

LOAVES AND FISHES

DULUTH, MN

WINTER 2011

COST: FREE

We're still here

Joel Kilgour

The story of Loaves & Fishes almost came to an end this year. With a near-empty credit union account, one house closed and in disrepair, and no live-in volunteers committed past the summer, we seriously considered calling our 22 years a good run.

But like the other Good News, ours was announced by the discontented, the homeless and the looked-down-upon. As word of our demise reached the street, an accidental campaign swung into effect. Men and women who had come to know this place as home - who rely on it for a permanent address, food and friendship - began to call and visit us alums with worried questions and offers of help.

It was the kick-in-the-pants we needed. Loaves & Fishes is more than a leg up for people in crisis. It's a place of belonging and meaning in a sometimes lonely and brutal world.

I am happy to report that the campaign worked. We're still here.

We're still here because of the efforts of our founders and long-time volunteers, who met regularly to work out the future of this place and re-build support in the broader community. While the agenda was heavy, it was good to reunite with the likes of Steve O'Neil, Liz Carlson, Donna Howard, Meg Kearns, Jay and MaryB Newcomb, Michael Latsch & Melanie Lahr, Jeff Corey, Amy Wilcox, Ozone Bhaguan, Melissa Boyle & Jen Stenersen and Mark Engebretson.

We're still here because so many of you responded to our appeal with gifts of time, money, prayers and kind words. Too many people to mention have stepped up to paint, plumb and clean our houses; and counsel and care for our guests. We're especially touched by the outpouring of support from former guests like Chris and Barb, who stayed with us as young people and have been among this year's most reliable volunteers.

We're still here because of Kate Bradley, who has kept the Olive Branch running without interruption, sometimes single-handedly.

The house has been filled to the rafters (literally... ask Kate how many times she's hit her head on the ceiling of her attic bedroom). Our guest families have suffered more than their share of hard times, but the Branch is still a joy to visit, abuzz with toddling, hair-braiding, homework-helping, baking, birthday-celebrating and lots of laughing.



Lucy, seen here holding down the fort, is thrilled to see the Dorothy Day House peopled again!

We're still here because of the people who join us as live-in volunteers for whatever time they're able: Cathy Zimmerman of Hayward, who spent several weeks with us this summer and brought gifts of houseplants and green cleaning; Oliver Pentimaki of Madison with his impressive smile and love of conversation; Diane Emerson the bicycling "global volunteer" who happened upon us by accident while visiting her home town after a stint in Kashmir. Inside you'll meet Chelsea Froemke and James Merle, students at Bemidji State and St Scholastica, respectively, who are currently sharing their lives with us.

We're still here because of the spirit of creativity and flexibility that differentiates L&F from an agency. You can see that creativity in the Bike Cave, a free community bike shop in the basement of Dorothy Day House. Bike Cave mechanics have helped hundreds of people - many with no other transportation options - build and maintain their own bicycles out of donated parts. And the flexibil-

ity can be seen upstairs, where we haven't had enough workers to take in overnight guests, but have pulled in teams of volunteers to offer meals, hair-cuts, tutoring and game nights.

We're still here because L&F is a needed vehicle for social transformation. We've hosted round-table discussions, teach-ins and movie nights on topics like disability & normalcy, time banking and factory farming. Michele continues to take the lead in a budding sister city relationship between Duluth and Rania, Iraq. And recently we've offered support to Occupy Duluth, the new youth movement against poverty and corruption.

While we can see the light and are excited about our future, we're still in an Advent time and hours from dawn.

We continue to rely on your financial support. These days we're getting many requests for help with rent and food, and face major repairs to the Dorothy Day House foundation.

We also need your hands and heart in this work. Please consider joining us for a time as a live-in worker, or regular volunteer. We're always seeking people who can take shifts at the houses, cook meals, care for children, and maintain these old houses.

Loaves & Fishes needs you. More importantly, the people at the bottom of this nation's economic house of cards need you. In our two decades we have never seen the kind of poverty and inequality now facing our community. There are not enough shelter beds in Duluth for the surge of newly homeless: every day we receive calls from people who have suddenly been jolted out of the middle class and into the streets.

As the Tea Party and Wall Street continue their Herodian assault on the poor, workers and migrants; as social programs are devastated to feed the mega-rich and their security state; our little "miracle on Jefferson Street" is as important as ever.

The good news of Loaves & Fishes is that a group of dedicated people can change the world. We do this without unreliable government or foundation money, or a complex nonprofit infrastructure. All it takes is love and willing hands. Please join us!

Some of the people you can meet at Loaves & Fishes



Chelsea Froemke

“Guess why I smile a lot? Ah, cause it’s worth it.”
-*Marcel the Shell*



Olive Branch became my home this August. I moved to Duluth for the semester to complete my Social Work degree. Previous to this I had been living and studying in Bemidji. I spend my days interning at CHUM, hanging out at Olive Branch, and exploring Duluth on my bicycle. I am truly thankful to be a part of Loaves and Fishes. Maybe I am just in the thankful mood, seeing as Thanksgiving has just passed, but as I reflect on my time here it is apparent that I have grown in ways I never anticipated. This December I will be leaving Duluth for a semester abroad in Swaziland. It will be hard to say goodbye to this community and I sure hope that they will have a place for me when I return!

Diane Emerson

“An aura of peace we are bound to possess if self-offering is our sole duty.”
-*Sri Chinmoy*



Since December 2006 I have lived as a full time traveling volunteer for local and international charities, community groups, NGOs, and whatever else looks appealing. No home, no car, just a bicycle, trailer and tent.

I discovered Loaves & Fishes while visiting my sister in Duluth. I love the philosophy, the activism, the radical hospitality of Loaves & Fishes. I knew I could contribute to the community, and I would be challenged and would grow. I was accepted as a volunteer, and joined the community September 29. I can only stay until Thanksgiving, so I hit the ground running. There is so much I wish to share in addition to my house duties: time banking to strengthen our communities and reduce our dependence on large corporations, cash, and federal government, Nonviolent Communication to end conflict, Emotional Freedom Technique to heal ourselves, and hazelnut trees so we can feed ourselves in the future.



Marcella Jackson

I moved into Olive Branch in early October after losing my job and then my apartment here in Duluth. After moving in, I found a new job. I’ve appreciated the hospitality and friendship I’ve found here. It’s been nice to have a place to call home while I’m getting my financial house in order. What makes it feel like home is when I can cook for everyone sometimes and they all really appreciate it.

Family style dinners every night are a lot of fun when we share our happsies and sadsies* of the day; the support of this community is awesome. I’m learning about conservation and the environment living here, getting into recycling and even composting! I like hearing about the activist work that the community is into, but I don’t think I’d want to land myself in prison for protesting. The stress of being homeless & feeling like I was alone has subsided, and for that I am thankful. *Join us for dinner some night to learn about happsies and sadsies!



Anne Rogotzke

Anne Rogotzke (center) has provided delicious and wholesome meals to the Olive Branch for many years. After reading our spring appeal, she stepped up her support and is now a regular house duty volunteer!

Here Anne is leading an informative round-table discussion on nutrition and wellness. We believe that education is both the right and duty of all people, and we’re grateful to Anne and others who have lent their expertise to our monthly discussion series.



Barb Allen

It has been such a joy to return to this community after fifteen years. I lived at Olive Branch as a guest when I was nineteen. About two months ago I got back in touch with the Loaves and Fishes community. I spend time here weekly helping out around the

house, playing cribbage, sipping coffee, and making music. This place has become a second home to me. I am so thankful for the support and friendship that I have found within the Loaves and Fishes community. When I am not at Olive Branch or Dorothy Day House, you can find me participating in a number of different activities at The Rainbow Center, bowling, spending time with my friends, or enjoying a cup of coffee at Jitters.

Adeline Wright

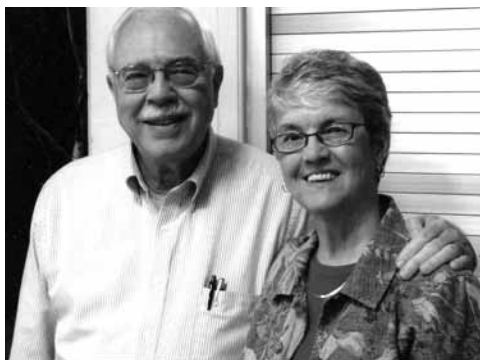
Everyone deserves to feel good about their appearance, but it's hard to keep up when you're living on the streets or simply can't afford to go to the barber. Dorothy Day House has been offering free haircuts every Monday night thanks to volunteers Adeline Wright and Sherry Liabraaten. Says Adeline:

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to continue doing my favorite things in combination with our beloved Dorothy Day House. I love to cut hair and I love to extend hospitality to my community.



Marsh & Mary Kay Thornton

After retiring from teaching eight years ago, Mary Kay approached Michele about volunteer opportunities. Knowing what a good cook Marsh is, she suggested becoming a Meal Angel. So once a month, Marsh cooks up his



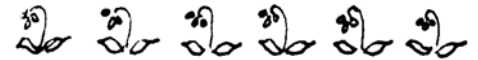
delights and brings them to the always grateful people at the Olive Branch. (He also has enjoyed the challenge of learning to cook for the vegetarians). The best part is eating there along with the guests and community members. We have found that sharing the meal at the house gives us a fuller experience and a great chance to get to know the guests. We feel that our lives have been enriched because of these interactions and the positive experiences have led us to further involvements such as House Duty and painting projects. We feel very grateful to be part of such a loving and compassionate group.

James Merle

Seeing as I am a senior at The College of St. Scholastica studying humanities and philosophy, I was intrigued by Dorothy Day and her lifestyle. I moved into Dorothy Day House in early November, and I



became involved in Loaves & Fishes through the Bike Cave where I have volunteered as a mechanic for the past year. Fun Fact: Dorothy Day and I share the same favorite author, Fyodor Dostoevsky. He's so great! Since I only have two semesters left of school, I spend most of my time immersed in my studies and writing short stories. My favorite things so far since moving into the community have been learning to cook with a wider variety of raw ingredients, meaningful conversations with guests, and the sense of family that I feel away from home.



Who we are:

Loaves & Fishes is a community of people working to build "a new society within the shell of the old." Through our houses in Duluth's Endion neighborhood, we offer food, shelter and friendship to migrants and people experiencing homelessness; through our Bike Cave and gardens we promote voluntary sharing of skills and resources for the good of the community; and in halls of power and on the street we speak out for a more just and peaceful society.

Loaves & Fishes is a 100% volunteer-run effort. Current full-time volunteers are: Chelsea Froemke, Greg Boertje-Obed, James Merle, Joel Kilgour, Kate Bradley, and Michele Naar-Obed, with tactical and emotional assistance of Lucy the cat. Many others contribute as handywomen and men, providers of food, agitators, financial donors and more. We invite you to join us in whatever way you can.



Loaves & Fishes

1614 Jefferson
Duluth, MN 55812

www.duluthcatholicworker.org



Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/duluthcatholicworker

Join us for Loaves & Fishes Christmas Party!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11th, 2-5PM

St. Paul's Church (17th Ave East & Superior St.)

RSVP! Call Olive Branch: 728-0629

CAN YOU HELP? We need non-violent children's toys and adult hats, mittens, scarves and warm socks for gifts at the party. Donations can be dropped off at Olive Branch (1614 Jefferson).



"No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless. There's too much to do."

-Dorothy Day

Loaves & Fishes really, **really**, **REALLY** needs:

Live-in volunteers to help run the houses. 25-30 hour per week commitment, room and board covered.

Meal angels to prepare and deliver dinners on a monthly basis. We feed 10-15 people per house nightly.

House duty volunteers to take 4 or 5-hour shifts at the houses: answering phones, light house-keeping and spending time with guests.

For more information, please call Kate at Olive Branch: **218-728-0629** or email duluthcatholicworker@gmail.com

Loaves & Fishes Wish List:

- Dishwashing soap
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Herbal or green tea
- Coffee
- Canned tomatoes (whole and diced)
- Fruit juice (no added sugar)
- Eggs
- Wild rice
- Butter
- Toothpaste
- Tampons and pads
- Baby lotion and baby shampoo
- Men's shaving products
- Floor lamps
- Living room chair/recliner
- Sturdy set of bunk beds
- DTA fare cards (\$5 & \$10)
- Volunteer plumbers and electricians