



The Berkshire Food Project seeks to alleviate hunger, food insecurity, and social isolation by serving healthy, no cost meals and connecting people to other resources, all in a dignified and respectful manner.

In just a couple of weeks we will hit a milestone we never expected - it will be **one year since our last in house dining** (which was on Friday, March 13, 2020).

Our temporary pandemic meal distribution schedule is: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Each day we distribute two meals. ALL are welcome - no questions asked.

We had no idea where the pandemic would take us back then. We weren't even sure we were going to be allowed to stay open.

Since then we've served about 75,000 take-out meals!

We've partnered with Louison House to get meals to the people living in emergency shelter and with Northern Berkshire Transport to get meals to families and individuals who are unable to pick up meals due to the pandemic.

Things are so different - we try to help people reduce the risk of being exposed to the virus by having them spend as little time as possible at the BFP. We love to chat, but instead we try to quickly move people on so they are not here long enough to pick up any germs- on the off chance that there might be some to pick up.

It's so quiet at the BFP now - our volunteers are spread out to reduce their risk. That means less chatter and joking and overall camaraderie among the small crews. To reduce the risk as much as possible we have very small crews.

We all wear long Johns every day too - as we have a ventilation protocol that involves keeping several windows open when we are in the building.

One thing has NOT changed though - and that is our commitment to provide meals with dignity and respect.

At some point we know the pandemic will subside. The risk of catching the virus will diminish and we will be able to break bread together. There will still be so many lasting effects of the past year - recovering from the financial and mental health cost of COVID will take a very long time. We are committed to being here and providing meals to everyone who needs meals. We look forward to a day when we can do that the way we used to - dining together, with community partners tabling and sharing information, with big volunteer crews and a full dining room of conversations all happening at once. Sometimes, that light at the end of the tunnel is what keeps us all going - and we hope it helps you too!

Be sure you let us know if there are food items you need - we do our best to work with the Al Nelson Friendship Center Pantry and the Food Bank of W MA Mobile Pantry to ensure people are getting what they need.

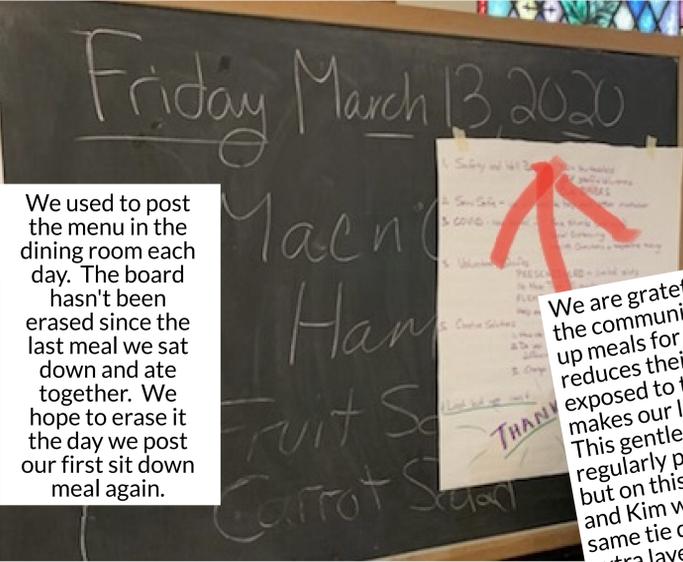
Spring is just around the corner - we've got this!

We provide prepared meals to take home and heat up every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. This schedule remains in effect for the foreseeable future - but **not** forever (we promise). There is NO criteria and no questions asked. We encourage families to send a single person to pick up to reduce the number of people standing in line. Masks and social distancing required in line and in the building.

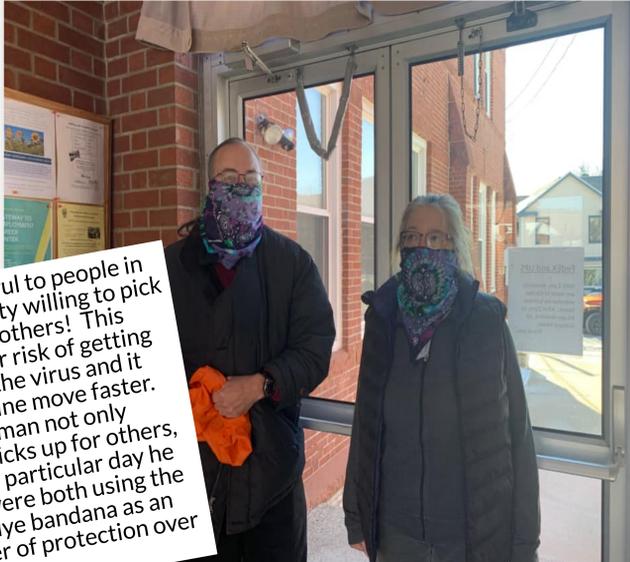


While we continue to have a waiting list for volunteers, we do have shifts open up as volunteers' lives change. There's not always a perfect fit between when we need volunteers and when potential volunteers are available. If you are interested in being on the waiting list and being notified when a shift is open, e-mail Kim at kim@berkshirefoodproject.org.

THANK YOU!



We used to post the menu in the dining room each day. The board hasn't been erased since the last meal we sat down and ate together. We hope to erase it the day we post our first sit down meal again.



Be Safe! Double Up Your Mask! Tell Us If You Need Another Mask!



While it's true we have great local produce from several farms all summer, we do also get fresh produce year round from Big Y and Walmart, through our Food Bank of Western MA membership. We are all part of the Feeding America food banking system. Recently we were able to provide diners with these lovely salads thanks to that system.



Kitchen Manager and Chef Darlene Ellis shows off some of the roast beef dinners recently prepared in our kitchen. The carrots were from our winter CSA share from Caretaker Farm in Williamstown - sweet and delicious!



Supporting the BFP can look many different ways... one way is to store your curbside pick up grocery bags and then donate 200+ bags for our delivery meals!



Click here to learn more about Caretaker Farm.

Click here to learn more about Berkshire Grown's program that provides us with our CSA shares to Caretaker Farm and Full Well Farm.

We are not able to accept donations of reusable take-out containers at this time be we CAN use clean grocery bags - paper and plastic. In order to reduce risk that comes from interacting with people outside your bubble, we suggest you save them and then bring a large number of them in. They can be dropped at the kitchen any weekday between 9:30 AM and 1:30 PM.

Recognize the painting at the top of the newsletter? It's one of the many outdoor paintings you can enjoy in downtown North Adams - this one happens to be right outside the BFP!

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the BFP during these uncertain times. Each week we see new faces - people who are often facing challenges and crisis due to the pandemic and its rippling effects. We are so grateful that we have enough for everyone thanks to all of the wonderful people who support us. Thank you!

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