



For most of us 2021 was a year of discovering and inventing the “New Normal” and Crossroads at Park Place was no exception. We were blessed to have only a few cases of CoVid among our staff and volunteers. Our clients were also fortunate as we did not have a large number of cases among them either.

Early in 2021 we had Harris County Medical in the Parish Hall on our service days giving CoVid vaccine shots and later booster shots. Quite a few of our staff, volunteers and clients took advantage of this service. We continue to require masks of everyone coming into the Parish Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Having discontinued our Tuesday/Thursday services in January of 2020, Crossroads was blessed to be able to re-start full Tuesday/Thursday services on August 3, 2021. Thank you to our volunteers and supporters who made this possible.

We are planning to grow our services in 2022 and beyond and look forward to your continued participation in our mission.

Services

We are currently providing the following services on Tuesday and Thursday:

- Hot Breakfast
- Hot Lunch
- Showers
- Laundry
- Hygiene products
- First Aid Products
- Harris Health Mobile Clinic
- Harris Health Low Income Medical Insurance Administration
- Haircuts
- Hope Haven – Residential Navigation Service
- Private Insurance counselors
- Harris Health Case Worker
- Small Food Pantry
- New socks and underwear

These services are provided by our volunteers, other agency staff members and Harris Health staffers. We no longer accept clothing donations; however, we do accept new socks and underwear.

Matthew 14:19

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Crossroads of Park Place

Food Distribution

After we stopped services in March of 2020, we were hard pressed to develop a service strategy during the depths of the CoVid shutdown. Collaborating with the Vicar at St. Paul's and the Houston Food Bank (HFB) we decided to take advantage of the HFB's Mobile Food Pantry Program. Our first delivery occurred on April 15, 2020. And even though we only used word of mouth advertising on our first distribution we had 145 client families receive groceries that were loaded into their cars by our volunteers. By the end of April, we were servicing 475 families with groceries every Wednesday.

We have received a mobile pantry delivery from HFB every Wednesday since then and will continue to have a grocery distribution every Wednesday going forward. Our volunteers have been faithful in their service, and most are planning to continue this work into the future. But we could always use more help. If you are interested, please show up at St. Paul's between 8:30 and 9 A. M. on Wednesday, sign in and get your temperature taken then we will put you to work. We are usually finished by 11:30 or 12:00.

I have summarized our grocery delivery numbers below. This service is truly a ".....loaves and fishes...." event.

2022 Services

Effective August 3, 2021, Crossroads went from having a two day a week service mission to having a three day a week full-service mission. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we provide our services to our homeless and low-income clients in the Parish Hall. On Wednesdays we provide a grocery distribution to anyone in our drive through grocery distribution. We plan to continue this schedule throughout 2022.

Of course, continuing this schedule means a commitment from our volunteers. Wednesdays are a big volunteer day for us. To provide the distribution service we need at least 25 volunteers to setup, unload the truck, bag up produce, load groceries into the cars and the cleanup afterwards. We have learned to do this very efficiently and we do have a lot of fun. Our volunteers arrive between 8:30 and 9:00 A.M., and we are usually finished everything by 11:30 or 12:00. If you are not already participating in this mission, please consider joining us on Wednesday for one of our distributions.

2022 Facility Maintenance

When Crossroads leased space from St. Paul's we committed to do several maintenance items to the property. The biggest was the installation of a portable building at the back of the parking lot to accommodate Crossroad's storage needs, laundry equipment and food pantry operation. We discovered that to place these buildings on the property would require a major renovation of the parking lot, sidewalks and drainage system. This work proved to be beyond our means, so we have postponed the installation of that building.

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Crossroads of Park Place

We also committed to refurbishing the Parish Hall kitchen to commercial standards. We began this work in 2021 with the installation of a commercial grade sink and drainage system that passed all City Health Department requirements and was permitted. Next on the project is a ventilation and fire suppression solution for the kitchen along with re-wired electrical, wall treatments, a new stove and flooring. As a small bonus we have also installed an ice machine in the kitchen.

2021 Special Events

We held three special events during 2021. The first was our annual Crossroads Charity Golf tournament. This year's event was well attended and generated a number of donations to our mission.

The second event held was what we hope will become an annual event and this was a Thanksgiving Dinner for our clients. This year we fed almost 200 guests at the event held in the Parish Hall. It was turkey and dressing with all the trimmings and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We also had a lively sing along of good old-fashioned hymns.

The third event was a roast beef Christmas dinner. Roast beef with all the trimmings was served to nearly 200 guests. Santa did not show up this year, but we did have a joyous sing along of traditional Christmas Carols.

There is one more special event that we hold every month. On the second Tuesday of each month, we conduct a worship service featuring music and a message. Pastors from our Covenant Partner churches and other guest speakers deliver a message of hope and salvation to our clients. These monthly services are appreciated by our guests and volunteers.

Numbers

We try to keep fairly accurate counts of the services that we deliver and volunteer hours that are worked. We use two pieces of software to do this. For recording services and guest attendance we use a software package called Foodbank Manager. Volgistics is provided at a very reasonable cost by a group dedicated to supporting service missions like ours. For tracking volunteers' hours, we use a software package called Volgistics. Volgistics is used by many organizations and is provided to us at a very reasonable cost. As a side note, we are able to use Volgistics to easily email things to our volunteers, like this report.

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During 2021 we provided the following services on our Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday service days.

2021 Services		
Tracking Method Group	Service Count	2021 Service Period
Houston Food Bank	12950	Jan - Dec
Lunch (Almuerzo/Lonche)	3135	Jun - Dec
Breakfast (Desayuno)	2537	Aug - Dec
Hygiene Pack (Higiene)	1294	Aug - Dec
Showers (Bano)	1093	Jun - Dec
Laundry (Lavanderia)	497	Aug - Dec
Socks (Calcetines)	492	Aug - Dec
Underwear New - Calzones)	476	Aug - Dec
Food Distribution Walkup	384	Jan - Aug
Harris Health Gold Card	203	Aug - Dec
Haircut (Corto de pelo)	158	Aug - Dec
Phone Charger	152	Aug - Dec
Blanket (Cobija)	150	Aug - Dec
Shoes (Zapatos)	93	One time
Harris Health Mobile Unit	90	Nov - Dec
Harris Health Clinic	89	Aug - Dec
Homeless Letter	69	Aug - Dec
Reading Glasses	50	Aug - Dec
H.O.T ID	24	Aug - Dec

Our Wednesday Food Distribution began in April of 2020. Between April 2020 and the end of December 2021 we delivered over 26,000 loads of weekly groceries to our clients. Crossroads augmented HFB groceries with 100 count packs of tortillas. Over 2020 and 2021, Crossroads distributed over 25,000 packs of tortillas.

Crossroads has bought tortillas from a local tortilla manufacturer but will be curtailing this item in 2022 due to the high cost of tortillas.

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Volunteers

Crossroads is a totally volunteer supported organization. All our food distribution, facility maintenance, kitchen operations, daily intake, shower management, laundry and service delivery is accomplished through the hard work of our dedicated volunteers. Crossroads has a diverse set of volunteers. Our volunteers come from our supporting churches, the local community, and our clients themselves. Everyone pitches in to make Crossroads possible.

We require volunteers to sign in, we take their temperature and record their service in our Volunteer Management system. Volunteer hours during 2021 are as follows.

2021 Volunteer Hours	
Service	Hours
Floor Support & Laundry	2126
HFB Food Distribution	4429
Kitchen	1170
Total Hours	7725

Looking Forward

One thing I can tell you for sure, The Board is convinced that Crossroads is on the right path and is committed to maintaining the focus on our mission. We will continue with our expanded service schedule.

We are excited about continuing our work at St. Paul's and upgrading the facilities as we have committed. My goal is to make progress on the kitchen work as quickly as possible. If anyone is interested in donating a commercial stove, please contact me.

Another maintenance item that we will be tackling this year is a redo of our six showers. They are in need of deep cleaning, re-caulking and painting. Contributions and labor donations toward this effort would be appreciated.

Another organization has begun to operate at St. Paul's. They are the perfect complement to what we do at Crossroads. The Texas Center for Human Advancement (also known as AHA!) has begun an after-school enrichment program for elementary students at Park Place Elementary school. Their program operates in the afternoon while we operate in the morning. They provide tutoring, art, music and drama classes.

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Crossroads of Park Place

We are teaming with them to provide food to them for use in their kid's supper program and for distribution to families in need through their program. It is my belief that our two programs can provide more valuable services together and Crossroads is committed to making that synergy a reality.

We are all looking forward to an active, productive and blessed 2022 as we all figure out what the new normal looks like. For Crossroads that will be to continue to focus on our mission of providing basic services to the homeless and the less fortunate; and to provide those services in a respectful, safe and Christian environment.

Please join us in helping to make Crossroads thrive into the future. Crossroads is only able to do what we do with the support of our volunteers and our Board.

Thank you for all that you do,

Doug Fortner
Executive Director

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