



LOAVES & FISHES

Groceries for Neighbors in Need

THE FISHNET

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE A WEEK'S WORTH OF GROCERIES TO PEOPLE WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY FACING ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS.

www.loavesandfishes.org

BEHIND EVERY BAG THERE IS A STORY

It all happens so quickly. Your child is sick and you need to take a couple of days from work to be with her. It takes longer than expected, and suddenly you're out of sick days, finding yourself having to do without a paycheck or two. Medical bills and living expenses start to add up. You find yourself looking for a miracle.

So often that's how it happens. A sick child, a cancer diagnosis, a lost paycheck. There are hundreds of reasons why people may find themselves with no food in the house and no idea where their next meal will come from.

Teneille knows this firsthand. She drives a school bus for a living, but when her two-year-old daughter developed pneumonia, she missed almost a month of work. She ran out of sick days and with mounting medical bills, quickly realized she needed help.

A few years ago, a colon cancer diagnosis stopped **Bob** in his tracks. Thankfully, today he is a cancer survivor, but lingering symptoms have prevented him from working. He tells us his income is pretty low and the limited amount of food stamps he receives sometimes isn't enough to get by. "You never know what someone is going through. Even though I had a job, things happen," he says.



Teneille and Bob are two clients we met on the same day at a Loaves & Fishes food pantry. Thanks to you, Teneille, Bob and thousands of others in Mecklenburg County won't have to worry where their next meal will come from. **You are part of the story of every bag of groceries in the arms of someone who is looking for a miracle.**

Bags that are filled with a week's worth of nutritionally balanced groceries to feed hungry neighbors in need. As Teneille tells us, "It was very scary, but my children won't be hungry since I wasn't able to provide." That's the miracle of Loaves & Fishes.

WE ARE GROWING TO MEET THE NEED!

At Loaves & Fishes, it is our vision for all people in our community to meet their basic hunger needs by having access to nutritious food. Meanwhile, it is a harsh reality that while the economy has improved overall since the recession, it continues to worsen for those at the bottom. Housing costs in our area have grown significantly while wages among the working poor have remained relatively flat.

For several months, Loaves & Fishes has researched where there are gaps in access to nutritious food in our county. In an effort to help close those gaps, we will open an additional 13 full-sized and “mini” pantries by early 2018. (See Box)

Each of these new pantries is located in areas identified as the crescent of poverty that surrounds uptown Charlotte. A pantry at Hope Covenant House, located near Brookshire Freeway and I-85, opened in the spring. The newest to open include pantries at Northeast Seventh Day Adventist Church in Hidden Valley, Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church near W. Morehead St. and Wilkinson Blvd. and Nations Ford Community Church near Nations Ford and Tyvola.

These full-sized pantries are joined by the opening of mini pantries at Servant’s Heart of Mint Hill and eight local college campuses to serve students working and studying in hopes of achieving upward mobility but who struggle in the short term to make ends meet. These include Johnson C. Smith University, UNCC and each of the six campuses of Central Piedmont Community College.



A “FULL-SIZE” PANTRY VS. A “MINI” PANTRY?

A full-size pantry provides a week’s worth of nutritionally balanced groceries for each member of the family.

A mini-pantry provides a two-day supply of groceries for clients accessing the services where the mini-pantry is located. Loaves & Fishes mini-pantries are located at Crisis Assistance Ministry, the Dept. of Social Services, Jewish Family Services, Goodwill Industries Opportunity Campus, Servant’s Heart of Mint Hill, CPCC, JCSU, and UNCC.

SHARING SUNSHINE

It can be something as simple as having a snack. When you are poor and every dollar counts, being able to take a snack to school can be a very big deal, especially in middle school, when all you want to do is fit in. So when we have extras of items not on our bagging list, our Quality Control Coordinator, Angie Brumer, makes sure nothing goes to waste.

Angie has forged partnerships with roughly 100 local agencies, organizations and schools – cutting down on waste and getting items into the hands of those who can put them to good use. When we received a pallet of charcoal, Angie connected with a group headed to Houston, where it was badly needed after Hurricane Harvey.

Which brings us back to snacks and to school counselors such as Laura Morris, who stop by our warehouse to pick up any extras. Laura works with homeless students at Alexander Graham Middle School and on this day she picked up a couple of boxes of snacks and flavored water. She tells us that at her school, “We do the very best we can



for all students, particularly for those that have extra needs. Loaves & Fishes plays an important role in that.”

She calls it “sharing sunshine”, when a student comes into her office and she can tell them to grab something from the treat box. “They see when all the other kids can unwrap a treat from home so having something as simple as a snack can make them feel special,” says Laura. “They appreciate that positive reinforcement for working hard.”

TOUR DE TURNS



For everyone who rode, walked, volunteered and to all of our generous sponsors – THANK YOU for making the 2017 Tour de Turns such a tremendous success!

The August 26 cycling event netted over \$47,000 for Loaves & Fishes at a critical time of year. The funds were used to purchase items needed to stock pantry shelves depleted by a busy summer. THANK YOU!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Find out all the latest happenings at Loaves & Fishes by signing up to receive our e-newsletter and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. To sign up for all the latest updates, upcoming events and ways you can get involved, visit www.loavesandfishes.org.

- » **WSOC-FM 103.7 Thanksgiving Giving Day** - November 17 join us at Coyote Joe's where we will be collecting funds and turkeys for Thanksgiving!
- » **Harris Teeter Harvest Feast** - Annual Food Drive and Donation Card Campaign at your local Harris Teeter store throughout November.
- » **Loaves & Fishes Holiday Cards** - For a donation of \$10 a card, you can honor the special people on your list. To order, visit www.loavesandfishes.org.



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