



## Newsletter June 2020



### A Hand Up Through The Pandemic

*At Exodus Place, the largest transitional housing facility for men in Michigan, we are not backing down from our fight to end homelessness, as we continue to offer a hand up to men in need, now more than ever.*

[Donate Today!](#)

When news broke of COVID-19 in Michigan, we stepped up our already-rigorous cleaning efforts and informed our members on the best practices for avoiding infection. When coronavirus reached Grand Rapids, we provided face masks to all of our members and enacted strict social distancing policies. When one of our members contracted the virus in early May, the Kent County Health Department tested everyone in our building, and Fulton Manor housed our COVID-positive members for quarantine. We were able to limit our positive cases to only 11 at the time, and we have been able to keep this number low.

During this crisis, the homeless population is one of the most vulnerable, and they need our help. Using a COVID-19 screening process, we continue to accept new members, currently housing 117 men who would otherwise be on the street or in local shelters, where coronavirus is spreading rapidly. Under our roof, these men are able to train for new employment, allowing them to join the workforce which is rebuilding the economy as the state reopens. Even under normal circumstances, our haven is essential to the Grand Rapids community and remains a focused nonprofit to get men back on their feet.

Even with our successes, however, we are facing difficult challenges. In order to avoid contact between members and kitchen staff, we have been forced to serve all meals in disposable containers, which is unfortunately expensive to maintain. Similarly, purchasing additional health and sanitation items has been a major financial drain on our organization. To continue our vital services, WE NEED YOUR HELP. A donation of \$10 will provide 5 meals for a single member, and \$100 provides enough disposable containers to serve our members safely for two whole days.

Simply donate online at [www.exodusplace.org/give](http://www.exodusplace.org/give), or mail your gift to the address below. Together, we will make a direct positive impact on the lives of men in need.

[Click here to donate!](#)

Or mail gifts to:  
Exodus Place  
322 Front Ave SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

## Making a Difference

We are proud to be a part of the Grand Rapids community, and this crisis has reminded us what that truly means. When we faced difficulties as a result of the pandemic, several businesses and organizations reached out to help. Thank you to the following:

**Feeding America, Heart of West MI United Way, and United Forest Products**  
We would not be able to feed our members without these organizations. With consistent food donations, they keep our kitchen running! Watch how they helped make our annual barbecue happen:



### Fulton Manor

Housing our COVID-positive members for quarantine, Fulton Manor has been majorly responsible for limiting the spread of coronavirus in our building.

### Great Lakes Coca-Cola

Just down the road from Exodus Place, this facility has donated tens of thousands of bottles of Coca-Cola products to our organization. See their generosity in action below!



**Kent County Health Department**  
When one of our members tested positive for coronavirus at a local hospital, the Kent County Health Department tested all of our members in one day, and provided us with results quickly. Because of this, we were able to quarantine positive members and limit the spread of COVID-19 in our building.

**Our Kitchen Table**  
When we asked the community for help with planting our garden, this organization reached out immediately to give us advice on which plants to grow and how to grow them. They also organized plant donations to us! See these heroes in action below!



**West Michigan Sews Hope Facebook Group**  
These local heroes reached out to us at the start of the pandemic and offered to sew over 150 masks. Then, weeks later, they sewed 150 MORE masks for us! See their impact below!

## MR. ROGERS' CORONAVIRUS MESSAGE

EXodus  
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## Need Something to Binge?

Before the pandemic, Exodus Place launched an original web series, centered on a new member named Jason, who was displaced from his Grand Rapids home. Catch The Jason Project on YouTube, and watch Jason's compelling true journey through Exodus Place, as he grapples with homelessness and mental illness, meeting incredible and inspiring people along the way.

Click below to watch the full series!



The  
**JASON**  
Project

EXodus  
PLACE

## The Doctor Will Call You Now

To avoid unnecessary hospital visits, we have been able to establish telemedicine for our members through Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine. Through a private video chat, members are able to speak with a licensed physician free of cost in order to address their conditions, as well as refill certain prescriptions. We hope to continue this relationship with Michigan State University's Spartan Street Medicine organization, which provides free medical care to Michigan's homeless population.

Learn more about Spartan Street Medicine [here](#).

## Other Ways to Help

We are also asking for in-kind donations in the form of the following items:

- Surgical masks
- Surgical gloves
- Disinfectant
- 20qt double boiler pot
- Large plastic storage bins up to 50 gallons
- Men's hygiene items such as body wash, shampoo, deodorant, and shaving cream
- Small plastic garbage bins
- Clothing items including men's T-shirts (especially L/XL), men's pants, socks (especially summer socks), and boxer briefs

Call the front desk at (616)-242-9130 to coordinate pickup or drop-off, or you can always ship items to our address:

Exodus Place  
322 Front Ave SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Our mission to give a hand up to men in need cannot continue without your help.

Donate Today!



Exodus Place | (616) 242-9130 | [info@exodusplace.org](mailto:info@exodusplace.org) | [www.exodusplace.org](http://www.exodusplace.org)