



## Coronavirus Update: April 11, 2020

**KEEPING YOU IN THE KNOW** about how COVID-19 is affecting our people, our programs, our methods of delivering essential services like food and shelter, **and how you can help us continue to serve our Guests.** We continue to focus our energy on the care of Guests in our Shelter, Food Pantry, and Soup Kitchen through modified programs and collaboration with The City of Lawrence and many other non-profits.

### TEMPORARY PROGRAM CHANGES

- **NEW:** The Shelter has moved our Guests to a quarantine facility (Doubletree Hotel in Andover) run by the city where families can shelter in their rooms, thus offering an improved option for preventing the spread of the virus (details below).
- **NEW:** We are in final negotiations with the City of Lawrence to use our Ishah House building as a COVID-19 recovery center (details below).
- Soup Kitchen continues using a “meals to go” system Monday to Friday for breakfast and lunch.
- Food Pantry continues to fulfill emergency food orders and has converted our Wednesday distribution of groceries to a “groceries to go” format.
- We have closed our Thrift Stores until further notice.
- We have closed our Sewing and Culinary Arts classes until further notice.
- We have suspended our crucial Volunteer Program (over 5000 annually) until further notice.

### A MESSAGE FROM JEFF HASSEL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR April 11, 2020

The focus inside Lazarus House continues to be service to our Guests – through the Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry, Shelter, and Transitional Housing programs. Miguel and Almarie, the leaders of our Soup Kitchen, are redesigning the way we staff that part of the ministry. Previously run with only Miguel and three cooks, the concern was that if one person on their team contracted COVID-19, the entire team would have to isolate for 14 days, and no one would remain to keep the kitchen going. This week, they created a plan with three teams, each with a leader and three cooks to “COVID-proof” the Soup Kitchen and keep us serving meals every day.

Since my last update, I am pleased to report that Lazarus House and the City of Lawrence found traction for a partnership to turn our Ishah House facility into a COVID-19 Recovery Center. This facility will receive patients from the hospital who no longer need hospitalization for COVID-19 but are still contagious. We will lease our building to the city at no charge for the next several months to give those patients a place to heal and provide the hospital the chance to free-up beds for patients who are in critical need. *It is inspiring to be able to make such a partnership for the benefit of our community!*

Given the design of our Shelter to hold as many Guests as possible, our Shelter staff have been losing sleep over the chain reaction that would occur if a Guest or staff person came down with COVID-19. We cannot isolate people at the Shelter. Our Guests have now moved into the new city shelter in the Doubletree Hotel in Andover; this gives our Guests private rooms so they can isolate. Carmen, our Shelter Manager, will continue case management with them and welcome them back to our Shelter when it is safe to do so.

The Doubletree contracted with the City of Lawrence to convert their premises to a shelter. Kudos to the Doubletree owners for this generosity and community mindedness. *In a beautiful moment, our shelter staff threw a surprise BABY SHOWER for a Guest who is nine months pregnant. Please see our Facebook page for the story!*

Several people in our Capernaum Place Transitional Housing Center have tested positive for COVID-19. The good news is that all families have apartments, so isolation and sheltering in place is possible for our Guests. This week, in an act of generosity on the part of donors, we gave Easter Baskets *and a bottle of bleach* to every family. That peculiar combination of gifts is a sign of the times, wouldn't you agree?

The Food Pantry was in full operation on Wednesday, giving bags of groceries and 10 lbs of potatoes to each of 660 Guests using a "grab and go" system. Ken Campbell, the pantry manager, built a transparent plexiglass barrier that fills the door of the pantry yet allows us to slide food to our Guests. Even though everyone is social distancing, the staff use masks and gloves, and most Guests are wearing masks, everyone felt safer with this barrier in place. The Food Pantry will be open again on Wednesday, April 15, and pantry staff continues to prepare emergency food orders as needed for people in crisis.

If you would like to support Lazarus House in these tough and ever-changing times, a financial donation is best.

I wish you and yours a blessed Easter – a season of Hope for us all!



Reverend Jeff Hassel  
Executive Director

**Note:** Lazarus House leaders continue to make necessary changes, as recommended by the CDC, to the way we serve, sanitize facilities, use personal protective gear, and operate. We are keeping safety for all at the forefront of our minds and actions.

#### **HOW YOU CAN HELP US CONTINUE TO SERVE OUR GUESTS**

- PRAY for our staff, our Guests, and the Lawrence Community
- [DONATE](#)

#### **LAZARUS HOUSE – A Beacon of Hope in the darkness of poverty and homelessness.**

Lazarus House helps courageous women, men, and children living in poverty restore their dignity and self-respect. We offer life-saving services in the areas of food, shelter, clothing, and education.

and Jesus said:

**“Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.”**

- John 14:1 NLT