



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.

Find us inside the First Congregational Church on Summer Street between Ashland & Church Streets in downtown North Adams, MA.

## Happy 2020!

The first thing we want to do is tell you about last year. In 2019 we provided our community with 45,789 meals. Over 1,000 unique individuals joined us in our dining room over the course of the year. We saw a 28% rise in the number of meals we provided over 2018.

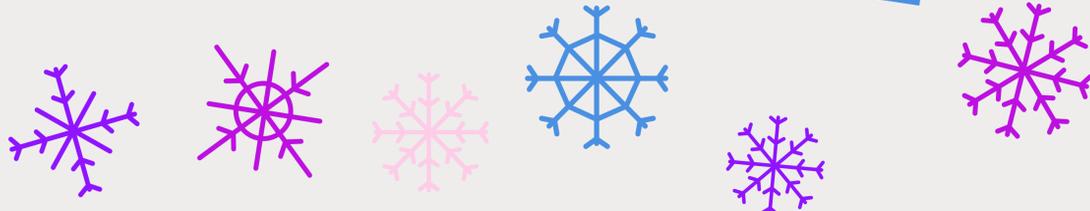
We aren't sure why we saw such an increase. Has the need increased that much? Have we gotten better at having what people need? Is the word spreading further that we are here? We don't know. We do know, though, that we have not turned a single person away hungry. For that, we thank all of our supporters!

We've also said goodbye to some of our regulars recently. One of the families who we saw regularly has moved out of state. We wish them well in the warmer climate of Tennessee!

And sadly, a long time member of our BFP family, Rose, passed away earlier this month. You may have come across Rose playing piano beautifully. Or maybe you ran into her out and about - she was quite independent and got where she needed to, despite being well into her 80s. The dining room conversation turned to remembering her quite a bit recently.



We've been busy already this year - we have moved our office from a shared space on the west side of the building to the balcony directly above the kitchen. Look up during lunch and you may see the office staff working up there!



## A Reminder About Winter Weather

When the winter weather gets snowy and slippery, we follow the lead of the North Adams School District for snow days. Partly this is because the school district has great capacity to get the word out - it is much easier to find out if the schools have closed than a small organization with limited capacity. That is only part of the story though. Many of our volunteers have grandchildren, neighbors and other kids who count on them for care if school closes. So, many of our regular volunteers are unable to volunteer on school snow days. AND the most important reason we close for snow days - we want all of our diners, volunteers and staff to be safe. If the school district has determined it is not safe for kids to be on school buses or walking to school, then it's likely not safe for people to be out traveling to the Berkshire Food Project. We do post on Facebook and answer messages, but the best way to determine if the BFP is closed due to weather is to check to see if North Adams Schools are closed.

It gets tricky of course - doesn't everything?!? So, if the school district has a delay, for example, we are open. A delay indicates the belief that the roads and sidewalks are going to improve and the weather activity is done. So, we assume the roads and sidewalks will be safe by lunch time on those days. School delay=BFP open.

What if school is ALREADY closed? This is our biggest nightmare! When we get a winter storm during school breaks or holidays, we really struggle to decide what is best. On these occasions we post our decision on our Facebook page, on our blog page of our website, and where ever else we can get the word out - radio, public access tv, et cetera.

Please err on the side of caution during the winter. If it's icy out, don't take the chance of falling. If the roads are bad, don't take the chance of getting in an accident. We prefer everyone stay safe on those days.

IF WE CAN ANTICIPATE A STORM, WE PROVIDE GROCERIES or TAKE HOME MEALS. Be sure to take advantage of this if a storm is expected.

## CHANGE IN PLANS!

**Our Empty Bowl event will NOT be on April 24. We have just learned of another event happening that evening. We are now working to select another date and will announce it soon!**

## Thank You BFP Volunteers!

On Monday, January 27 we recognized our star volunteers from 2019 at a dinner prepared and served by our staff with some help from the community (and a couple of regular volunteers who just couldn't stay out of the kitchen). Last year's growth - serving 28% more meals than the year before - couldn't have happened without our incredible cohort of volunteers. In 2019, our Patrick Hernandez logged in the most hours - 784, with several others logging nearly as many! Below are some photos from the event, but you can [see more on our Facebook page.](#)

We were so happy to see all of the volunteers who logged 100 or more hours in 2019 also recognized in an [iBerkshires story!](#)



More photos on line - [click here](#)

We serve lunch every weekday from noon until 1 PM. Our doors open at 11:30 AM for snacks and beverages. There is NO criteria and no questions asked. Join us any weekday!

Are you coming from **Williamstown**? Volunteers and Diners Can get a FREE RIDE from Williamstown! You can arrange A FREE ROUNDTRIP RIDE any Tuesday or Thursday. Call by Monday of the week during which you want a ride - 413-458-9831. Tell the operator you want to arrange a free ride to the Berkshire Food Project. Use the ride service Tuesday AND Thursday if you would like - there's no limit! For more information you can also call Kim at 413-664-7378. For a ride call 413-458-9831. Rides provided by a grant from the Fund for Williamstown of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. When you volunteer you are deciding what kind of community you want to live in.

[Click here for our volunteer application.](#)

The Berkshire Food Project • 134 Main Street, PO Box 651 • North Adams, MA 01247 • 413-664-7378

Kim McMann, Executive Director • Darlene Ellis, Kitchen Manager  
info@berkshirefoodproject.org

[www.berkshirefoodproject.org](http://www.berkshirefoodproject.org)