness and healing to bear on decisions made on behalf of our L&F guests. WELCOME, RANDY!

Okemos Presbyterian honored at Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Loaves and Fishes Ministries is pleased to honor Okemos Presbyterian church with the Above and Beyond Award for their 30+ years of volunteer and financial support. Inspired by Kevin Bowling, a member of the church and one of L&F's co-founders, Okemos Presbyterian adopted L&F as a special mission in the early 1980's

When the 5-year land contract for the original Loaves and Fishes Overnight Shelter came due, the church's Mission Committee raised the necessary \$18,000 to meet the balloon payment. In so doing, they freed the Core Community and Staff to put their emphasis on caring for the guests...rather than worrying how they were going to meet the looming mortgage liability.



Both adult members and their children became personally involved. One very heartwarming example is the inspiring mural of Jesus feeding the multitudes which graces the walls in

the Emergency Overnight Shelter. According to Kevin, one summer the kids studied bible passages together in the mornings. Then in the afternoons, their teacher - after creating the broad strokes of the mural - engaged them in "sponge painting" the people and sheep on the hillside. They also painted about 5 additional biblical canvasses for the other rooms.

Shown in the picture (above) with the children are some of the original Okemos Presbyterian volunteers: Larry Barnard, Ron Dorr (MSU professor whose wife Barbara organized the church women to provide weekly dinners for years), Larry Farris (former pastor who supported L&F in many ways - including the mortgage payoff), and Don Treat (MSU theatre professor). Larry and Don regularly teamed up to do the 6-10 pm volunteer shifts. Larry later served as L&F Coordinator for about a year and then joined the Core Group for several years until he moved to the west coast.

Larry and Don are now deceased, but Okemos Presbyterian members have faithfully continued walking in their footsteps...serving both as volunteers and financial supporters as well as graciously inviting L&F to be part of their mission fair. What a gift they have been to L&F over the years! OUR DEEP AND SINCERE GRATITUDE to everyone who has been part of this special mission to Loaves and Fishes Ministries. ✨

L&F Staff Comings and Goings



Welcome to Jenny Leaf, our new Guest Advocate. *"I've been the Guest Advocate since the beginning of November 2013, starting out part-time and then moving into the full-time position in December. While I am a new staff member, Loaves and Fishes Ministries has been part of my life for a long time. As a child I remember helping my parents drop off meals for the guests. People from my church family were instrumental in starting Loaves and Fishes Ministries and some continue to be part of the Core Community. My father, Donald Leaf, served as the Coordinator for some time. When I returned to the Lansing area after graduating from the University of Michigan, I volunteered for a short time in the 6-10 shift. Those experiences led me to my first post-college job at the American Red Cross, in the After Hours Emergency Services program, helping people with food, shelter, and personal needs on nights and weekends. Since then I've had many jobs in helping agencies, including coordinating a homeless shelter for families in Ypsilanti, MI. In 2010, my son, Henry, was born and we moved back to Lansing. I was blessed to be able to be a stay-at-home mom for the first three years of his life. When I got the call to help out until a new Guest Advocate could be hired, it was perfect timing and I was happy to help. Once I got here, I found that this position, this ministry, and these co-workers all fit just right and I am so grateful that I was given the chance to stay and fill this role. I look forward to meeting all the wonderful volunteers that make this place feel like home to our guests, and to me."*



Welcome to Lucile Edelen, our new Weekday Facilities Manager. *"I first came to work at L&F as an emergency overnight worker in October 2013. I have three beautiful children and became a grandmother last year as well. I enjoy working with the community. My previous jobs included home health aide, customer service, and residential technician. I'm very thankful and grateful to be chosen as the new L&F Weekday Facilities Manager. I'm also looking forward to meeting the L&F Core Community members at the April meeting. Thank you!"*



Farewell to Amy Morris, our Weekday and former Weekend Facilities Manager. *"It has been such a pleasure having you on staff. Your true dedication always showed through in your work. Loaves and Fishes Ministries have been enhanced with your presence. Your organizational skills were appreciated and the extra care and time you spent with guests will leave us all with a heavy heart without your presence. Congratulations on your new position. We know that your new employer will find you a delight to work with. God bless you, Amy!" ~ Erma Chastine, Director*



831 N. Sycamore
Lansing, MI 48906

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CURRENT RESIDENT OR

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
Jenny Leaf, Guest Advocate
Beth Young, Volunteer Coordinator
Lucille Edelen, Weekday Facilities Manager
Angharad McGaughey, Weekend Facilities Manager.



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A time for almsgiving

“A way has to be found to enable everyone to benefit from the fruits of the earth, and not simply to close the gap between the affluent and those who must be satisfied with the crumbs falling from the table, but above all to satisfy the demands of justice, fairness and respect for every human being.”

(Pope Francis, Address to the Food and Agricultural Organization, 6/20/13)