



Staying in Touch - Newsletter

Help Us Help Others!

Amidst COVID Crisis, The Bridge Feeds the Community!

You may have heard that The Bridge has been giving out free food to families in need every Friday since COVID-19 struck. **It's true!** In fact, our numbers grew to **260 people, 65 families in total**, who have received and/or are continuing to receive assistance weekly. Through a partnership with MFN, Miracle Food Network, a local non-profit that redistributes leftover food from restaurants, delis, farmers and food stores, Sustainable Connections, Gleaners, Food Lifeline, and CAP - Community Assistance Program in Blaine - **our volunteers have been tirelessly and joyously giving out food to all who register with us.**



When we first began in March, we had 15 families. But, within a few short weeks our numbers had multiplied; the need was so great! People from all walks of life and status, age and ability have been receiving boxes and bags full of good food. **Thanks to the symbiotic relationship with our Grace Core Chaplains**, who have led the charge and set up the distribution program, people have not just been able to get free food, they have been given the opportunity to work through other

needs and struggles, crisis and setbacks, with the **capable aid of a trained Grace Core Chaplain.**

Our **Chaplains** and volunteers have been delivering food to those who aren't able to pick theirs up at The Bridge each week. But, most people pick up their food by driving to the Bridge on Friday afternoons, between 3:30pm-5:00pm. **Our masked and rubber gloved**



COVID-conscious team of volunteers bring the food from the sorting station in the back of The Bridge building to the front, and then give people the option of putting it in their cars themselves, or putting it into their cars for them. **This has proven to be the best method, under the current COVID constrictions.**

Our Bridge volunteers are invaluable and range in all ages! Several young people in our community are using their free time by helping with serving in the Food Distribution program each week. From sorting to filling the bags and boxes, to giving it out, our volunteers work hard, but love doing it! **So, people's needs are being met weekly on many levels. From feeding the hungry to helping people find purpose, hope and help, the Bridge Community Hope Center in Birch Bay has been, and continues to be, a place of blessing!**



- Help us pay for urgently needed improvements in the Food Distribution area!
 - Help us help homeschooling families and provide tutoring in the Learning Center this fall
 - Help us provide counselling and Life Coaching through the
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- Help us help needy families with job training and clothing through the Boutique and Coffee Bar
 - Help us help veterans find hope and help through the weekly Wednesday VA group
 - Help us by volunteering
 - Help us get the word out
 - Help us by becoming a monthly donor

The Bridge Learning Center & Tutors are available for Homeschooling families this fall!

With the trauma and uncertainty of the COVID crisis enduring each month, more than ever, the Bridge is proving to be needed. Families are finding themselves not just needing food, but needing help with schooling their children this fall.

With our Learning Center available to use, and our tutors ready to help, we are actively planning and networking NOW with families facing unplanned and unexpected homeschooling! By partnering with local groups such as BBSP Covid-19 Community Helpers, seasoned homeschooling families are coaching and helping prepare families who are new to it. If you, or someone you know, is interested in homeschooling and need help, contact us! We can help.

The Bridge is helping Veterans

Our Veterans are continuing to meet on Wednesday afternoons 1:00pm-3:00pm. Many are getting help with needed paperwork in to the VA. Others are getting the opportunity to meet and find a safe place to talk with other veterans. If you, or someone you know, is a veteran, and are looking for such a group, come and join us!

The Bridge Boutique is back!

When the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were placed on Whatcom County, everything closed, even the Bridge Boutique. But, with the re-opening guidelines in Phase 2, the Bridge Boutique has re-opened, starting with two days a week. Our new hours are Wed 3:00-5:00pm and Friday Noon-5:00pm. If you want to make a donation of clothing items to The Bridge, please call ahead and make an appointment with one of our Boutique volunteers. Thank you!



The Bridge Helps Youth gain work experience

This year has been tough on our young people since the pandemic struck. Mercifully, The Bridge has helped to provide a place where young people can come and serve, gain work experience and find a place of hope and encouragement. Some are helping with the Food Distribution ministry. Others are helping in the clothing Boutique. And others are eager to learn how to be coffee baristas at our espresso bar! Sign-up and book an appointment for barista lessons today!



Did you know that The Bridge Community Hope Center has its own in-house Chaplaincy and training program? It's called The Grace Core Academy. Since 2017 The Grace Core has been training people with a desire to help others more effectively, but didn't know how. So far, The Grace Core has had 24 students, 7 current, 8 graduates, 4 certified Life Coaches, 3 who are currently serving with the local police as First Responder Support Officers. They, and several others, are serving each week at The Bridge Community Hope Center with the Food Distribution program. One chaplain works with addicts. Another is working with abused women. And another is helping homeless women find shelter and relief from substance abuse at the Lighthouse Mission in Bellingham, WA.

Grace Core Chaplains are trained and certified people with servant hearts, ready and willing to meet the needs of their local community! Starting in September, The Grace Core Academy will begin another round of Core 1 classes. The beauty of this training is that it is mostly on-line, and can be taken anywhere, at any time! There are some group classes which are also done on-line through Canvas. Supervised internships are available for all students. If you, or someone you know, wants professional training, without the high cost, with instruction from professional counselors and coaches, and with on-line flexible hours, then sign up today! Call us at: 360 366-8763 or visit our website at: www.gracecore.org

HELP US FINISH THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION AREA!

We have an urgent need that you can help with. The Food Distribution area of our building needs drywall, insulation and more, before the winter sets in. If you would like to donate toward this important and urgent need, please do! You can give in the following ways:

- ❖ Mail in a check made out to The Bridge Community Hope Center to :
4550 Birch Bay-Lynden Rd. PMB #1228, Blaine, WA, 98230
- ❖ Donate on-line through our website at www.thebridgehope.com
- ❖ Come in, see firsthand what we are doing, and make a donation at the front desk.

HELP US HELP OTHERS! With a monthly donation. Your tax-deductible gift goes to helping us keep the doors of the Bridge Community Hope Center open, to helping with the Food Distribution program, to helping keep the Learning Center open, to helping train young people in the coffee bar, and the clothing Boutique. It goes to helping the hurting find hope, through Life Coaching and counselling with the Grace Core, and into everything that keeps the ministry functioning daily. It goes to benefit this local community! Thank you for giving.

We are a 501c3 Religious non-profit and rely completely upon the donations of generous people like you!