



## **One Community. One Heart. Serving Hundreds.**

*by Donna Pygott*

On March 3rd, Wake County announced its first confirmed COVID-19 case. Looking back it's hard to believe that so much of what we had worked for and what God had blessed us with at North Raleigh Ministries would be put on hold so rapidly. With 22 staff furloughed or laid-off and most of our volunteers taking precautions to self isolate, the remaining team has worked hard to answer calls, calm fears, provide referrals, and help fill the gap by providing food and precious household supplies to our community.

It feels like the pandemic has taken a lot. But what it hasn't taken is our spirit, our sense of community or generosity. We've seen an outpouring of love and support from our volunteers, donors, churches, Mission Triangle, the National Christian Foundation, local family foundations, and the community at large. In addition to partnerships with Interfaith Food Shuttle and the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, we've kept our pantry stocked with fresh produce, meats, bread, and

prepared food. Smithfield Foods' donation of ham was just in time for Easter. Lowes Foods graciously continued donations of fresh baked goods. Yellow Dog Bread Company along with Homeland Creamery began supplying weekly donations of fresh milk.

Because of this incredible collaboration, in March we were able to provide 189 families, a total of 546 people, with curbside grocery assistance. And in just the first week of April, 84 families, 267 people total, have already been served by the NRM Food Pantry. Each family received 2 weeks of nutritious food and household items, offering them peace of mind.

To help our community members experiencing fear and isolation, we've added telephone lay counseling with our ministerial intern from the Fountain of Raleigh. You will see more about this from Angie in her article below.

Let's continue to work together to keep this incredible collaboration going! There are many ways to help and stay connected:

1. We continue to need financial support to keep our doors open and groceries flowing. Give at [www.northraleighministries.com/give](http://www.northraleighministries.com/give)
2. We also need shelf-stable food, paper goods, and cleaning products. Learn more at [www.northraleighministries.com/pantry-donations](http://www.northraleighministries.com/pantry-donations)
3. We need cloth masks, latex free gloves, and sanitizing supplies for our food pantry workers. Learn more at [www.northraleighministries.com/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.northraleighministries.com/volunteer-opportunities)

We love you. We appreciate you. We need you. Thank you for being the heart of the NRM community! This is what it's all about - a community coming together to ensure no one goes hungry and no one is alone in this. We are in this together!

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## Financial Peace University Spring Graduation

*by Kara Gravinese*

Please join us in congratulations and prayer support of our 4 North Raleigh Ministries clients who graduated from Financial Peace University on March 31st. Collectively, the cohort saved \$3,000 and paid off over \$1,000 in debt. Way to go, especially during this time!

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*Pictured here is Amanda, our FPU Class Facilitator, hosting graduation night via Zoom.*

As with much of life right now, the class was not without its challenges. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our normal face to face classes finished up through online conferencing. Heartbreakingly, some of the class members lost their jobs right around graduation time.

We're really proud of all our graduates for getting to the finish line and putting in the hard work during such a challenging time. It takes a lot of courage to focus on the future when just managing the present moment can feel so overwhelming.

Join us in praying for our clients, already living on the margin, who've lost jobs and for whom the future feels uncertain. God, we pray that you will provide for every need of our clients in crisis. Keep them safe and well, sheltered and fed, spirits lifted and filled with hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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## **\$10,000 Matching Gift Challenge - Thank You Donors!**

*by Donna Pygott*

On April 2nd, we announced that an anonymous donor, who wholeheartedly believes in North Raleigh Ministries' mission, was inviting the community to join them in a

\$10,000 matching challenge gift. The great news was they weren't alone in their belief in our ministry.

Over 50 generous community members came together in 72 hours to raise \$24,775! With the \$10,000 match that's a total of \$34,775 raised! Thank you to everyone who donated and helped spread the word for the matching challenge gift.

This support has helped to keep the NRM Food Pantry open to those in our community who might otherwise go hungry. We couldn't be more grateful for our donors. No one needs to go hungry during this crisis and the generosity of our community is ensuring no one does!

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## Spring Internship Perspectives with Angie Payne

*by Angie Payne*

My name is Angie Payne. I'm a Spring intern in the North Raleigh Ministries Crisis and Development Center. Many years ago God called me to ministry, but I decided my ministry would be in an elementary school classroom. God gave me many wonderful years there. However, I knew that my calling was due for a change of seasons.

Presently, God has led me to work in ministry on staff, at my church home, The Fountain of Raleigh Fellowship. With much encouragement from my pastor, Rev. Paul L. Anderson, I entered seminary with Regent University. The experience has been filled with ups and downs. With God's help, I will complete my studies in May. The culmination of my seminary experience has been to spend my final semester interning at North Raleigh Ministries.

My role is constantly evolving but what a rich experience it has been! I have sat in on the evening classes, learning how to make a great shepherd's pie using healthy ingredients. I have worked in the food pantry, reception area, and attended volunteer and programming committee meetings.

Everything changed on March 13th as the Raleigh community started implementing big changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that services are limited by the outbreak, I reach out to clients remotely that ask for prayer, encouragement, or just someone to listen.

It has been humbling, to say the least. Life's challenges seem magnified in a time when we are going through something globally, that will surely change us and our world forever. I pray that God will give me the right words. We all need hope, especially now.

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## Happy National Volunteer Week

*by Kara Gravinese*



We want to give a huge shout out to our volunteers and let you know we are really missing you! During a regular week at North Raleigh Ministries, just about 200 regular volunteers help to care for clients in crisis in the NRM Crisis and Development Center and work with our customers and donors in the NRM Thrift Shoppe. It takes an army of gifted and generous people to make the magic happen and you guys bring it!

We love our volunteers and are so grateful for the love they pour out on our community. Currently, many of our volunteers are taking precautions to self isolate while some have been able to continue on, helping fulfill essential roles to keep the NRM Food Pantry open to the public. We thank you for all you do cannot wait to see you all again soon!

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## New Partnership with The Produce Box

*by Jeanne Joyner*

A new partnership between The Produce Box and North Raleigh Ministries is bringing nutritious fresh food to our clients' tables. The Produce Box provides multiple boxes of vegetables and fruits such as celery, grape tomatoes, lettuce, squash, potatoes, brussels sprouts, oranges, and strawberries each month. Many of these items are grown by farmers in North Carolina.

Because fresh fruits and vegetables cost more than processed packaged foods, families with tight budgets must frequently purchase less healthy items rather than fresh produce that has greater nutritional value. Low-cost foods with added sugars and fats are filling but often lead to obesity. Limited time and poor cooking facilities also encourage the purchase of low-cost items that are quick to prepare but are nutrition-poor.

The Produce Box, started in Raleigh in 2007, has the dual mission of supporting local farmers as well as area residents by weekly packaging boxes of fruits and vegetables and delivering them directly to members. Through the support of orders by Produce Box members, the Produce Box also provides bulk produce to local food banks for families that might otherwise not be able to afford the fresh fruits and vegetables.

Sincere thanks to The Produce Box for this partnership. The addition of fresh fruits and vegetables will greatly benefit our Food Pantry clients.

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## NRM Thrift Shoppe Updates

*by Kara Gravinese*

### **Stony Brook Grand Opening Cancelled**

Thank you for hanging in there with us! We were really looking forward to opening our second Thrift Shoppe location at the Stony Brook shopping center at the beginning of April.

As businesses began to close in response to the COVID-19 crisis it became clear the grand opening would be cancelled. While we don't have an opening date yet, we'll be sure to let you know as soon as it's safe for our staff, volunteers and customers.

### **NRM Thrift Shoppe Online Shopping**

Behind the scenes, we've been preparing to launch an online version of the NRM Thrift Shoppe. Visit us at [www.northraleighministries.com/shop-online](http://www.northraleighministries.com/shop-online) to see our soon to come online store.

We hope to open for online business this week. Stay tuned for updates!

*Don't forget to connect with us on social media and our website:*

