February 2019 News & Updates

Reflections from the Director

Bouts of bitterly cold weather, the government shut-down, and another one pending, have hit poor people especially hard. People receiving SNAP benefits to help them buy food have been worried about those being stopped. The government released February benefits in January to ensure they'd be available, but recipients also worry about stretching those until March. More people are seeking help from food pantries like ours. Meanwhile, the bitter cold has put homeless individuals in serious danger. The First Church of the Nazarene in Malden, with the help of the City and many community partners and volunteers, opened the Malden Warming Center (MWC) on January 1st. It's not a shelter with beds, but you can get in from the cold, have soup & hot drinks, and stay from 8 pm until 6 am the next morning, Monday through Friday. Several of our patrons are finding refuge there...including a gentleman 75 years old who has been living in his car for two years...and two sisters in their 60s who come to our evening meals and who just lost their home because the one sister who was supporting them lost her job in the Spring. They are now living in their car. The cold also reminds us how very much we need our new building. Our oil tank finally reached the end of its usability - right when temperatures plunged! We are halfway toward our $2.9 million goal to build our new facility bringing kitchen, multi-purpose hall, pantry and offices "Under one Roof" by the end of 2019. I try to keep in mind these words of Saint Teresa of Calcutta: "To show great love for God and our neighbor we need not do great things. It is how much we put in the doing that makes our offering something beautiful for God." Each of us doing small things with great love, united in our goal, is how we move forward. I invite you to join in our efforts so we can move forward together!
Please click here for more information on our "Under One Roof" Campaign.

**MLK JR Service Day**

A flurry of activity at the Melrose Highlands Congregational Church on Martin Luther King Jr. Service Day. Amazing community of adults and youths preparing a dinner of shepherd's pie, salad, cookies all prepared right in their kitchen. Delivered to BOL for our Tuesday programs - our evening meal and outreach to homeless families living in motels. We are so grateful for this annual event and our wonderful long time partnership with MHCC. Check out more pictures.

![MLK JR Service Day](image)

**Everett Food Pantry welcomes new Coordinator**

We welcome our new Everett Food Pantry Coordinator, Brandon King, who worked alongside Lou Barsotti during January to "learn the ropes!" Lou will continue to volunteer at our Malden Food Pantry. We need volunteers in Everett and encourage anyone interested to give it a try! Please call Brandon at 857-888-3452, or come to Everett City Hall, 484 Broadway, ground floor entrance at the corner of Church Street:

- Every 3rd and 4th Thursday of the month:
  - 12 - 1 pm: help unload the truck
  - 12 - 3 pm: help make up grocery orders
  - 3 - 5 pm: provide interpreting in Spanish, Portuguese or Haitian Creole for pantry applicants.

**Standing in the Gap...**

Kathy is a senior citizen living at 89 Pearl Street in Malden. She likes to stay active and enjoys helping distribute the groceries BOL delivers every month to residents in her building - and 12 other buildings in Malden, Everett, Melrose and Medford. She says a lot of her neighbors, especially the Chinese residents, also help to unload the truck and organize the grocery items. Kathy says that cereal, rice, pasta and milk are always snapped up by residents, more so than canned goods like soup or beans. But they especially appreciate the fresh vegetables and fruit, and would like to see even more. Already, almost 50% by weight of the food BOL gets from the Greater Boston Food Bank is produce. But we continue to
go after funding to increase the amount of fresh fruits & vegetables we can provide to the community, and especially the elderly.

* Although this story is true, the photo used does not correspond to the actual people in order to protect their privacy.

**New Temporary Meal Site continues at First Baptist Church in Malden.**

We will continue to serve our evening meals from Tuesday through Friday at the the First Baptist Church, while repairs to the Salvation Army location are ongoing throughout the month of February. We are extremely grateful to our friends at the First Baptist Church for stepping up in our time of need. Our evening meal program is as follows: Tuesday through Friday, at the First Baptist Church, corner of Main & Salem Streets in Malden, 5:30-6:30pm.

**Malden Warming Center**

The Malden Warming Center (MWC) is a temporary night center for those that are homeless to be welcomed and find a place of warmth during the harshest winter months. It seeks to serve those experiencing homelessness by providing safe shelter and warmth, recognizing each person’s inherent dignity and unique circumstance.

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 8:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m., January 1 - February 28. Volunteers: The MWC needs people to volunteer their time for 8 weeks during the hours of operation in two 5 hour shifts. To sign up to volunteer, click here.

**Shop and Smile**

If you shop at Amazon, every purchase will result in a donation to Bread of Life if you register at Amazon Smile and select us as your designated charity. The big shopping season is upon us and this is a great way to give back! You can sign up at Amazon Smile here.

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781-397-0404 | info@breadoflifemalden.org | www.breadoflifemalden.org

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