

Exploring Asylum Hill – Loaves & Fishes

Since 1982, Loaves and Fishes Ministries has been a fixture in Asylum Hill. Quietly operating in the basement of Immanuel Congregational Church, they have been serving the poor for more than 35 years. In the beginning they were addressing what they thought were a few elderly individuals who needed help with meals, but what they discovered then and have know ever since is that there are a significant population at any given time who, usually for



multiple reasons cannot take care of their basic daily needs. In fact, it was in 1989 that Alyce Hild took on the task of Executive Director of Loaves and Fishes and began the effort to address both the loaves for lunch and the skills to “fish” when that was what was needed.

Over the years, they expanded into offering sewing lessons for women as a way of making clothes for themselves and their children and sometimes to earn money sewing for others. They also now have David Chen on staff offering employment counseling in a small office near the dining room. Nearly a third of those who regularly come for the food have a job of one sort or another that does not cover all their costs. Many are on SNAP but still cannot make ends meet. David helps those who can to improve their employment to where they no longer need the assistance. There are some who began as clients and are now staff, and as such are a testament to those seeking help that their lives can get better.

In the 16 years that Alyce’s daughter Allison has been working at Loaves and Fishes she’s



become very familiar with the systems that Alyce established, so it was only fitting that when Alyce retired at the beginning of November, Allison would take over as Executive Director.

She is continuing the tradition of involving many with diverse skills and offerings in the effort to help the many with needs and unmet potential.

For more details on this effort or to join in, go to <http://www.loavesfishesministries.org>