

FUMC HOMELESS MINISTRY INFORMATION

Our ministry serves an average of 130 guests each Saturday on 51 Saturdays a year, and volunteers are needed at First United Methodist Church (FUMC, 77 West Washington), and at our partner church, Grace Episcopal Church (Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn). FUMC is used to prepare hot food for our guests, and to store clothing items for our guests. Grace Place is used to serve the food and distribute the clothing.

- Hot food is cooked at the kitchen of FUMC on either Thursday or Friday, and is then reheated and transported to Grace Place on Saturday morning. We receive donations of food items from Panera Bread, Au Bon Pain and Trader Joes, which volunteers pick up on Fridays and Saturdays and transport either to FUMC or directly to Grace Place. The pickups and food transportation tasks do require a car which many of our volunteers don't have, so these are often hard slots to fill.
- Food prep at FUMC requires food safety handling licensing, however, as long as we have one of our licensed cooks in attendance, others are able to help. The person heating the food on Saturday also needs help getting items ready for transport to Grace Place and this does not require licensing.
- On Saturday morning at Grace Place, volunteers help to prepare sandwiches, salads, grits and other quick food items depending on what donations we have received that week.
- Prior to the meal being served we have volunteers who provide a short inspirational message (3-4 minutes) for our guests and volunteers.
- Once all of the prep is completed, some volunteers help serve our guests the meal, while other volunteers distribute clothing and toiletries to our guests. A couple of times a year we also distribute backpacks which are specially designed by a local company for homeless individuals. In addition to the distribution of clothing on Saturday, we have opportunities for work during the week to sort and launder donated clothes at FUMC.
- As the meal is being served we have a couple of volunteers that begin to clean the dishes/trays/utensils that have been used in the prep of the food and then continue with the items that are used for the serving.
- In addition to our volunteers, we have a couple of dedicated roles each week, including a site supervisor and a registration person.
- Finally, we have a group of volunteers that donate 12 -14 dozen uncooked eggs each week, which are then hardboiled by our cooks. These are used either to make egg salad sandwiches, or they are put out as part of the food service. Hard boiled eggs are a good and easy source of protein for our guests and are also easy for them to take along with them as a meal for later in the day. Eggs are purchased by the person scheduled for the week and they deliver them to the FUMC church kitchen by Friday of that week.

All of this requires an average of 20 volunteers each week. Tasks include picking up food donations from our vendor partners, driving food and other items between FUMC and Grace Place (before service and then after the service), food prep, serving, clothing distribution, and dish cleanup.

The tasks performed at Grace Place on Saturday (except for dishes) require our volunteers to arrive at 7:30 and remain until service is complete which is typically between 10:15 and 10:30. The volunteers on dish duty can arrive a little later, typically 8:30 or 8:45. Volunteers performing food prep or food serving duties are required to wear a hair covering (hair pulled back in pony tails or clips for women and hats of some kind for men and women) as well as food safety gloves. We do provide hair ties and hair nets if volunteers don't bring their own, and we also provide gloves.

We use a "self service" volunteer registration tool called Volgistics, which allows volunteers to go into a web site and sign themselves up for tasks and dates for which they are available, so volunteer today!

Thank you for your interest!

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