



seeds of change

lutheran metropolitan ministry

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COVID-19 Preparedness Sparks Renewed Sense of Community

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (LMM) is following the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 (Coronavirus), as we're sure many of you are. As we update procedures and do everything we can to keep people safe, we've also found a renewed sense of purpose. We're reminded of why we serve with the most vulnerable populations among us. We are here to empower and protect.

During this time of uncertainty, our Board of Directors and staff have shown great leadership and a commitment to innovative solutions to situations we've never before faced. We've had to make some difficult decisions, but we move forward knowing this too shall pass, and the most important thing is that we are continuing to provide critical services to our community. Kindness and compassion for clients and co-workers have long been part of the LMM culture, but the tough days we've had recently have bonded us together in a brand new way.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

Since before the first COVID-19 cases surfaced in Ohio, LMM has been advancing safety and business continuity plans in coordination with city and county governmental partners and within the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute of Health and the World Health Organization. In coordination with a continuum of service partners, LMM is implementing policies and procedures specific to each LMM site and client base along with assessing workforce through cross-training and other measures so we may continue our services to residents and participants in our region.

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

We have suspended all volunteering by groups and individuals at LMM sites. We have closed two of our buildings to the public: Richard Sering Center (LMM headquarters) at 4515 Superior Avenue and the Health & Wellness building at 4100 Franklin. Our 24/7 operations continue for clients. We have implemented a work-from-home policy for staff who are able.

- ✓ We are in the process of implementing telehealth appointments for our Health & Wellness clients.
- ✓ Our Guardianship Services operations are still underway with modifications allowing for virtual client visits. We are still doing intake to accept new wards.
- ✓ Youth Residential Services continues its important work housing at-risk young adults. Staff are putting together programming and activities to prevent cabin fever, while still practicing social distancing.
- ✓ Our Workforce Development students are temporarily off-site, but some are able to take virtual classes. Our Central Kitchen is still operating to provide meals to local homeless shelters.
- ✓ LMM's Men's Shelter and other homeless shelter sites are making an unprecedented move. We have temporarily transitioned some residents into off-site space in order to be able to practice effective social distancing, which our current location does not allow for because of the large number of people we serve each night. Some staff have relocated, as well, so residents still have on-site services.

Recognizing the situation is fluid and rapidly changing, we will continue to assess the appropriate responses to do our part in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in our area.



LMM's exciting new culinary venture, Metro45 Café & Catering, is a social enterprise we can't wait to share with you!

The café is located at LMM's Richard Sering Center (RSC) on the corner of E. 45th & Superior. For months, we've been putting together a special café and catering menu for you, and working out details of operations so we can bring the community delicious food while providing culinary training to our students who face employment barriers.

The café at the RSC has been open as a training café for some time, but we're excited to take it into the next phase when the culinary industry is back up and running in Cleveland. With the temporary hold due to the COVID-19 precautions, we continue behind-the-scenes to create new menu items and prepare for the day we can open to the public.

Metro45 Café & Catering recently had an open house for LMM staff, which included a sampling of delicious pastries, wraps, salads with salmon, burgers and more. The Workforce Development chefs and students are making the fresh eats. The Chopping for Change students are a group of women who are currently incarcerated at North East Reintegration Center in Cleveland. They come to LMM five days a week for extensive culinary training and ultimately earn multiple certifications and in some cases, an associate degree, before they are released. This allows for the women to obtain jobs quickly and helps them to get their children back.

The made-to-order food will be a delicious and fast way to grab your coffee and scone, or your lunch to go, during the work week. We're also working to be able to provide delivery. Need catering for your meetings or events for breakfast, lunch or dinner? Allow us to provide great food at competitive prices, and you'll be supporting LMM and the education and success of our students in the process.



Metro45 Café & Catering staff open house



Grilled Salmon Salad with arugula, dried cranberries, goat cheese, pine nuts, pickled red onion

Stay tuned for more updates on an official opening date, café hours and the catering menu on LMM's social media channels (@LMMCleveland on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and make sure to spread the word! We look forward to serving you great food with an even better story.

Why Give to LMM?

There are thousands of reasons to give to LMM, and each and every reason has a story of his and her own. Every single human being who walks through our doors seeking hope, help and dignity is one more reason to give. The thousands of people who find their way to caring staff, a hot meal and a warm bed through our Housing and Shelter services is a reason to give. The hundreds of women who find the courage to face a new life after incarceration through our innovative Chopping 4 Change program is a reason to give.

Over 650 indigent adults would be left vulnerable if not for LMM's Guardianship Services. Each of them is a reason to give. And hundreds of young people in our youth services program find a foothold in adulthood thanks to your gifts. Every person who comes to us—hurting, forgotten, and oppressed—is an answer to the question, "Why give to LMM?" Because at LMM, people who struggle have the opportunity to be healed, remembered, and respected.

In these difficult, uncertain times, your donation demonstrates your concern—that you haven't forgotten the people in our community who face devastating circumstances. Your gift helps us make a world of difference

to our participants. We need your financial partnership now, more than ever. Please give generously.

The process of giving is easy. Visit www.lutheranmetro.org to make an online donation. If you'd like, you can send a check to Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, 4515 Superior Ave, Cleveland OH, 44103.

If you'd like to provide an estate gift, or a planned gift through an IRA rollover, a donor advised fund, a donation from your stock portfolio or other financial instrument, please don't hesitate to call Kate Maver, Director of Development at 216-658-7204.

Vote For the Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services Levy



On March 16, Governor Mike DeWine announced his intention to postpone Ohio's primary election scheduled for March 17. This postponement, he admitted, was dependent on a judge approving the delay. A few hours later, a judge in Franklin County ruled against the delay, and a dramatic back and forth commenced, keeping the status of the election in flux. Ultimately, in-person voting was cancelled after the Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton enacted a rarely used authority to cancel an election due to a public health emergency. This was a bold move, making Ohio the only state to cancel in-person voting on March 17.

It is important to note that the primary election was delayed, not permanently cancelled. While there will no longer be in-person voting, individuals can still vote absentee through April 28.

The HHS levy (Issue 33), which includes a 0.8 mill increase remains on the ballot. The levy would raise an additional \$35 million for critical health and human services programs for Cuyahoga County. According to Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish's proposal, increased funding would support the county's kinship care program, restore funding for mental health services, expand universal pre-K and address the cost of inflation for all health and human services expenses. At LMM, funding from the HHS levy directly benefits the Men's Shelter at 2100, Haven Home family

overflow shelter, the Next Step Youth Shelter, the Chopping for Change program and the Guardianship Services.

We are proud to share that at the February Board of Director's meeting, LMM's Board approved a resolution expressing LMM's support of the levy and encouraged the LMM community to advocate for its passage. It is clear now, more than ever, how critical these funds are to the health and wellbeing of the LMM community. We hope you will join us in supporting Issue 33.

If you have not yet voted, you can request an absentee ballot at www.ohiosos.gov or call your local Board of Elections. For those who have a disability or are unable to access the postal system, contact your local Board of Elections for alternative options. To learn more about the levy, please visit www.voteforhhs.org.



Community Partnerships in Bloom

With the season officially changing over to spring, and National Arbor Day coming up on April 24, LMM is gearing up for sunny skies and warmer weather. What better way to bring in springtime than with gardening and flowers?

Thanks to the generosity of the Holden Arboretum and the Cleveland Botanical Garden, LMM staff were given a spring surprise with a donation of 70 beautiful orchids. In addition to their orchid donation, these organizations are both partnering with the Men's Shelter at 2100 Lakeside to work on multiple community gardens.

The Cleveland Botanical Garden, a University Circle-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to enriching and inspiring through gardens, and the Holden Arboretum, one of the largest arboreta in the country located in Kirtland, Ohio, are both dedicated partners to LMM.

In recent years, the Men's Shelter was able to convert the formerly empty lot next door to 2100 Lakeside into a welcoming greenspace that has evolved over the years. The 2138 Lakeside lot currently houses a gazebo, fire pit, picnic table and a bike livery. With the help of the experienced teams at Holden and the Botanical Garden, that greenspace also includes a community vegetable garden.

"That you have recognized the opportunity to create an oasis of beauty in your garden and reconnect the guys with nature and the good in the world, is fantastic," says Caroline Tait, Vice President of Horticulture & Collection with Holden Forests & Gardens.

As the weather warms up, the Shelter will continue to work with these two organizations to build on the vegetable garden and will also begin to tackle a new garden location on the corner of E. 23rd and St. Clair Avenue.

Partnerships like these allow LMM to continue offering more opportunities to Men's Shelter residents to build a sense of community and value.



The garden at E. 23 and St. Clair is ready for 2020 planting.



Harvesting zucchini at the E. 23rd and St. Clair garden in 2019.

Next Step Program Receives Furniture Upgrades

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry's Next Step program consists of our Westhaven Youth Shelter, which serves children between the ages of 12-17 who are without a home or a stable living environment, as well as our Independent Living Program, which serves youth ages 16-21 who will be exiting the foster care system. Operated under LMM's Youth Residential Services program, these services remain a vital need for the youth in our community.

Through the generosity of Judge Richard and Mrs. Carol Markus, both the Westhaven Youth Shelter and our Independent Living Program have received brand new furniture sets including couches, loveseats, dining tables and over 20 beds.

As Youth Residential Services Director Linda Torbert put it, this donation was "simply amazing." These new couches and chairs provide the youth with a welcoming environment to come back to after school, while the upgraded mattresses, bed frames and bunk beds fill each youths' room with a comfortable place to lay their head down at night.

This furniture donation came at just the right time, as both the Westhaven Shelter and the apartment complex that houses LMM's Independent Living Program are currently in the process of receiving further upgrades. Coupling with the new furniture, the interior of Westhaven is receiving a new coat of paint, along with updates to the staffing quarters. The Independent Living building has been repainted, updated with new appliances and the kitchens have recently been remodeled.

Donations and improvements that make the shelters a more welcoming and comfortable space for the young adults are vital, as they allow for the betterment of their lives and an opportunity to give them a brighter future.



Donated bed in Westhaven Youth Shelter



Donated dining sets in Westhaven Youth Shelter



Living area at Westhaven with new furniture donations



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Our Mission:

To promote shalom (peace, well-being) and justice (right relationships) through a Christian ministry of service and advocacy with those who are oppressed, forgotten and hurting.

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To add, delete or change your address, contact 216.696.1882 or mail@lutheranmetro.org.

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