

# The Seed

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## The TOP **10** reasons to contribute to LUM's 2008 Annual Fund Campaign...

The 2008 Lafayette Urban Ministry Annual Fund Campaign is in full swing. We're working hard to raise \$60,000 to support vital programs that make life better for the children and families served by LUM. Here are the top ten reasons you should consider making a generous donation.....

- 10** Thirty-five LUM volunteers just completed tax returns for over 1,200 low-income households, resulting in over \$1.5 million in tax refunds.
- 9** Since November of 2007, LUM's new case management services have reduced the average number of shelter guests from 48 per night in October, 2007 to just 30 in March of 2008.
- 8** Instead of focusing on differences between people of faith, LUM enables churches to work together.
- 7** Over 2,000 community members and Purdue students volunteered in LUM programs last year. Talk about engagement.
- 6** The St. John's/LUM Food Pantry distributes 2,200 pounds of food each week to the hungry in our community. Last year we filled 7,345 requests for food, feeding 23,143 individuals.
- 5** In 2007, LUM served 4,360 children, families and individuals—a number equal to every household living in poverty in Tippecanoe County.
- 4** LUM's facilities are in use almost 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.  
Each of LUM's 47 member churches sends a representative to sit on the LUM Board, making the Lafayette Urban Ministry the largest ecumenical church-directed agency in our community.
- 3** LUM's Afterschool, RESPECT, LUM Camp and Jubilee Christmas Programs served 1,795 at-risk children in 2007.
- 2** We do all that we do at LUM because Christ mandates us to love and serve our neighbors.
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If you have already contributed to the 2008 LUM Annual Fund Campaign – thank you! If you haven't, can we hear from you today? The children and families we serve have no where else to turn but to LUM – and to you. **Place your check in the enclosed envelope, or give online at [www.lafayetteurbanministry.org](http://www.lafayetteurbanministry.org).**



# A blessed experience

by Mary Anderson, Interim Executive Director

As most of you know, May 1 will be a transition date at Lafayette Urban Ministry. Joe Micon, who has been LUM's development director while serving in the Indiana legislature, will return to full-time duties as executive director. I will continue full-time at LUM, splitting my time between the advocate program (emergency financial assistance) and helping with plans for LUM's future program growth.

It has been an amazing four years as interim director! I have learned more than I ever wanted to know about budgets and personnel issues, insurance matters and audits, back-flow valves and roof shingles. Some days it was hard to catch a breath between meetings. Deadlines always loomed; my calendar was always open on my desk. But there have been amazing people helping me through the administrative maze, and I thank every one of them.

I also have come to realize just how amazing the staff and volunteers at LUM really are. My past program experience at LUM has included the shelter, Jubilee Christmas, LUM Camp and the advocate program. My time as interim has given me the opportunity to work more closely with other LUM programs: tax preparation, social justice advocacy, the St. John's/LUM food pantry, the After School program, RESPECT and all the rest. I have met and

enjoyed so many volunteers in the different programs. I am deeply thankful for the time, talent and treasure so willingly shared by those volunteers.

Perhaps the greatest privilege has been the opportunity to represent Lafayette Urban Ministry in public. Speaking to groups and organizations, congregations and Purdue students has been a joy. I have met many of the friends of LUM and

the words of *Genesis 22:17* are "I will surely bless you...and through you all nations on earth will be blessed."

This is my experience in my 14 years at LUM, and certainly in the last four years. I have been blessed by the presence of God at work in this place, through the staff, the volunteers, the donors and the people we serve. And others have been blessed by the work done here—certainly the clients, but also the staff, the volunteers, and others who are touched by the programs of Lafayette Urban Ministry.

There are wonderful things on the horizon for our work here. New programming to assist our shelter guests to become more independent, asset-building programs to help assure self-sufficiency for low income people, and innovative youth programming are all being explored. I may no longer be the administrator of such programs, but my heart will still be invested in all of it. I have been blessed. Thank you. ✨



finally have put faces with names in our member congregations. I hope I have informed, explained and motivated.

Years ago, I participated in a Bible study training program called the Bethel Bible Series. Of all the Biblical stories and passages we studied and memorized, one has really stuck with me: the lesson entitled "Blessed to be a Blessing," the promise of God to Abraham during a time of testing and doubt. Depending on the translation,

## Staff changes at LUM— saying goodbye and hello

Change is constant, and most change is good! At Lafayette Urban Ministry, we are sorry to say good-bye to Jo Johannsen, our business manager. Jo has been with LUM since 1990, serving as director of social justice ministries, interim executive director and business manager. Before 1990, she served as a board representative from Our Saviour Lutheran Church. We wish her well.

Mary Lundstrom will begin duties as the new business manager on April 15. Mary has been a part-time member of the LUM staff for several months and has served as a volunteer in the Advocate Program. We welcome Mary to this new role.

Also joining the staff is Kathy Dale of West Point. Kathy will be working part-time on LUM development and future program planning. Welcome to LUM, Kathy.

On May 1, Joe Micon will resume his duties as executive director, and Mary Anderson will return to Program Director responsibilities. Other than a few misdirected phone calls and e-mails, these transitions should happen without any disruption to LUM's business as usual!

## LUM's tax assistance program helps over 1200 people and brings in \$1.5 million!

Most people do not associate having their tax returns done with having a good time. But three days a week (and several Saturdays), laughter could be heard in the tax preparation rooms at LUM. Some of the laughter was the result of an unexpectedly large return, but most was simply because people were being treated kindly, listened to, and made comfortable. And yes, they were generally getting refunds!

Over 1200 returns were filed through the LUM program and an astounding \$1.5 million has been returned to hard-working local families.

But the real story of the tax program at LUM is in the stories of the clients and volunteers:

- “Jane” earns \$15,000 from her \$7 per hour job, and received \$7,400 in tax refunds. She set up college savings accounts for her two young children and used the remainder to pay off her winter utility bills.
- The volunteer who helped “Charlie” with his return apologized that the amount would only be about \$95. But “Charlie” was thrilled, because a \$70 utility deposit was all that was keeping him from moving into his own apartment – and his tax check would take care of that.
- A Purdue accounting student volunteer was happy to put her classroom experience to work in the real world: “I never knew I could make such a difference for people who needed it.”

In addition to the regular tax preparation program for low-income working families, LUM helped many seniors and others file federal returns to get their stimulus package. Individuals with only Social Security income do not generally have to file. But this year, in order to receive the economic stimulus checks issued by the federal government, many people had to file for the first time in many years. LUM volunteers were there to help!

**With her \$7,400 tax refund, Jane set up  
savings accounts for her two young children  
and paid off her winter utility bills.**



**In March, friends from the  
County Extension Office  
visited the Afterschool  
Program. The children had  
fun learning about trees.  
Here, the kids show off the  
paper crowns they made as  
they learned about the  
“crown” of a tree.**

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**Change Service Requested**

**Briefly noted**

- ❑ **It's not too early to start thinking about LUM Camp!**  
Camp will be held at Hanging Rock Christian Camp in Warren Country August 4-8. Want to be a volunteer counselor? Want to help out? Want to sponsor a camper? Watch for details in upcoming issues of the *Seed* or check out our website.
- ❑ **The LUM emergency homeless shelter is looking for part-time summer help.** Coordinator positions are available either for weeknights (Sunday through Thursday) or for weekend nights on a rotating basis. Training is required; a stipend is paid. Contact Joyce Boehm at jboehm@lafayetteurbanministry.org or at 423-2691.
- ❑ **The Advocate Program is looking for a few new volunteers for Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday mornings.** We ask for a commitment of one morning a week to help families seeking emergency financial assistance. Contact Mary Anderson at manderson@lafayetteurbanministry.org or at 423-2691.
- ❑ **Attention LUM Volunteers**—watch your mail for information soon about LUM's annual Volunteer Appreciation event!

**Congratulations!**

To **Dr. Jack Kelley**, a volunteer in LUM's tax preparation program. Jack was honored with the Crystal Bison award, sponsored by Bison Financial Group, on March 18. LUM's nomination read in part:

"Jack is a volunteer extraordinaire who is critical to many local organizations—Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, Rotary, and medical mission trips.

Likewise, he is critical to LUM's tax program, volunteering several times a week and often re-arranging his schedule to do taxes. He makes the clients feel comfortable and carefully explains



**Jack Kelley celebrates a successful tax return with a LUM client**

everything in the tax return. He always does his best to get the maximum refund for the client, and has a great sense of humor! Jack really feels for the people who are working so hard to make ends meet and provide for their families. The clients Jack serves feel so valued and encouraged to keep going, it really is inspiring."

We congratulate Jack on this recognition. We've always known LUM volunteers are special people!