

**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

Fall 2020

A NEW DIRECTOR & A RENEWED VISION AS WE NAVIGATE TOGETHER THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19



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

I am most grateful to have been selected as the new Director of Loaves and Fishes Ministries! Since taking on the position, my vision has been to take the L&F Ministries to another level including: better and continued training for staff on the current trends of shelter and case management, a structured approach to our relationships with guests and maintaining measurable outcomes, intake documents

that are user friendly and clearly explain what is expected from our guests. We are utilizing a team approach as we work with our guests to find solutions and services that can improve their lives.

Just as important and often forgotten is the shelter infrastructure. Where would we be without sound and well-maintained facilities to house our staff, our volunteers, and our guests? Regular inspections of the facilities grounds and guests' units by staff, new security cameras, deadbolts and electronic door locking systems for all guests' private units in the transitional houses. And, most assuredly, L&F will maintain consistent standards as prescribed by the county health officials in keeping the facilities safe from Covid-19 to the best of our abilities. All the above is what we need to do to be effective in helping those that we serve.

So many of you call or stop by almost daily to ask us how we are doing, and we very much appreciate those contacts. We are grateful when we are asked, "How are you?" "What do you need?" "What can I do for you?" Those few words make a vast difference in the lives of the staff and volunteers who come in each day hoping to change for the better the life of a guest who has faced so many obstacles in his/her life...and for many who were at the edge of losing hope. Those few words bring us comfort and assurance that we are not alone in our endeavors to end the plight of homelessness in our communities.

Staff and volunteers understand and are empathetic to what our guests have faced in their long journey to end their battles with joblessness, days on end with no warmth or dry clothes, water, and food. Each day a sister or brother experiencing homelessness faces potentially unintentional injuries from falls or being struck by a car. They face unintentional overdoses of drugs or alcohol or both. Then there is exposure to the elements which is a major hazard. Frostbite and hypothermia can be substantial and deaths due to freezing are not uncommon. In hot weather they can face severe burns and heatstroke can occur. And lastly when they believe all hope is lost, suicides among our sisters and brothers experiencing homelessness is far too common.

When you call or stop by it gives us strength to carry on and provide our guests with the best services that our shelter has to offer. It empowers us and gives us strength to continue, no matter how difficult it may be in helping our guests achieve the best that life has to offer. *When you call or stop by you are saying to staff and volunteers, we care about you and we are here to support you – keep doing the good work.* For that and so much more, on behalf of the staff, volunteers, and our Core Community Board of Directors, we thank you for being there for us so that we can continue to help those in need. May God bless you immeasurably!

***"Your calls & your visits empower us & give us strength to continue
helping our guests achieve the best that life has to offer!"***

Volunteering in 2020: A Challenge and a Grace

By Jim Veurink and Gordon Bieske, L&F Volunteers

After volunteering 6-10 shifts regularly prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Gordon and I discontinued working as we all hunkered down, knowing very little about the virus and its transmission. Several months later, we found how much we missed our time with guests at the shelter. We were interested in learning whether the shelter still needed volunteer support. Is the environment safe enough to volunteer during these difficult times?

First and foremost, each of us needs to consider our own health and well-being. We fully recognize that this is a very personal decision. Before returning to volunteer, Gordon and I asked our Director, Dr. T and Volunteer Coordinator, Dorothy Moore about the shelter's safety guidelines. We were fully reassured that they completely met the Ingham County Health Department's safety regulations. To date, our shelter has had no outbreaks of the virus, thanks to the responsible oversight of our director and staff.

With our questions answered, we determined it is a safe environment for us to resume offering support. Fortunately, we are in good health with no underlying health conditions. So, we have chosen to continue volunteering during 6 -10 p.m. shifts.

We have been impressed with the strict protocols in place for guests and volunteers. Guests are well versed and highly sensitive for their own personal safety and that of others. To provide for safer physical distancing, the shelter is operating at approximately 70% capacity. Face coverings are mandatory, with extra masks readily available. Temperatures are taken using digital thermometers when each person enters the shelter.

During dinner, guests are spaced several table settings apart. Some folks prefer to eat separately, and we have accommodated their wishes. One great improvement is that a new washer and dryer have been installed on the 1st floor, so that no one need to fear falling down the old basement stairs. With laundry, disposable gloves are easily accessed when placing clothing in the washing machine.

Conversations with guests are enriching and enlightening now more than ever. We learn of the successes and challenges folks face with job hunting and transportation. We hear of a wide variety of experiences when seeking housing. And we value many opportunities for lighter topics, too. Sharing this time with residents is truly a blessing.

Loaves and Fishes Ministries, our unique community outreach to those who are homeless, was founded on the model of volunteerism. Through your generosity, you provide nutritious evening meals and work evening shifts. The overnight volunteer shift offers the assurance that the shelter is watched over. Thank you for your many contributions of time, meals, and financial gifts...and for offering prayerful support to our beloved Loaves and Fishes Ministries.

Finally, and most importantly, we seriously need to rebuild our Volunteer Team, since so many of our faithful long-term volunteers had to let go of offering this service due to the challenge of COVID-19. If you are fortunate and healthy enough to provide time to the shelter, we encourage you to consider starting or returning. The COVID-19 safety protocols (bottom right of pg. 3) in place have given us the assurance that we can safely offer our services. Again, your health and well-being need to be your first priority. If you are not able to volunteer at the shelter, please consider reaching out to those who may be in a better position to offer help: possibly friends, relatives, and neighbors.

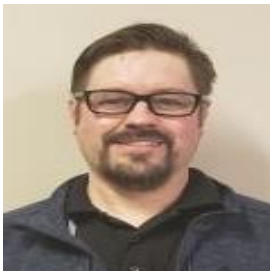
Hope you will consider joining us and passing on this message to others. If you have questions about volunteering, please contact our new Volunteer Coordinator/Administrative Assistant, Dorothy Moore.

To join our L&F volunteer team, contact Dorothy Moore at 482-2099 or volunteers@loavesandfisheslansing.org

Meet Some of Our New Staff



We welcome **Dorothy Moore** to our staff who began her role as **Volunteer Coordinator/Administrative Assistant** in June 2020. Dorothy is familiar with our shelter and has a rich history with Loaves and Fishes. She worked as an intern here in 2018, when she was pursuing her Human Services education at Lansing Community College. More recently, Dorothy served on our L&F Core Community Board of Directors for approximately a year and a half. She loves her work, and said, *“I’m excited to work with you, our volunteer family...and I look forward to meeting and supporting you through our outreach in the Lansing community!”* We, too, look forward to having Dorothy as part of our Loaves and Fishes team! If you would like to contact Dorothy about volunteering, she can be reached at 517.482-2099 or email her at volunteers@loavesandfisheslansing.org – *Volunteer, Jim Veurink*



We also warmly welcome **Brent Anderson**, our new **Guest Advocacy Manager**. Brent previously worked as one of our Staff Assistants and transitioned to his new role on Oct. 26. Prior to becoming our GAM, Brent had volunteered with L&F for over 4 years. He was then hired to serve as our staff assistant where he served our guests with the kind of caring and empathy that is very rare. *“Brent is a good person who brings honesty, integrity, maturity, self-confidence to his new role. His compassion and his drive to bring out the best in the guests that he works with is unmatched. L&F is very fortunate to have Brent in this role and we know that he will continue to serve our guests in the same manner that he did in his prior roles.”* Welcome, Brent, to L&F in your new role as our Guest Advocacy Manager. – *Director, Dr. Thomas Woods*

God bless you, Good and Faithful Servants!

Granger Foundation comes through again for L&F Ministries

Bravo! Once again, the **Granger Foundation** has come through to support Loaves and Fishes Ministries! This time, **Granger supplied a generous grant to create a new 1st floor laundry station just inside the Oakland entry of L&F.** This move from our original basement laundry has insured the safety of our staff and volunteers, who previously had to manage trips up and down an old staircase. Everyone loves this new addition!

Core Community Board of Directors Member, **Barbara Curtis**, who is one of L&F Ministries’ original co-founders, engineered the project. She used both the Granger grant plus donations from a few other donors, who gave their “stimulus checks” to purchase a new washer/dryer, as well as having a cabinet and supply shelves constructed to encase the new appliances.

Barbara also graciously served as our interim Guest Advocate until we hired Brent Anderson as our new Guest Advocacy Manager (see above).

Barbara wrote: *“For the past several weeks I have been filling in as Guest advocate while we searched for a new person to take that position. I have really enjoyed reconnecting with the guests and doing the ‘work on the ground’. I will continue to be an occasional ‘advocacy assistant’ for our new Guest Advocacy Manager, and I*

encourage all of you to think if you might want to do the same. I have realized the huge need for tracking down affordable housing, picking up rental applications... then helping guests fill them out, running them to drop them off. This is all extremely time consuming. If you can help in this way, please call our Volunteer Coordinator, Dorothy Moore.” (See pg. 2 bottom for contact info.)

God bless both Granger & Barbara Curtis!

COVID-19 Protocol Safety Improvements and Precautions

(Must be strictly adhered to by all staff, guests and volunteers while living or working at L&F.)

- Complete COVID-19 Protocol Digital temperature checks at the door. Mandatory face coverings / masks to be worn at all times.
- Maintaining approximately 70% of shelter capacity to ensure physical distancing.
- Disposable gloves continue to be provided for meal prep and laundry.
- Physical distancing at dining table or allowing for eating meals individually.
- Covid-9 testing opportunities offered.
- Upcoming saliva testing to be offered.
- New personal combination locker system in bedrooms to insure no sharing of keys.
- An ample supply of soaps for handwashing.



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Please consider helping to sustain L&F by:

- Using the enclosed donor envelope OR
- Making secure donations through our website at

www.loavesandfisheslansing.org

Click on "Donate," then click the "Network for Good" button.



CURRENT RESIDENT OR



We thank you for...



*All the years of support through your generous financial gifts – whatever the amount,
All the donations of meals and other food, clothing, bedding, paper products, etc.*

All the years and hours of volunteering to help care for and improve the lives of our guests,

All the special projects you and your church or community group did to help maintain and enhance our shelters,

All the grants your civic or business organizations gave us for needed renovations to keep our facilities safe and updated,

All the support you have generated from friends and family to help sustain L&F over the past 40 years! May God Bless you ALL!

ALERT! MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! (See page 2)

To join our L&F volunteer team, contact Dorothy Moore at 482-2099 or volunteers@loavesandfisheslansing.org