

WHAT CAN CONGREGATIONS AND CONGREGANTS BE DOING?

In this, as in any crisis, the most vulnerable suffer first, suffer most and suffer longest. In response, we have been communicating with some of our largest area direct service providers to ask how houses of faith and individual congregants can work to lessen the impact of our current challenges on our neediest neighbors. Faith leaders are also urged to direct congregants experiencing critical needs to these resources. There may be many people who've never before needed such support who may be unaware of the resources available.

Loaves and Fishes will be looking for new drivers to deliver boxes of food that will provide seven days of meals to people who are unable to leave their homes:

<https://loavesandfishes.org/get-involved-2/#vol-opp>

Friendship Trays always welcomes new volunteers to deliver meals (some of these volunteers will also be delivering the 7-day food boxes):

<https://friendshiptrays.org/volunteer/>

Crisis Assistance needs donations of clothing and household goods – these materials in their free store turn over, on average, every 48 hours and the need for these items will likely be greater in weeks to come.

Crisis also needs volunteers to help sort and process donations as many volunteer groups have cancelled:

<https://volunteer.crisisassistance.org/>

The Urban Ministry Center, having now cancelled the remainder of the Room in the Inn season due to health concerns, has an Amazon Wishlist of items that will be of particular value to our neighbors experiencing homelessness:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3TGAR7H8GVVFF?ref_=wl_share

The Urban Ministry Center also has other ways to donate:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScOYcQvRCy0WaYLrYFvxVFNJ0Rxhl5uVRGmPECTkQn82tRBfg/viewform>

Second Harvest, deeply involved in these efforts, is always looking for new volunteers:

<https://www.secondharvestmetrolina.org/give-time/volunteer>

GIVE --- If congregations or individuals are able to make financial gifts to sustain these crucial ministries, that is obviously immensely helpful.

PRAY – Please pray for people being directly impacted by the virus and/or by the many disruptions we are all experiencing. Please pray too for the many people, like the leaders and staff of these nonprofits and others, who are providing service in very challenging and constantly-changing circumstances.

As you become aware of other critical needs, please communicate them to ledayne@meckmin.org so that we can share them as widely as possible.

In all we do and say in these days, may we be guided by the directive common to all faiths to love our neighbors – which includes being willing to give and receive specific acts of care.