

# MINISTRY WITH COMMUNITY

rebuilding lives

August 2020

## MwC Provides a Safe Place During the Pandemic

### Staying Open, Keeping People Safe

**“Some people don’t have the opportunity to stay home right now,” says Janet Karpus, Associate Director. “We’re open because we are here to keep those people safe. To provide a space where they can wash their hands and keep their clothes clean. We’re here to make sure they can take a shower and they have a mask to wear. A lot of other places are closed, but we’re open for them.”**

In March, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced many businesses and organizations to close, MwC staff worked quickly to modify our services and enhance sanitation with the goal of keeping our doors open.

“We decided early on that we were going to serve as many people as we could for as long as possible,” says Phil Behrens, Facilities Coordinator.

Phil was instrumental in adapting the building to increase safety for staff and members (those we serve). He installed Plexiglas barriers around the Service Desk and Welcome Desk, two high-traffic areas. He also worked with the Security Team to determine how many people could be inside the building to maintain a safe distance between one another. For the first few months, a maximum of 45 members were welcomed into the building at a time. Our capacity is now up to 66 members after opening more rooms.

To make sure that our facility stays clean and safe, our Custodial Team has worked even harder than usual. In addition to our already enhanced cleaning, we close daily from 11:00am – 12:00pm, and again at 4:30pm to allow for additional disinfecting.

Brian, Custodian, says that, “When this all first started, the extra tasks seemed like a lot, but now it’s our normal routine and we all pitch in. We do everything we can to keep things clean. We sanitize constantly.”



Phil Behrens, Facilities Coordinator, has been busy keeping the facility running smoothly and looking like new.

## Same Services in a Different Way

“Limiting the number of people in the building is heartbreaking,” says Kelly Henderson, Executive Director. “But we’re still providing all of our services, just with masks on and extra space between us.”

Moses, Safety & Security, is often stationed at the Welcome Desk where he is the first to greet members and hand them a clean mask. “We’re living in different times,” he



David, Cook, in the kitchen as he prepares a hot to-go meal for our members.

says. “It’s confusing for some because the rules have changed, but our members still trust us and that trust is so important for us and for them.”

Since the pandemic began, we have worked without volunteers to keep the number of people in the building as low as possible.

“We really miss having the volunteers here. Our members miss them too,” says Tony, Member Services Assistant. “Not having them here means more work for us, but it also means that I’m getting more chances to talk to our members, and they’re still getting the resources they need.”

Kelly notes that, “During busier times of the day, we’re seeing members come in to do what they need to do and then leave so we can let someone else in. We’re still busy, it’s just a different flow.”



Hand sanitizer is available throughout the building for members and staff.

The mission of Ministry with Community is to empower people to make positive life changes.



## Meals To-Go

Before the pandemic, our dining room would fill up with members and volunteers for family-style breakfasts and lunches every day of the week. Due to the risk that would now pose, we have switched to boxed and bagged meals. Members that are in the building during meal times eat in the Commons Area to maintain distance from others. Meals for anyone not in the facility are provided to-go at the back door of the kitchen.

Michael Albanese, Kitchen Manager, admits that it's challenging, "Some things are hard to serve in a box or bag and we're trying not to use so many disposable items. It also costs more to purchase things like individual cartons of milk. Our goal is to have a healthy variety in our meals and use donor funds responsibly."

Even with the extra challenges, Michael says, "My staff is doing really well. They are so organized. With their hard work, we've been able to serve some hot breakfasts and four hot lunches each week."



"It's confusing for some because the rules have changed, but our members still trust us and that trust is so important for us and for them," says Moses, pictured inside the Welcome Desk "bubble".



A view of our Service Desk, surrounded in a plastic barrier.

## It Takes All of Us

"People in our community, our Board, our donors, they've all really come together to support us," says Phil. "It's given us all extra hope when we see a donation of homemade masks come in from a volunteer, or bottles of bleach from a local healthcare facility. Knowing that people care keeps us going."

That generosity in our community has allowed us to stay open during the most challenging time we've experienced as an organization. It has made it possible for us to maintain safety for our members, and provide hero pay bonuses to our hourly, front-line staff who have been in our building every day.

"It may never be the same again," says Janet, "We have to keep looking at new ways to do our work. We have a big vision for what we want to do for our community. We want to serve our members well. We want to keep working on anti-racism. We want to keep empowering people."



**"Some people have nowhere else to go right now and this is a refuge for them."**  
- Moses, Safety & Security



Tony (left), Member Services Assistant, and Bill (right), Custodian, pose after a mid-day cleaning of the facility.



## Thank You, Rotary Club of Oshtemo!

We would like to thank the Rotary Club of Oshtemo for securing funds to support some of the additional costs we've encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic. The group presented us with a check for \$5,750 while standing our garden, which they also helped to fund. Thank you, Oshtemo Rotarians, for your ongoing support of our work at Ministry with Community!

Tony (left), Member Services Assistant, and Linda (right), Safety & Security, inside the Service Desk "bubble".





## In Memory Of:

**George Acker**  
Nancy H. Acker

**Bob Ailes**  
Laura Van Vlack

**Lois Alberti**  
Robert Schellenberg

**Michael Beck**  
Gene and Jean Miller

**John C. Bennink**  
Agnes Bennink

**Diane Tanas Betz**  
Caroline Williams

**Betty Brown**  
Robert and Judy Rapp

**Janet Buchtrup**  
Gail K. Hummell

**Ted Curtis**  
Phyllis Curtis

**Dr. James Dolan**  
Brian and Barbara Menlen

**Jennifer Dole**  
Dorothy and Vincent Larkin

**Dick Dozier**  
Larry Clemens

**Don S. Duke**  
Judy and Roy Pool

**Gunther Fonken**  
Agnes Hughes

**Betty Georgeau**  
Brian and Barbara Menlen

**Lowell Gettle**  
Nancy Engemann  
Chris A. Goodwin  
Norma Rehme

**Harold L.J. Grenke**  
Lenore J. Lorion

**Jean Grice**  
Gene and Jean Miller

**Russell and Edna Hazel**  
Laurel E. Hazel

**Liz Heystek**  
Deanna Lingg

**Maude Hess**  
Rhiannon Zielinski

**Mac Howard**  
Rae Lee Howard

**Fr. Mike Howell**  
Patrick O'Hara and  
Nancy Groenewold

**Sarah Renstrom-Jaksa**  
James Jaksa

**Jack Johnston**  
Susanne J. Johnston

**Colleen Koestner**  
Larry and Laura Huggett

**Peter Livingston**  
Carolyn and Richard Chormann  
Judy Smith

**David V. Lorion**  
Lenore J. Lorion

**Fran Mason**  
Donald and Martha Martin

**Linda Mason**  
Sheila and Gary Bigelow  
Lois Plantefaber and  
Patty Maher  
Steve McMahon  
Tom and Denise Richards  
John and Joyce Ruhrop  
Bill Krasean and Nancy Stern

**Paul Michael**  
Aprill Brandt  
Ronald and Jacalyn Warners

**Mike and the MwC Kitchen Crew**  
Robert and Mary Poel

**Devlin Miller**  
Barbara and Mark Pearson

**Phyllis Rappeport**  
Paula and Franklin Presler

**Retah**  
Loree A. Bagley

**Bernadine Richert**  
Carla and Tom Obringer

**Jalen Roberts**  
Megan and James Roth

**Patricia Sangalli**  
Joe and Rosalie Novara

**Jean Schmitt**  
Colleen and  
Patrick VanSlambrouck

**Susan Sefton**  
Kathy and Richard  
Dirrenberger

**Robert Silberman**  
Laurel E. Hazel

**A. W. Sinha**  
Elizabeth Roelofs

**Daniel Smith**  
Thomas and Donna Lambert

**Jeffrey Smith**  
Thomas and Donna Lambert

**Phyllis Ann Smolinski**  
James Smolinski

**Burnadean Trimmer**  
Cynthia Sanfilippo

**Steven Tyler**  
Ruthie Tyler

**Carol Urban**  
Mary and Donald Brown  
Martha R. Cohen  
Ronald and Nancy Crowell  
Robert and Barbara Felkel  
Allan and Shirley Heavy  
Joe and Rosalie Novara  
Mary F. Oudsema  
Charles Van Zoeren  
Barbara and James Walters

**Dale E. Van Antwerp**  
Leona Van Antwerp

**Jared Wend**  
Alexander and Anne Lipsey

**Faith Werdin**  
Nathan Drummond

**Florence, Barney, and John Westra**  
Karl Westra

**Don and Ruth Wisser**  
Marshall and Joyce Draper  
Judy and Jeffrey Smith

## In Honor Of:

**Al Andrews**  
David and Linda Mayer

**All Essential & Front-line Workers**  
Barbara Albanese  
James and Jayne Mayer

**All those helping others during the COVID-19 crisis**  
Linda Stieve

**Beautiful Souls of Unity Church**  
Jane Adams

**Phil Boothroyd**  
Marilyn Vineyard

**Dr. Susan Caulfield**  
Sharon and Evan Kokaes

**Sis Dewitt**  
Pam Fenno

**Ruth Diephuis**  
Dave and Carol Diephuis

**Pastors Jerry and Janet Duggins**  
Marlin Gerber

**Lindsey Green**  
Karen E. McPhail

**Craig and Mary Jbara**  
Tom Cretsinger

**Don Jones**  
Robert and Mary Poel  
Marilyn Vineyard

**Janet Karpus**  
Paula and Franklin Presler

**Bill and Jeannette Maxey**  
Pamela and Mark Cassino

**Prudence McCabe**  
A. Gregory and  
Mary Ann Laurell

**Caroline Meyers**  
Flip Rosenberry

**MwC Members and Staff**  
Prudence McCabe

**MwC Staff**  
Amy Louise Anderson  
Anonymous  
Byron and Nancy Foster  
Chris and Richard Thomas

**MwC Staff and Volunteers**  
Catherine and John Niessink

**Tom Robertson**  
Karen E. McPhail

**The Sisters of St. Joseph**  
Sisters at the Congregation  
of St. Joseph, Wichita

**Paul Sizer**  
Tim Cathersal  
David Cornelius

**Chris Thomas**  
Crystal Ross  
Susan Singer

**Randy Thorburn**  
Lenore J. Lorion

**Ruthie Tyler**  
Steve and  
Anne VanTongerren

**Terry Weber**  
Martha Aills

**Art Winslow**  
Susan Bergholz

## In Celebration Of:

**Jay Forman's Graduation**  
Allan and Shirley Heavey

**Mercer Hardy's Birthday**  
Mike Hardy

**Michaela Martin's Graduation**  
Allan and Shirley Heavey

**Jason Neelay's Graduation**  
Allan and Shirley Heavey

**Tommy and Nicole Platte's Marriage**  
Thomas and Mary Platte

**Frank Somers's Birthday**  
Barbara Somers

**Mikayla Williams's Graduation**  
Allan and Shirley Heavey

**Please note:** Memorials and Honorees listed here were received February 19, 2020 through July 6, 2020.

Memorial and Honorees received after July 6, 2020 will appear in the next newsletter.

To correct any errors, please contact Laura Perron at 269.343.6073 x132 or office@ministrywithcommunity.org.

# Our Summer 2020 Garden, Growing Hope

“One of the most important things our members need is hope. I believe that the garden is a wonderful visual representation of hope,” says Sarah Cain, MwC Social Worker.

In addition to her Social Work duties, Sarah oversees our garden and organizes planting and harvesting. She also shares her knowledge for all things green with the members and volunteers who provide daily care for our plants. The garden is the one place where we've offered volunteer opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The outdoor space combined with scheduling volunteers and members by individual or household allows for better safety.



Our new shed is the perfect place to store our gardening tools.



Fresh green peppers and a radish.

“During the pandemic it is especially important when our lives are so chaotic to see the green plants growing and producing fruit and vegetables,” says Sarah. “Our members frequently stop by the garden when I am there and comment on how good it looks and how excited they are to try the food that is harvested for breakfasts and lunches.”

Thanks to Sarah’s oversight and the hard work of our members and volunteers, the garden is flourishing.

“The kitchen staff are excited every time we bring in a harvest and the green beans are so good! We will also be picking a lot of watermelons and squash soon!”



Sarah Cain, Social Worker, with a recent harvest from the garden.



Bean plants blossoming



A view of the garden in late June.

**May 21:** The Brazilian Oven Team: John, Silvana, Kristen, Lucas, LySeang and Kim

**June 4:** Breakfast and Lunch: Satish and Supriya Deshpande

**June 11:** Theresa and Joe Swabash of ARK LLC Landscaping

**June 18:** Mary Smyser for loved ones past and present

**July 2:** Richard and Carolyn Chormann in memory of Peter Livingston

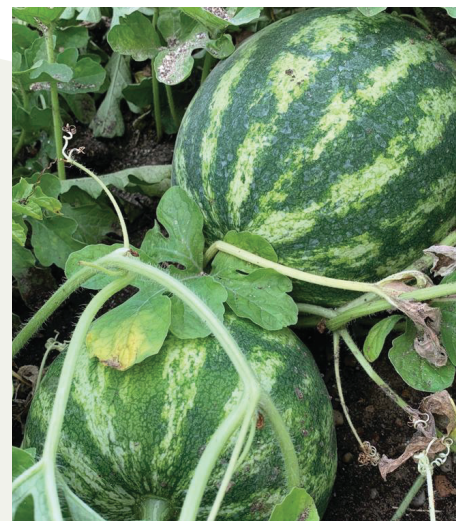
**Thank you to everyone who has participated in our Sponsor-a-Meal program!**

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 Janet Karpus, Associate Director, at 269.343.6073 x138 or via email at [jkarpus@ministrywithcommunity.org](mailto:jkarpus@ministrywithcommunity.org) to sponsor a meal!



Watermelons have been plentiful this year!

# Sponsor a Meal

**March 19:** Breakfast and Lunch: Greg Laurell in honor of Prudence McCabe

**April 12:** Lord of Life Lutheran Church in celebration of Easter

**April 23:** Breakfast and Lunch: Laura Van Vlack in memory of her husband, Bob Ailes

**April 24:** Ted Vliek in memory of Joyce Vliek

**April 27:** Deborah Dezeeuw in honor of Margaret Dezeeuw

**April 29:** Breakfast and Lunch: George Manley in celebration of Gladys Manley’s birthday

**May 1:** Notre Dame Club of Kalamazoo

**May 8:** Breakfast and Lunch: Karol Dill in memory of her husband Everett Dill

**May 10:** Breakfast and Lunch: Sue and Ken Kuchenreuther in memory of Martha Walters

**May 14:** Breakfast and Lunch: Jim and Jayne Mayer in honor of front-line workers





# JUNE 2020 NUMBERS

Despite the need to limit the number of people in our building, we are still providing all of the same services. Below are some statistics on service use during the month of June 2020.



**8,200**

boxed meals were served to members in the building and those that took their food to-go.



**830**

showers were taken.



**931**

loads of laundry were washed.



**319**

members used MwC as their mailing address. 1,044 have used our address so far this year!



**146**

members worked with our Social Work Team.

Love dignity?

Love hope?

Love food?

Love community?

Love rebuilding lives?

Leave a legacy of what you love.

Leave your legacy at Ministry with Community.

## Your Legacy at Ministry with Community

Your gift today is a legacy that will live on in another's journey. You can also establish a different kind of legacy by including Ministry with Community in your will or estate.

Planned gifts may include:

- Wills and bequests
- Life insurance
- Gifts of securities
- Retirement assets and other giving options

To discuss how to leave your legacy at Ministry with Community, contact us at [development@ministrywithcommunity.org](mailto:development@ministrywithcommunity.org) or 269.343.6073 x131.



**"We're doing everything we can to keep everyone safe. I think we're doing well. We're probably harder on ourselves than we need to be but look at what we're trying to do."**

**- Phil Behrens, Facilities Coordinator**



## Wish List

Can you help us by donating these much needed supplies?

Deodorant (travel size)  
Shampoo (travel size)  
Soap (travel size)  
Conditioner (travel size)  
Lotion (travel size)  
Lip balm  
Two-blade razors  
Tampons  
Maxi-Pads  
Toothbrushes  
Shaving Cream  
Band-aids

Adult size pull-up diapers  
Bath Towels & Washcloths  
Sugar (packets or bulk)  
Peanut butter  
Jelly  
Coffee mugs (standard 10 oz. size and shape)  
Washcloths (dark colored, terry cloth)  
Socks (new, adult size)  
Underwear (new, adult size)  
All weather shoes (adult size)  
Belts (adult size)  
Metro transit bus tokens  
Two-wheeled luggage  
Duffel bags  
Backpacks

## Get social with us!

Follow Ministry with Community on Facebook and Twitter to stay up-to-date with news, events, inspirational stories, and more!



facebook.com/KzooMwC



@kzoomwc

***We never sell, rent or share your personal information.***

*Design and layout are generously provided by Bev Kirk.*

## Have we made any mistakes in our database?

Please let us know if:

- You have moved or are planning to move
- You have a seasonal address you'd like us to use
- The name(s) on your newsletter need an update
- We are sending you duplicates of any mailings
- You would like to be removed from our mailing list

Contact Laura Perron at 269.343.6073 x132 or at [office@ministrywithcommunity.org](mailto:office@ministrywithcommunity.org) to have your record updated or corrected. Thank you for helping us maintain a correct and efficient database!

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