

**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

Summer 2018

Teresa Kloock: Advocating for our Guests

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



Teresa Kloock has been our Guest Advocate since 2015. She came to us with experience and skills that have enhanced the lives of our guests. Teresa earned her degree in the Social Sciences at MSU and from there, has worked in the Lansing area with clients needing support in budgeting, housing, life skills, protective services, foster care, and much more.

At our shelter, Teresa begins her early mornings visiting with each guest individually. Together, they work on personal goals for the day. Teresa offers encouragement with resourceful ideas. Not only does she help guests with tailor-made goals, Teresa leads weekly house meetings where our guests write down their longer-term goals for the week. Along with group discussions, our guests discuss ways to communicate successfully in the

workplace, how to deal with the frustrations they encounter, and how to improve "soft skills" to improve relationships.

With our Transitional Housing guests who stay with us for up to two years, Teresa schedules individual and group house meetings, which are a great opportunity to discuss their progress and the obstacles they face, as well. Teresa helps guests sign up for a Housing Choice Voucher, a federal housing grant which subsidizes their rent to make future housing more affordable. She spends time on how to be a good tenant and understanding the laws that pertain to renting. Teresa also reviews with guests their credit reports, helps them seek out employment opportunities and search for local programs that assist with personal needs.

The challenges Teresa encounters are many and often daunting. Those who are homeless are more prone to all levels of mental illness and unaddressed substance abuse issues. Additional challenges include addressing the underlying causes of homelessness, the high cost of rent as our guests leave us, and being current with the most appropriate resources for referrals to excellent health care, counseling and ongoing personal services.

And in many instances, it's the small details, often critical skills that you and I may take for granted, which need to be addressed. How to get an ID card, how to obtain a birth certificate, how to manage money and personal financial crises, to name just a few.

Teresa believes it is crucial to our success as an effective ministry to develop supportive, positive relationships with our guests. She has known many of our guests and their families for years. Teresa's background knowledge and proactive nature help her develop stronger and more sustaining relationships. Teresa remains persistent with guiding and redirecting when guests fall short of their goals, with the knowledge that they will be closer to succeeding on their next attempt. Many who have left the shelter continue to visit Teresa, call her on the phone to share their personal stories. Teresa's wealth of information of the Lansing area's vocational, employment and housing resources serve our shelter and most importantly, our guests well.

*Thank you, Teresa, for your advocacy work on our behalf
to help make our guests' lives more successful and fulfilling!*

Our Loaves and Fishes 'FAMILY'

By Jenny Leaf, Director



In 2018 we have many definitions and concepts of "family." We often think of family as parents and children. Some families are biological, some are adopted (I'm an adoptee myself!), there are step-families and in-laws, just to name a few. Since I've been here at Loaves and Fishes Ministries, I've often found myself speaking about the "Loaves and Fishes family." I am quite entwined in this ministry and my history goes way back to when I was a kid, helping my parents deliver meals. People from my church family were part of the original Core Group that began Loaves and Fishes, and one still is! As some of you know,

my father, Don Leaf, was the L&F Coordinator from 1996 – 2005.

When I started here, I was happy to see that some of the volunteers I knew when my dad was here, were still volunteering. It wasn't just one or two, there were several! Those folks have become an integral part of our Loaves and Fishes family. Not only have they been filling shifts here and helping our guests, they have valuable institutional knowledge and insight into the work we do and into homelessness in a broader issue. We also have newer volunteers who have become family in a short amount of time. They are active in helping us in so many ways, whether it's again, filling shifts, or purchasing items when we are in need, such as living room furniture or a griddle that's used every day to make a hot and filling breakfast for our guests, or sharing with family and friends the work we do in order to bring more volunteers and support to the ministry.

We also have families volunteering that fall into that parent and child category. For example, Matt began as an overnight volunteer when he was a student at Michigan State University. He did that faithfully until his school and work schedule just got too busy for him to continue. Before stopping, his mother, Celeste, and brother, John began volunteering for 6-10 shifts. One of our families, a mother and son team, have been helping with 6-10 shifts, overnight shifts and administrative support for twenty years. TWENTY! We have many other family teams that help us out, whether it is working volunteer shifts, providing meals, weeding/planting in the yard, and countless other ways! What a great way to build those relationships while making a huge difference in the lives of others.

Lastly, we often feel like our guests are family. They are, after all, the reason the rest of us are here. Sometimes I feel like my job is difficult and I go home exhausted at the end of the day...just needing to rest. I cannot forget, however, that our guests are doing the real work. They are fighting against barriers on a daily basis in order to get a most basic need met: Housing! This is why the work our volunteers do is so important: we provide a place for our guests to feel loved and cared for, so they can rest and rejuvenate to continue to battle the next day. Some of our guests are homeless because they don't have a family support system to help when everything falls apart. We can tell them we're here for them, though - we are their Loaves and Fishes family.

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

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
Playmakers Michigan
Fitness Foundation,
and the Gillespie Group

for honoring Loaves & Fishes Ministries at their Brew Fun Run and Walk in downtown Lansing on May 9th in recognition and support of L&F's work with those experiencing homelessness. We also want to thank ALL who participated and ALL who donated to our critical work. As a result, Loaves & Fishes Ministries was awarded \$959.90.

May God Bless You!

Caring for our Aging Shelters & Landscapes

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

Our sincere gratitude to all of you who have stepped up to help us with the demands of caring for our aging shelters houses and landscapes. So much needs to be done that our busy staff cannot tend to, so you are like *guardian angels* coming to the rescue year after year. Our Overnight Shelter and Zacchaeus House on Sycamore St. are easily over 100 years old, but because of the marvelous work done by our staff and volunteers, they are nearly fully operational.

I say *nearly* because there is always something we discover that needs to be tended to, repaired, replaced, painted, deep cleaned, organized, cleared away, made more secure – just like your own homes. But these houses are home to thousands of guests each year, which increases the likelihood of ‘something’ needing attention much more often.

For example, we just had to replace the grease trap in our Emergency Shelter Gathering Place kitchen. However, our Director, Jenny Leaf, breathed a sigh of relief as she let the Board know that “the company we hired didn’t have to tear out the old trap, which would have involved much more work, including replacing the entire floor around the grease trap. Instead they were able to place the new one under the sink and the only floor work we needed to have done was to have a new floor on top of the old grease trap...after it was sucked out again and capped off so nothing runs through it anymore.”

The cost for this work is \$2,450.00 – which was not in our 2018 budget. So, if by any chance, you or your church family or other group to which you belong are looking for a worthwhile project to donate toward, this would be one to seriously consider.

We are also having to have old carpeting removed, which was glued onto the old wood floors of our two transitional homes – Zacchaeus House and Luke’s House. Due to the wear and tear these floors take with so many guests living in the small apartments/rooms, we have decided to have the carpeting replaced with vinyl plank flooring, the kind that can be more easily be cleaned and maintained. Then we plan on covering them with large, safe area rugs which can be replaced as needed. The cost for replacing the flooring in just one of the Zacchaeus House apartments for women and children is \$1,900.00, and there are 3 such apartments in Z-House as well as 3 individual bedrooms in Luke’s House that need these updates. ***Again, if you are able to contribute to the cost of these unplanned, unbudgeted repairs, we would be most appreciative.***

But the GOOD NEWS is that in light of ALL that needs to be done to care for our aging houses and landscapes, we have MUCH to be GRATEFUL for to our wonderful volunteers!

And...Our Gratitude Kudos Go to:

(See next column) →→→

(Drum roll, please😊)

The Department of Health & Human Services Group Members

...are taking turns mowing the lawn on a weekly basis! They have several people that cycle through. Since we haven't had much rain we haven't needed the grass cut much, but the volunteers still show up and take on weeding or other yardwork as needed. Thank you SO MUCH, Gardening Angels!

Edgewood United Church

... power washed the wheelchair ramp and fire escape and stained them both. In addition, they donated the funds to purchase almost all of the stain! Thank you, GIFT GIVERS ALL!

Lansing Catholic High School group

...who did an incredible job of yard clean up and planting in the spring. They also built some raised garden beds and a picnic table in the yard between the Overnight Shelter and Zacchaeus House. (See pictures below.) You ALL stand tall among our L&F SUPER STARS!





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Lansing, MI 48906

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Loaves & Fishes Ministries Mission Statement

“Loaves and Fishes Ministries provides emergency short-term housing, advocacy and support services for men, women and children experiencing homelessness, as well as long-term transitional housing, advocacy and support services for mothers with children and individual men – in a caring Christian environment. Our purpose is to serve – not convert, respecting each person’s spiritual path, different though that may be from ours. All are welcome who are in need regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity, country of origin, mental ability or physical ability.”

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



SEE WHAT LANSING
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS HAVE DONE FOR
LOAVES & FISHES on page 3.

BE INSPIRED TO JOIN OUR
L&F ‘FAMILY’ – Read Director
Jenny Leaf’s inspiring story on page 2.

READ WHAT YOU CAN DO
TO HELP CARE FOR OUR
AGING SHELTER HOMES &
LANDSCAPES on page 3.

“I was homeless, and you sheltered me, naked and you clothed me, hungry and you fed me.....As long as you did this for the least of my brethren, you did it for me” (Matthew 25: 35-40). Loaves and Fishes Ministries was officially opened in April of 1982 to embody these words of Jesus, and has always taken this call very seriously.