



ST. CLARE'S MINISTRIES

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO

St. Clare's Ministries is pleased to provide Front Range Plain Region with this report of our use of your generous program grant of \$400 per month for a total of \$4,800. The funds were used to support the ministry of providing the spiritual guidance, feeding, and clothing to the homeless and working poor of the Baker Neighborhood in Denver outside every Tuesday night during the 2021 pandemic calendar year.

1. HISTORY

The Bible teaches us to help the weak and feed the poor. The Diocese of Colorado asks us to engage with the needy in poverty. St. Clare's Ministries operates at The Episcopal Church of St. Peter and St. Mary in the Baker neighborhood of Denver, Colorado. St. Clare's Ministries offer short-term respite from the harsh realities of homeless and food insecurity through the provision of meals, clothing, personal hygiene and comfort items, blankets, sleeping bags, and other support to our community members in need. In addition to these services, we offer an evening prayer service during the meal, open to all, and led by volunteer clergy and lay leaders from the Region.

St. Clare's strives **not** to be the stereotypical "soup kitchen." We welcome our guests with special amenities such as a bicycle "valet", seated dining at tables with tablecloths, hot sauce condiments, coffee carafes and ceramic mugs, volunteer wait-staff, occasional musicians as well as second helpings and beverage refills. The guests and volunteers come together in a pre-meal prayer. All diners frequently compliment both food and the friendly uplifting atmosphere. Guests at St. Clare's receive nourishment for the body and for the soul in spirit; without this wonderful service, many would go to bed hungry. With the refurbished Clothing Closet, our guests can get clean coats, clothes, shoes, toiletries, blankets and sleeping bags.

That method of operation stopped in mid-March 2020 with the coronavirus pandemic. Initially most of our many volunteers were high risk elderly people and they had to self-quarantine. St. Clare's Ministries was declared an essential ministry because we serve the homeless and working poor of the Baker neighborhood of Denver. Our way of serving food was not allowed under the Covid-19 guidelines. Therefore, St. Clare's Ministries handed out to go meals in front of the church with fewer healthy younger volunteers and staff. We also handed out to go toiletries, underwear, clothes, coats, blankets and sleeping bags. Initially our church services were not offered after mid-March 2020 because of Covid-19. We started evening prayer on the grass outside in June 2021.

2. PROGRESS AND RESULTS

As stated in our September 2020 application and as evidenced in the year-to-date summary, we continue to meet our goals of serving dinner every Tuesday, in adequate supply and within budget. Any leftover food is donated to local homeless camps in Denver. We serve a large and ethnically diverse population of both men and women. With Covid-19 we do not see many families with children, like we use to serve on regular basis.

The \$200 per month "Sponsor a Meal" grant received from Front Range Region for direct meal costs pays for the groceries for the meal on one Tuesday a month for 2021. In 2021 St. Clare's Ministries is averaging 91 to go meals a Tuesday through July 2021. Our numbers of meals are down a little from last year. We have quite a few new guests every Tuesday and our numbers of meals are always higher at the end of each month. We have been open every Tuesday night to serve the meal during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

The \$200 per month "Sponsor the Clothing Closet" grant for coats, clothing, toiletries, blankets and sleeping bags is being used to purchase those items monthly during 2021. During the first seven months of 2021 many churches, partners, and individuals have contributed used clothing to our Clothing Closet. The Front Range Region grant money has been used to supplement the clothing donations and purchase new underwear and socks for both men and women and toiletries. St. Clare's purchases blankets and sleeping bags for the winter months of the year. Our guests greatly appreciate the warmth against the cold nights. We have been open every Tuesday night to serve the clothing needs during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

St. Clare's has a Managing Director who runs the week-to-week coordination of volunteers from the 14 churches that rotate through the ministry. She also greets and manages our guests each week. The church volunteer rotation was streamlined during the early months of 2021. Starting in April 2021, our over 65 vaccinated volunteers started to rotate back into the weekly rotation. St. Clare's Ministry has a policy of no alcohol, no drugs, and no weapons to make our ministry as safe and friendly as possible. Since we operated outside all of 2021, we acquired two propane gas heaters to help keep our volunteers and guests warm during the cold nights. We anticipate purchasing an additional propane gas heater and some canopies for the upcoming winter nights.

3. CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

One of our continued challenges during 2021 is the sweeps of the homeless population by the Denver Police Department. Per a recent report by Denver Homeless Out Load when the sweep happens, the top three items lost are clothing, tents, and sleeping bags/blankets along with all the other belongings of our guests as they are taken away and never returned. St. Clare's Ministries has teamed up with Empower Field at Mile High to obtain donations of clothing and other needed items for our guests. We have teamed up with Sleep Tight Colorado to provide sleeping bags for our guests. We have teamed up with Coats for Colorado and Channel 7 to provide coats for our guests during the winter months. We are now able to serve our homeless and

economically challenged guests in ways that they need on a weekly basis to survive in the real world. With Covid-19 we are handing out to go toiletries, underwear, clothing, coats, shoes, blankets and sleeping bags from the front of the church.

For 2021, St. Clare's Ministries applied for and received grants from seven different organizations, including High Plains Region, Front Range Region, Christ Church Episcopal Church, St. John's Cathedral, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Colorado Episcopal Foundation and Oakes Home Trust. In June 2021, the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado awarded St. Clare's Ministries a grant of \$5,000 from the funds received from The Episcopal Church Pandemic Grant to the Diocese. The Standing Committee divided most of that grant funds to the feeding ministries in the Diocese. Our Board of Directors are working on the framework of our annual fundraiser for the fall of 2021.

Managing Director Elizabeth (Liz) Wolfert has been with us since November 2020 and is doing a great job of managing the ministry. Deacon Pam Stewart resigned/retired from St. Clare's Ministries in mid-May 2021 and moved away from the metro area. She was the Bishop's representative to our Board of Directors and Deacon for The Episcopal Church of St. Peter and St. Mary and has been greatly missed. The Managing Director works with our volunteer Board of Directors in managing St. Clare's Ministries in 2021 in the weekly operations with our incredibly talented volunteers from all the participating churches in the High Plains Region and Front Range Region. The Managing Director and Board of Directors is working with the Diocese coronavirus pandemic guidelines to bring our ministry back inside the old church building and parish hall. The Delta variant has put those plans on hold. Mercy Ministries trained our Board of Directors on trauma responses as they apply to our ministry in late July 2021.

As the Covid-19 pandemic changed and progressed, St. Clare's began moving back toward its former style of meal service. But it recently became clear that St. Clare's would need to continue to find ways of offering respite even while offering meals outside. St. Clare's began offering greater hospitality by moving from a strict grab-and-go style meal to offering chairs on the grass for our guests. Now, our guests can take their grab-and-go meals and sit outside at a table on the grassy lawn with others. It is St. Clare's plan to continue to offer respite and hospitality in this new way and we will soon offer games for our guests and volunteers to play and relax while they are visiting. Worship in the form of evening prayer is now conducted weekly, outside on the lawn, with music occasionally. The Holy Eucharist is provided when a volunteer priest is available.

Our roster of excellent volunteer cooks plan, shop for and prepare the delicious, nutritious, and innovative menus. We have new cooking teams from St. John's Cathedral and Episcopal Church of St. Peter and St. Mary in 2021. The cooking teams from St. Luke's Episcopal Church and St. Joseph's Episcopal Church retired in 2021. We greatly appreciate their years of volunteer service to our ministry. Our guests really enjoyed their meals and looked forward to their respective weeks of cooking. The cooks have been cooking to go meals for all the Tuesdays in 2021. Every week

members of various churches and the community, many long-term, come to serve meals and beverages, assist guests, and lend hospitality. St. Clare's provides meaningful faith formation service opportunities to adult and mature youth volunteers. Our volunteers operate the Clothing Closet every week in front of the church to help our guests with to go handouts of toiletries, underwear, clothing, shoes, blankets and sleeping bags. On August 3, 2021, Denver Health Services brought a mobile vaccine van to our parking lot and offered the Covid-19 vaccines to our guests and neighbors.

4. YEAR-TO-DATE SUMMARY

Programs and Services: January-July 2021:

Supper available every Tuesday, 52 weeks a year, during the pandemic.

Number of meals served: 2,836, on pace for to serve over 4,700 meals in 2021.

Number of volunteers: 261, on pace for over 450 volunteers in 2021.

Number of volunteer hours: 767, on pace for over 1,300 volunteer hours in 2021.

Value of volunteer hours at \$29.50 per hour = \$22,629, on pace for over \$38,800 in 2021.

Value of clergy volunteer services: \$450. Evening prayer started in June 2021.

Cost per meal served: \$1.45

Average meal cost per Tuesday: \$278 with direct costs included.

Average clothing closet cost per Tuesday: \$565 with direct costs included.

2020-2021 Winter Months: 164 blankets and 176 sleeping bags for a total of 340 distributed.

2021 through July 31, 2021: 93 blankets and 93 sleeping bags for a total of 186 distributed, these numbers are included in the 2020-2021 Winter numbers.

Cost per Tuesday for program services: \$929.

Cost per Tuesday for all expenses: \$997.

Percentage of all expenses paid for program services: 93%

Program services include the church services, the meal services and clothing closet.

As always, St. Clare's is extremely appreciative of the kind support provided to our Ministry by the Front Range Region.

Faithfully yours,

John Putnam
John Putnam
Chairman of the Board
Enclosures

Elizabeth Wolfert
Elizabeth Wolfert
Managing Director

Michael Wise
Michael Wise,
Treasurer

Photos of the St. Clare's Community (photos by John Putnam)









