

By Kara Brown, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Happy Holidays! It's hard to believe that 2023 is almost over, but I think I say that every year. We've had a very busy year at CLM. I want to share some recent stories about our work in the Food Pantry and the Bliss House.

In the Food Pantry, we've been serving record high numbers this fall. In mid-November, we gave food to 108 clients in just one day! We've had 13,659 client visits so far this year, including 1,476 first-time Food Pantry clients.

One recent first-time client told me that he wished he could still work, but his health wouldn't allow it. He is a veteran and had never been to any food pantry before. He told me about how his whole life changed when his wife passed away in her mid-fifties without insurance. He had to sell his house to pay for all the expenses. Now he's renting and struggling to pay his bills, so a friend told him about the CLM Food Pantry. I told him that we are here to provide food to people just like him who need some help to get through a hard time. He was very grateful for the food we gave to him.

Speaking of hard times, a Bliss House Alumna came up to me at a Bliss House graduation ceremony for another resident. The alumna said, "I want to thank you for keeping Bliss House open. This place is my home." She went on to say, "My Dad died last week. I've been really struggling. They have been letting me come here every day. Bliss House keeps me sober. This is my home."

From my work at CLM, I know how fragile sobriety can be. There are so many triggers that can make a person want to take a drink or drug to forget. The motto of the Bliss House is: together we can do what we cannot do alone. With your donations, you all help keep the Bliss House open for women like this alumna who needed a safe place to turn to and a shoulder to lean on in hard times. Together we can make sure there is always a Bliss House to come home to.

I want to pass on these heartfelt thanks to all of you. These are just two examples, but your donations and support make a difference to every Food Pantry client and all the Bliss House residents and alumnae. This holiday season, can we count on your donation to CLM? You can mail back the enclosed envelope, drop off a food donation at the pantry, or set up a recurring monthly donation on our website at <https://portal.icheckgateway.com/TheCenterForLayMinistries/>

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season!

Take care, Kara

The Bliss House Program

By Tiffany Mullinix, Bliss House Director

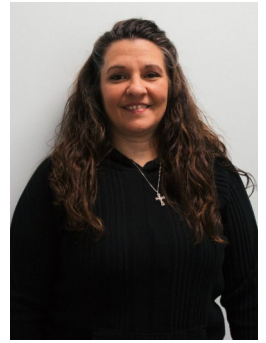
Bliss House ended the summer with a bang! We had a weekend camping trip hosted by the Alumnae Association that was a huge success thanks to all the help from our generous board and committee members. We also hosted a pool party where all residents and alumnae invited their families, and we spent the evening swimming our little hearts out. Right now, we are planning for our Christmas Party, where we can shower the ladies with lots of love and bring some cheer and joy during the winter season.

This fall our ladies were treated to a night out at Derby Dinner Playhouse to show them some encouragement for all the hard work they put into their recovery. We were also invited to attend the dress rehearsal of "The Christmas Story" at

Clarksville Little Theatre.

We continue to keep a rigorous schedule of Recovery Dynamics classes twice a week, 12-step meetings nightly, along with many other house requirements throughout the week. During the month of September, we added a Relapse Prevention class.

Since July 1, 2023, we have served nineteen adult women from Clark County and all surrounding counties and have held three graduations so far. We look forward to seeing more women complete the program and graduation as we continue through the fiscal year.



Thanks to the youth at Wall Street United Methodist Church for making care bags for our clients! Thank you for helping to feed our neighbors in need!

CLM Facebook

Are you friends with us on Facebook so you can see our latest updates, needs and events? Our account is at:

www.facebook.com/Center4LayMinistries/



What's your favorite cereal? Thanks to the Charlestown High School Student Council, CHS students, and Mrs. Stewart for donating cereal during Spirit Week to the CLM Food Pantry. They collected a van full!!!



Duke Energy employees volunteered to pack bags and boxes of food for CLM clients. They also included flyers about energy-saving tips and financial assistance for customers. The Duke Energy Foundation supported the food pantry with a \$6,000 grant to help fight food insecurity. Thanks to Duke Energy for being a great partner!



We participated in **Metro United Way Day of Action**! Thanks to these volunteers who made 200 snack bags for our homeless clients.



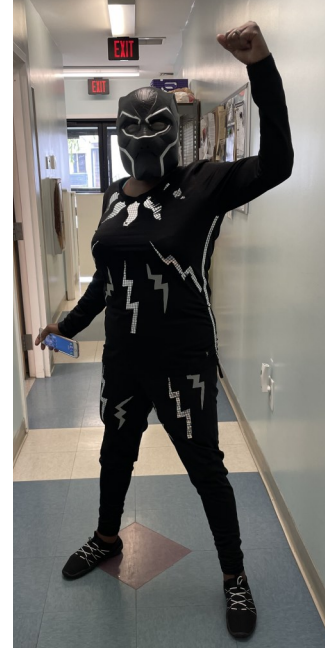
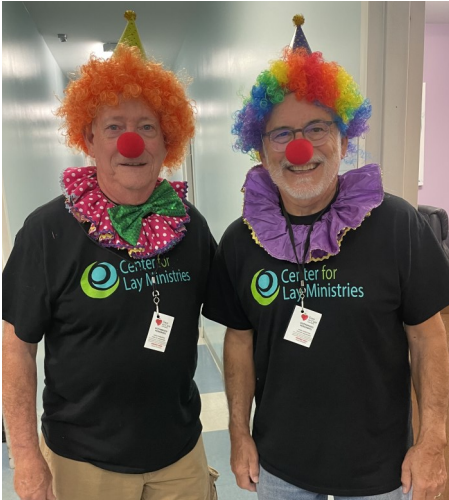
Dare to Care's Food Fight!

More than 200 volunteers from 16 companies volunteered at 18 of Dare to Care's partner pantry locations during the Food Fight day of service. Kroger volunteers helped CLM prepare food boxes for local elementary students. We donate the boxes to help students with food-insecurity over fall break.



Thank you **BelFlex Staffing Network** for collecting food donations for the CLM Food Pantry. We appreciate your help in feeding our neighbors.

Halloween Fun with Our Food Pantry Volunteers!



Volunteer Corner

By Susie Cooke, Volunteer Coordinator

Are you making an impact in your community?

“What are you doing for others?” That is life’s most persistent question according to Martin Luther King Jr. Every community needs people who will give back. We all live busy lives and finding time to volunteer can be difficult. Volunteering at the Center for Lay Ministries food pantry offers vital help to our community and enhances our mission to provide services to vulnerable populations in the local community with compassion, dignity, and respect.

As a volunteer, you choose to invest your efforts into your community and the people who live in it. You are providing a valuable service to your community and are giving back through social responsibility. Every volunteer can make a difference. Don’t underestimate your potential. No matter how small your steps are, you have the potential to make a big difference. Volunteering helps build a safer and stronger community. What many people do not always understand is that nonprofits only employ a handful of people. Nonprofits rely on the goodwill and volunteerism of others to help provide services to the broader community.

How can you make an impact in your community? Volunteer today! Below is a list of our volunteer opportunities.



Pantry Help: Volunteers create boxes of food and stock shelves.

Interviewer: This person greets the clients and helps them fill out the paperwork if needed. This position requires some computer knowledge but training will be provided.

Warehouse: This position does involve some lifting. Volunteers sort and stock the food.

Driver: Individuals pick up food from several locations. A driver must meet state requirements in order to drive the box truck.

Miscellaneous: There are other jobs that come up such as preparing Grab-N-Go Bags for our homeless population. We often need help unloading the trucks that make deliveries to CLM.

If you are interested, please contact me at volunteers@layministries.org or text 812-620-4706.

Jeffersonville Meijer Simply Give Holiday Campaign

Meijer Double Match Day: Saturday, December 16th

The Center for Lay Ministries (CLM) Food Pantry is proud to announce a continued partnership with the Jeffersonville Meijer to provide much-needed hunger relief to local families through the retailer’s customer-driven food pantry donation program, Simply Give.

“Our Food Pantry is struggling to meet the needs of our clients and we need your support of Meijer Simply Give more than ever to fill the shelves! The program allows us to provide more food to our neighbors in need each month,” said Kara Brown, Executive Director for CLM.

Each Meijer Simply Give campaign replenishes the

shelves of more than 260 food pantries. The program encourages customers to purchase \$10 Simply Give donation cards, which are then converted into Meijer food-only gift cards and given to a local food pantry in the store’s community.

The Center for Lay Ministries will benefit from donation cards purchased at the Jeffersonville Meijer store now through December 30. In addition, Meijer will double match any cards purchased on Saturday, December 16th, effectively tripling contributions made on those days. Meijer customers shopping online using Meijer pickup or home delivery can also purchase Simply Give donation cards as an add-on to their orders.

CLM Blessings for Breakfast

Thank you to everyone who attended our Blessings for Breakfast fundraising event on November 2, 2023 at 300 Spring in Jeffersonville.

CLM Executive Director Kara Brown discussed the work of the CLM Food Pantry and the increasing client numbers. Then Bliss House Alumna Angie Fessel shared her inspirational story of recovery with the audience. Breakfast was provided by Geraldine's Kitchen.

Thank you to our sponsors:

- Blue Lick Christian Church
- Kelley Curran
- Duke Energy
- First Harrison Bank
- First Savings Bank
- Ivy Tech Community College
- LifeSpring Health Systems
- Meritrust Wealth Management, LLC
- NWSB

Check out our short video about CLM's mission at www.facebook.com/Center4LayMinistries/



Bliss House Alumna Angie Fessel shared her personal story of addiction and her recovery journey at the Bliss House.

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