Meal Service Doesn’t Skip A Beat

“Providing meals is one of the most important things we do,” says Kelly Henderson, Executive Director. “We serve two meals a day, 365 days a year, and that stability is crucial to our members. If you’re worried about where you’re going to stay that night, if you’re carrying everything you own with you, if you’re afraid that you can’t pay your rent, at least you know that you can come here and have a meal.”

Ministry with Community provides breakfast and lunch daily, to anyone who walks through our doors. Before the pandemic, we would welcome our members into the dining room twice a day for hot, family-style meals. For now, that simply isn’t safe.

“We never anticipated that we would have to completely shift the way we provide our most basic service, but when the pandemic hit, we managed it as smoothly and gracefully as we could, and we didn’t skip a beat,” says Kelly.

In March 2020, when we first closed our dining room, we switched to handing out sack meals, but that didn’t last long. Soon, we were serving hot breakfasts and lunches to-go for nearly every meal.

More than a year later, we’re still serving meals to-go to allow for safe distancing, but the food looks almost identical to what we served pre-pandemic.

“We only serve two cold lunches each week at most, but we make some of the best sandwiches. We pack them with 6 ounces of meat or protein, and a good serving of fresh spinach,” says Michael Albanese, Kitchen Manager. “We make sure everyone gets a decent meal that will satisfy them.”

Nutrition is something that Michael takes seriously. “We’re limiting sugary items and increasing the amount of protein and produce we serve. Obviously, that makes it more expensive. We work with other local organizations like Loaves & Fishes, Hungry for Christ, and the Southwest Michigan Food Bank to keep our costs down.”

Even with the challenges of the pandemic, we served 114,670 meals in 2020, or approximately 313 per day. “With packaging things to go, there are extra steps,” says Michael. “But we have a process and we just have to stay organized. My job is to serve a meal that is nutritious, protein-packed, tasty, and good looking, and our members tell us that they appreciate it.”
Ministry with Community Against Hunger
April 1 - April 30, 2021

To support Ministry with Community’s meals program.

Chefs Against Hunger won’t be held in 2021, but we are still fighting hunger!

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ministry with Community will not hold Chefs Against Hunger in 2021.

While this comes as no surprise, we are still saddened to announce it. For the second year in a row, we won’t get to gather with you, fill up on delicious hors d’oeuvres, and watch our friends and favorite local chefs compete to create the best dish. It’s also disheartening to know that those same great chefs are experiencing the pandemic’s effect on the restaurant industry, first-hand.

In lieu of the event, and to give the chefs a break this year, we will hold Ministry with Community Against Hunger in April. This campaign will support our meals program.

Throughout the month of April, Ministry with Community and our amazing Board members will be reaching out in the community to raise funds and awareness.

For more information, visit our website at ministrywithcommunity.org.

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic a Success!

The Family Health Center’s mobile clinic made a very special stop in our parking lot on March 16th!

In partnership with the Health and Community Services Department of Kalamazoo County, they set up a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for those experiencing homelessness.

Sixty-five people were vaccinated that day, and more clinics are planned throughout the Kalamazoo area!

Young Supporters Get Creative to Fight Hunger

Maggie Westra is the CEO of Westra’s Wonders, which she runs with her sister Marley Westra, the company’s CFO. They repurpose old furniture and sell their creations. They’re also generous donors to Ministry with Community.

Did we mention that Maggie is 15 and Marley is 9?

Using their company’s profits, Maggie and Marley recently sponsored a meal at Ministry with Community. A sponsored meal covers everything we need to serve a freshly prepared, nutritious breakfast or lunch to hundreds of our members.

We were so inspired by their generosity that we wanted to learn more about what motivates them.

Head to our blog at ministrywithcommunity.org/mwcblog to read the full interview with Maggie Westra!

“I’ve been given so much, so I should probably be able to give back. I like helping out with the community.”

— Maggie Westra
Meals at Ministry with Community

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Ministry with Community has remained open and continues to provide breakfast and lunch daily.

In our community:

Kalamazoo ranks 65 out of 83 counties in Michigan for access to reliable and healthy food sources.*

1 out of 7 of our neighbors in Kalamazoo County is experiencing food insecurity.*

What we do:

114,670 meals were served in 2020. That's 9,556 meals per month, or 313 per day!

On average, our meals cost $2.00 to create. Our generous donors provide funding for our meals, and we keep our costs down by working with other organizations like the Southwest Michigan Food Bank and Loaves & Fishes.

During the pandemic, we have switched to providing our meals to go. This makes meals more available to those outside our building and keeps everyone safe by allowing physical distancing.

We've harvested over 2,500 lbs. of fresh vegetables and fruit since we first started our garden in 2018! This keeps our budget lower and our members healthier.

"I come down here when I'm out of food at the end of the month. It helps me stay on track with my health because I'm diabetic. They give me a variety of good food. It gives me that get up and go!"

— R., MwC Member

*2020 County Health Rankings
In Memory Of:

Levi Alberti
Robert Schellenberg
Margaret Ann Al-Obeidi
Amy Louise Anderson
Patricia Anthony
Amy Louise Anderson
Sr. Mary Bader, CSJ
Anonymous
Helen Bartley
Lynwood and Chris Bartley
Noel Boyle
Eileen Boyle Chlebana
Betty E. Brown
Robert and Judy Rapp
Janet Buchtrop
Charles and Kathy Buchtrop
Gail L. Hummell
Jack Builger
Robert and Candis Warner
Alva Burleigh
Faith Burleigh
Barbara M. Chmiel
John Chmiel
Janet Christianson
Charles Christianson
Maurie Coady
Don and Ellen Frisinger
Dr. Bill Combs
Joe and Rosalie Novara
William A. Decker
Greta Decker
Bryan Dewey
Richard and Elen Fox
Jack and Margaret DeZeeuw
Rupert and Bonnie Benson
Peggy G. Drew
Jeanie Marie Greenen
Joseph E. Ebenhoeh, Jr.
Dorothy and Guy Ebenhoeh
Nancy Ellenin
Jane Ellen-Dela Paz
Russell H. Engbers
Fred and Ann Arnoldink
James Nicholas Fetts
Edgar and June Marlett
Harold L. J. Grenchen
Lenore J. Lorison
Sistina J. Grenchen
Lenore J. Lorison
Herbert and Pauline Hannon
Betty and Yoshi Yagi
Harold “Bud” Hanselman
Susan Hanselman
Robert Hegel
Carol L. Hodges
R. Thomas and Linda Powell
Sheila Hood
Alma and Walter Jones
Walter and Mary Isabell
Bev and Alton Pollard
Janet Johnson
Laurel E. Hazel
Don Juchartz
Doris Juchartz
Mort Judd
Dick and Jane Easton
Thomas Kasdorf
Amy Louise Anderson
Dr. Fliny M. Keep
Georgia Joan Keep
Jim and Colleen Koestner
Larry and Laura Huggett
Michael Krasko
Dirk and Susan Dragt
Dr. Michael Kudlas
Mary T. Meagher
Judith Lawson
Kenneth Lawson
Dean Lewis
Jeanene Lewis
Peter Livingston
Bruce and Cheryl Briney
Floyd and Ann Luginbill
James and Julie Luginbill
Bud and Phyllis Maranette
Ann Maranette Rilecy
John Maranette
Ann Maranette Riley
Dorothy Markowski
Pamela and Martin Obed
Fran Mason
Jean and Robert Cox
Linda Mason
Sheila and Gary Bigelow
Paul and Christine Simon
Louise B. McCary
Robert and Ann Kilkuksie
Duane Mickelson
Mary Mickelson
Arien “Shando” Miller
David and Marilyn Balcom
John and Donna Bargo
Encore Club
Barbara and Kenneth Helbling
Dale and Michele Holder
Howard and Hildy Kerney
David and Amy Lehr
George and Linda MacLeod
John Mason
Richard Arlen and
Eleanor Miller
Thomas Hagadone and
Pam Miller
Wilma Mills
MWC Staff
Clarieth Jeanne Plott
David and Larrie Person
Gay H. Woolrich
Jack Miller
Wilma Mills
Max Miller
Wilma Mills
James R. Mosby, Jr.
Sue A. Schiller
Margaret Mary Mosher
Kristine Pioch
Donald Nakken
Gregory Nakken
Jackie Nemedi
Ron Nemedi
Carla Noe-Emig
Kalamazoo Area Women’s
Club GFWC
Diana L. Obed-Harris
Pamela and Martin Obed
Ella May O’Connell
Anonymous
Our Parents
Kevin and Ginnie Doerfler
Robin Joel Peterson
Judy and Paul Paget
Herbert and Margaret Pierson
James and Elizabeth Pierson
Roy Robert “Bob” Rasmussen
Grace and Mark Cook
Alexander and Anne Lipsey
Ron Refor
MWC Staff
Retah
Loree A. Bagley
Jennifer Bagley
Susan and James Sanders
Ken Sarkozy
Tom and Lauri Holmes
MWC Staff
Beverly J. Schmitt
Chris and Richard Thomas
William J. Venema
D. Terry and Sharon Williams
Butch Schascheck
Patricia Schascheck
Geraldine Schmatz
James and Mary Grace
Thomas Owen
Susan Sefton
Susan C. Gilmore
Sara Elizabeth Sevigny
Kevin Robertson and
Kathleen Robertson King
Patti Shireman
Dinah Eisenberg
Ira Shull
Anonymous
Christopher F. Dick
Patricia Dolan
Janet L. Grafis
Debra Lam
Prudence McCabe
MWC Staff
Martha Terpstra
Bob and Marion Tracy
A. W. Simha
Elizabeth Roelofs
Mary Skinner
Carol Anne Beckius
Daniel Smith
Mary Marquardt
Judy Smith
Francis (Frank) Somers
Caroline Ham
Jerry and Barbara James
The Steenhaus Family
Chester Taylor
Carol Gray
Jeanne Tindall
Penny Jennings
Marilyn Weichhand
John Wilks
Winship Todd
Allan and Shirley Heavey
Dennis Toussaint
Patricia Koziminskas
Dale E. Van Antwerp
Leona Van Antwerp
Jean Van Zoeren
Janet Schley
Joyce Vliek
Ted Vliek
Faith Joy Werden
Nathan Drummond
Florence, Barney, and John Westra
Karl Westra
Richard Guy Wilcox
Edwin and Michayla Page
Chuck and Jiedy Wilson
Earl and Nancy Hyde
Sherry Yeats
William and Martie Schinzer

In Honor Of:

The Alexander Family
Anonymous
The Hans and Rebecca
Anderson Family
Brian and Julie Schneebberger
All Essential Workers
Linda Stieve
Greg and Lexi Andrews
Karen Keene
Rob and Maya Andrews
Karen Keene
John and Agnes Bennink
Penny and Philip Bennink
Jessie, Ben, Evie, and Lizzie Birleif
Angela Taylor
Phil Boothroyd
James and Debbie Mellein
Wilma Tays
Dr. Susan Caudfield
Ronald and Jane Kramer
Ethlwyn Dewitt
Pam Fenno
Mary Budde and
Raymond Diffenderffer
Linda DeYoung and Tim Finton
Walt Bunce
Shirley Rouse
Sue Kovats-Beil
Julie Rogers and Edward Orloff
Phyllis Curtis
Patricia Curtis
Ben Damery
Julie Rogers and Edward Orloff
Norma Dearborn
Pam and Kip Schunn
Jeff Juday
Jean DenOelar
James W. Stafford
Mikka Dryer
Anonymous
Dr. David and Joan Dyke
Judy Smith
Karen and Ed Dziolowski
Melanie J. Perry
William Dzol
Mark and Karen Krinick
Peter M. Fallon
Timothy and Carla Fallon
Beverly and John Felz
Rita J. Stevens
Dorothy Geddeke
Rosalind and Bernard Stutz
Megan Hayden
David and Rhonda Newman
Kelly Henderson
William and Nancy Richardson
Kelly Henderson and
the staff at MWC
Tyler Little Family Foundation
Bobby Hopewell
David and Janet Snyder
Pattish Huiskamp
Elizabeth Upjohn Mason
Dan and Nan Janecke
Donald and Linda Hunt
Treby Johnson
Arline Johnson
Don Jones
Michael and Julie Cartier
Jeffery and Debbie Juday
Norma Dearborn
Timothy and Brandie Juday
Norma Dearborn
Janet Karpus
Margaret Bayless and
Frederick Hall
Thomas Owen
Katherine Houston
Hildy and Howard Kerney
Michael and Sherry Kerney
Rob and Donna Keller
Melanie J. Perry
Alice Kemlering
William and Nancy Richardson
Kate Kirk-Keenan
Lee Kirk
Marlena Kirton
Dennis and Pamela Hjelquist
Gwen Lanier
The Andrews Family
Denise Lisiecki
Lynn Scott
Loyal friends of Lulu and Jean
Anonymous
Sponsor a Meal

November 26: Breakfast & Lunch: North Park Reformed Church – Happy Thanksgiving!

November 27: Idris, Hammed, and Labib Daranjoh in honor of their birthdays

December 3: Breakfast & Lunch: Friday Night Friends

December 5: Cheetah Run Group

December 9: Breakfast & Lunch: Infinity Advisory Group in celebration of all their wonderful clients

December 12: Breakfast & Lunch: Westminster Presbyterian Church Men's Breakfast Group in honor of Bill Neff

December 14: Breakfast & Lunch: Betty Upjohn Mason in celebration of Captain Andrew Orosz's birthday

December 15: June Marlett in memory of James Nicholas Fett

December 19: Society of Muslim Women

December 20: Sue Beadling in memory of Virginia Gilbertson Achenbeck

December 31 and January 1: Breakfast & Lunch: The Tyler Kids in honor of Mary L. Tyler

January 3: Breakfast & Lunch: The Heartfelt Foundation in loving memory of Jake and Everyone

January 6: Breakfast & Lunch: The Knight Family

January 8: Harold Ballen in celebration of his birthday

January 11: Breakfast & Lunch: Infinity Advisory Group in celebration of all their wonderful clients

January 14: The Tocco, Lealofi, and Gardiner Families

January 18: Breakfast & Lunch: Ann Marantette Riley in memory of Bud and Phyllis Marantette and John Marantette

January 20: Breakfast & Lunch: Maggie Westra and Marley Westra of Westra's Wonders

January 23: Breakfast & Lunch: Judi and Ron Berridge, Joanna and Jim McIntyre in celebration of Jeanne Harterensteins's 95 years of living (and still going!)

January 24: Breakfast & Lunch: In honor of Marcia Sizer

January 26: Breakfast & Lunch: Phioptochos Society at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

February 4: In memory of Ruth Diephuis

February 7: Breakfast & Lunch: The Behrens Family in honor of Russ and Richard Behrens's birthdays – you are missed!

February 8 and February 11: Breakfast & Lunch: Mary Powell in memory of her beloved husband, James H. Powell

February 13: Kalamazoo Area Women's Club in memory of Carla Noe-Emig

February 16: Gayle Stephenson in memory of Winship A. Todd

February 17: Breakfast & Lunch: In honor of Lynne Wathen's birthday

February 20: Breakfast & Lunch: James Smolinski in memory of Phyllis Smolinski

February 23: Kellogg Community Credit Union

February 27: Portage United Church of Christ

March 1: Breakfast & Lunch: Joan and Dave Wendling

March 3: The Kilkuskie Family in memory of Louise McCary

March 5: Breakfast & Lunch: Anonymous

March 8: The Brazilian Oven Team including John, Silvana, Kristen, Lucas, Lyseang, and Kim

Thank you to everyone who has participated in our Sponsor-a-Meal program!

If you're looking for a way to thank someone, celebrate a milestone, or remember a loved one, consider sponsoring a meal at Ministry with Community.

A gift of $350 provides a 3 course meal for 300 people. A gift of $500 provides both breakfast and lunch for 300 people.

On the day your meal is served you and your honoree will be recognized on Facebook, Twitter, and by mail.

Please contact Matt Claus, Development Director, at 269.343.6073 x131 or via email at mclaus@ministrywithcommunity.org to sponsor a meal!

In Celebration Of:

Marlena Kirt's birthday

Dennis and Pamela Hjelmquist

Merry Christmas to Anita Lalulippe

Lisa Vanski

Merry Christmas to Mary L. Tyler

The Tyler Kids

My 102nd birthday

Agnes Bennink

Bob Poe's 80th birthday

Robert and Mary Poel

Please note: Memorials and Honorees listed here were received November 20, 2020 through March 9, 2021.

Memorials and Honorees received after March 9, 2021 will appear in the next newsletter.

To correct any errors, please contact Laura Perron at 269.343.6073 x132 or at office@ministrywithcommunity.org.
114,670 meals served in 2020

Visit ministrywithcommunity.org/mwcagainsthunger for more info.

Check out our wish list at ministrywithcommunity.org/wishlist.

Follow us on social media at:

facebook.com/KzooMwC  @KzooMwC

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