

**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 2022



Celebrating New Growth!

By Dr. Thomas Woods, Director

We are enjoying our growth...but growth does not necessarily mean getting physically taller or bigger. Growth can take on many meanings. The growth that I am referring to is growth within ourselves and who we are as a ministry. We are growing as a family of volunteers, Core Community Board of Directors, employees, and supporters who together coordinate our efforts to help our guests in their journey to a life that you and I have been blessed to enjoy...a home, a loving family, caring friends, gainful employment, the respect, and dignity that this great country can give when you do the right things in life.

That's how we are growing at L&F. We are growing spiritually, not to proselytize, but to carry out the teachings that God has commanded that we do for others. Growth in patience, understanding, empathy, being non-judgmental, growth in motivating those whom we serve to always reach for the stars and strive to do better...and the strength and determination for us to be able to do that day in and day out continuously and tirelessly for those who are less fortunate. Working with the homeless population is never easy, but it requires all those qualities and more that I mentioned before.

I am so proud to announce that we will be growing in yet another way. L&F will have a prisoner reentry program in conjunction with Power and Passion and St. Vincent DePaul as we work together to provide services to returning citizens from the prison system. The program is designed to prepare them for life in the outside world. New growth that will be needed at L&F to placate that last portion of Matthew 25; *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, "I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. '*

Steppingstones Project, a 1-year pilot program was awarded a grant from the St. Vincent Society to birth this very important program. I am thrilled to be partnering with two great organizations to assist with yet another population in need of our services. Growth, strength, empathy, perseverance, love, caring and understanding. That's how we are growing at L&F. It's my hope that you will join and grow with us in your journey to help others who are less fortunate.

God bless you all!



Loaves & Fishes Power in Passion St. Vincent de Paul

Peace and Progress!

Honoring Two Inspiring Women

By Joan Tirak, Core Community Board of Directors

Joan Jackson Johnson's Incredible Legacy Lives On



We are so saddened with the loss of our mentor and friend, Dr. Joan Jackson Johnson, who passed away on January 29th after months of suffering.

Triple "JJJ" - as she was known by our sisters and brothers experiencing

homelessness and food insecurity - served on the Loaves and Fishes Ministries Core Community Board of Directors (CCBD) for several years...UNTIL she was tapped by Mayor Virgil Paul "Virg" Bernero to serve as the Director of Human Relations and Community Services Department (HRCS) for the City of Lansing (2006-2020). *"Jackson Johnson was a force in the Lansing community. In her 13 years working for the city, 'She served the most in need for many years, helped so many people and left a terrific legacy of service in Lansing,'" (City of Lansing Facebook post)*

Generosity and service were a "way of life" for the Johnson family. Joan and her husband Vern regularly provided dinners for our guests, plus other supportive services, and donations.

I'm certain that if Joan were not going through her own unbearable pain and hoped-for recovery, she would have had an action plan for the homeless population during the COVID 19 pandemic, much as she had plans for those whose homes were condemned, burned, or foreclosed during other tragedies. †*May God now grant her well-deserved peace & rest.*

To read Joan Jackson Johnson's full obituary OR to make a donation or plant a tree in her name, please visit
<https://www.paradisefuneralchapel.com/obituaries/Joan-Jackson-Johnson-Lansing?obId=23876809>

Carol Baker Retires after nearly 30 Years of Service at L&F



Our Core Community Board of Directors (CCBD) cannot thank Carol Baker enough for her nearly 30 years of service first as an employee and then as a member of our CCBD – all done with the utmost professionalism, dignity, and grace. She took her playbook from Joan Jackson Johnson, who was a strong mentor for Carol's life of service.

At her last CCBD meeting, March 21st with us, where Carol served for years as a phenomenal meeting facilitator, we together shared our deep gratitude and love for Carol and presented her with an award that encapsulates her years of dedicated service. It read:

We honor & thank you for nearly 30 years of dedicated service to Loaves and Fishes Ministries, working initially as Guest Payee/Advocate & then as Assistant Coordinator in the mid 1990's – early 2000's. After a few years hiatus, you joined the Core Community Board of Directors where you served as Co-President for some years, and as HR Committee member & CCBD meeting facilitator until 2022. All these Good Works...All these Many Years...lovingly advocating on behalf of our mission, our staff, our volunteers & our guests!

"Well done, Good and Faithful Servant!"

A Loaves and Fishes Parable in Real Time

By Jim Veurink

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Heartfelt
THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



Parables aren't only events in the past, but oftentimes are current. I'm constantly reminded how we are surrounded by wonderful, caring folks who reach out to our guests and the Loaves and Fishes community in so many ways.

Claudia Remenar has prepared wonderful, healthy "made-from-scratch" meals for many years. Having learned of Loaves and Fishes Ministries from fellow parishioners, she decided that she, too, wanted to contribute by cooking meals for our guest residents. Pictured are Claudia cooking with her son, Philip Deschaine.

And today, **33 years later**, she continues to prepare dinners. Years ago, when balancing the needs of her family and career, Claudia asked eleven neighbors to join her in making evening dinners. So, since 2001, she and her neighbors have faithfully served our guests.

*"The people who give you their food give you their heart."
Cesar Chavez*

Claudia's time, energy and faith-in-action have been an example to others. When her children were young, their Scout troops would bring meals to the shelter along with her. Claudia's daughter, Marianne Deschaine, pursued a career specializing in services to those who are homeless in Detroit and Flint, and later to veterans in the San Francisco area. Truly an enduring legacy of service!

Claudia's outreach has continued. She is a member of Greater Lansing 100+ Women Who Care. On a quarterly basis, each of these caring neighbors donates \$100, which is approximately \$20,000.00 to local not-for-profit groups with great needs, who serve in the greater Lansing community. Claudia made an appeal to her WWC friends, shared our story, and 100+ WWC responded enthusiastically.

We are most grateful to Claudia, along with the over 200 women who have made an appreciable difference in our guests' lives with their donation of \$20,500.00!

Thank you, one and all!

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:

- Accompanying our guests from 5-10 pm – getting meals ready, washing laundry, and being present to our guests' other needs
- Doing overnight shifts from 10pm - 7am, keeping guests safe & preparing a hearty morning breakfast for all
- Providing 4,380 hot evening meals annually for our emergency shelter guests
- Mowing lawns, raking leaves, shoveling walkways, keeping our grounds neat and tidy
- Cleaning attics and basements in our three shelter homes
- Preparing and sorting Christmas gifts for our guests
- 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 can NOT do this without YOU!

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



831 N. Sycamore
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Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
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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

**There's still one month to support our Year-Long 40th Anniversary
“Giving Hearts” Fundraiser – let's make it a Blow Out Month!**

We are most grateful for the generosity that our donors have demonstrated thus far in responding to our 40th Anniversary “Giving Hearts” Fundraiser...which we started with the Fall 2021 Newsletter. **If you have already donated, THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts! If you haven't yet done so, APRIL is the month to make your donation.**

♥♥♥ P.S. Later donations will be good too! ♥♥♥

MAY GOD BLESS YOUR MOST LOVING & GENEROUS HEARTS!

**Donate by using the enclosed envelope OR
by making a secure donation through our website at www.loavesandfisheslansing.org**

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



**Enjoy your visit to our New Website at
www.loavesandfisheslansing.org**