

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE GATHERING AND CAPUCHIN COMMUNITY SERVICES PARTNER TO FEED MILWAUKEE'S HUNGRY AND HOMELESS

Milwaukee (February 7, 2017)...The Gathering of Southeast Wisconsin announced today that it will move its downtown meal programs from St. James' Episcopal Church at 8th and Wisconsin to the Capuchin Community Services' St. Ben's Community Meal location at 9th and State. The Gathering will serve breakfast from the St. Ben's meal hall Monday through Friday mornings plus a Saturday lunch. Capuchin Community Services will continue to serve dinners Sunday through Friday evenings. The two organizations remain separate non-profit entities. The move will take place mid-March.

Gathering Executive Director, Virginia Schrag, states, "This is a win-win for Milwaukee's hungry and homeless. For thirty-five years, The Gathering has been preparing and serving a hot breakfast Monday through Friday and a Saturday lunch to Milwaukee's hungry and homeless at our downtown location. From the very beginning, meal times and days were chosen to complement the dinners served Sunday through Friday evenings at St. Ben's Community Meal (a program of Capuchin Community Services). Now both of our organizations will be able to provide these meals in the same space, offering a respite for our guests and good stewardship of our resources."

The Gathering is conducting a Capital Campaign with the goal of \$50,000 to cover moving expenses, equipment purchases and site renovation.

ABOUT THE GATHERING OF SOUTHEAST WI, INC: The Gathering, founded in 1982, serves 90,000 free meals annually to Milwaukee's hungry and homeless through four Milwaukee locations. (See below for specific site information.) All meals are cooked on-site; 98% of direct service is done by volunteers; over 150 groups from corporations, faith communities, schools and service clubs participate. For more information consult the website at www.thegatheringwis.org.

THE GATHERING AT ST. JAMES (SOON TO BE STATE STREET): The Gathering's downtown meal program serves breakfast Monday through Friday mornings and a Saturday lunch. Additional guest services including mental health, medical, legal and housing assistance, supply distributions and "dinner-to-go" bags following Saturday lunch, are offered in collaboration with community-based organizations.

THE GATHERING AT CHRISTIAN FAITH: Monday/Wednesday dinners and Saturday lunch are offered on Milwaukee's near South side at Christian Faith Fellowship East, 724 S. Layton Blvd. Legal assistance and "dinner-to-go" bags are offered on site.

THE GATHERING AT OUR NEXT GENERATION: Saturday lunch is offered at ONG Neighborhood Center, 35th & Lisbon, on Milwaukee's near north side. Food support is also provided to ONG's tutoring/mentoring program.

THE GATHERING AT MT. CARMEL: The Gathering's fourth lunch site is a collaborative effort with Mt. Carmel Lutheran on 84th & Center. Lunch is offered on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month.

THE GATHERING'S FRESH PRODUCE PRESERVATION PROJECT: During the growing season Gathering volunteers freeze and can excess donated produce for use in our winter meals. This project reduces waste and provides a punch of nutrition and taste in winter meals.

ABOUT CAPUCHIN COMMUNITY SERVICES: Capuchin Community Services with two locations, St. Ben's Community Meal and the House of Peace, serves the poor, the hungry, the homeless. www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org

ST. BEN'S COMMUNITY MEAL: St. Ben's Community Meal has been Milwaukee's largest regular potluck dinner since 1970. 75 organizations (including churches, temples, and mosques) provide hot, home-made dishes six days a week to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Over 2,000 meals are served each week. Additional ministries include Columbia-St. Mary's St. Ben's Clinic that provides prevention-focused health care to those who cannot afford it, St. Benedict the Moor parish and jail ministry. All ministries are located at 9th and State Streets.

HOUSE OF PEACE: The House of Peace assists families and individuals in meeting their spiritual, material, and emotional needs. The House of Peace helps families to remain together and to promote self-sufficiency. It provides food, clothing, and pastoral care to the poor plus houses the UWM House of Peace Community Nursing Center and Marquette University Legal Clinic that serves the same population.

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