

# St. Francis House Seattle

Providing a safe and welcoming place in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi to serve those in need and inspire simplicity and charity in its volunteers and community.



Since 1967, the volunteers, staff and donors of St. Francis House have served low-income families and unsheltered people in Seattle's Central District.

Originally started by moms at St. Joseph School who longed to spend the time when their children were at school more altruistically, their values remain simple: to provide clients with a sense of community, help them with their basic needs and serve them with dignity and respect. As St. Francis taught, it is in giving that we receive.



A sense of community is what resonates most with clients, which you immediately feel as you enter the building when welcomed by a powerful mural with the message “Thank you for bringing your peace here.” Inside, the clients are offered warm cups of coffee, pastry items, and sandwiches in a friendly café’ environment before they embark on their “shopping” experience.

All at no cost, St. Francis House provides basic needs such as clothing (men’s, women’s and children’s), household items, toiletries, and shoes, financial help in the form of Orca cards for transportation to/from work, as well as utility assistance. Laurelhurst resident Sara Wietholter recently volunteered there with her 12 year old daughter Lucy, saying, “We went to work in the children’s room, engaging directly with clients seeking a range of items, including coats, shirts, pajamas, and toys for their children. Additionally, we took part in distributing rotisserie chickens, canned food, and fruit directly to some clients, an immensely gratifying experience for both of us, especially witnessing their heartfelt appreciation.” St. Francis House’s ultimate goal is to ease the burden of household costs to effectively stretch their clients’ monthly budgets so those clients who are house can pay rent and remain housed.

St. Francis House recently leveraged their long-term central area site to partner with Plymouth Housing Group on a redevelopment project that yielded 100 new apartments to chronically homeless individuals, as well as a new long-term home for the organization.

One of the most magical times of year at St. Francis House is Christmas when the mezzanine level is transformed into a version of Santa’s workshop at the North Pole. Through support from Toys for Kids, The Windermere Foundation, The Biella Foundation and many local parishes including Our Lady of the Lady and Assumption St. Bridget, St. Francis House provided new toys, blankets, stuffed animals,



games and crafts to over 700 children last Christmas. For many kids, these were the only gifts Santa brought.

Laurelhurst resident Mary Jo Gasperich notes, “After 20+ years volunteering once a week for a few hours I know my purpose. Greeting each person with a smile, introducing myself, sharing a sense of

respect and offering folks something they need has truly been inspiring & humbling.”

When clearing your closets and shelves this spring or if your children keep outgrowing their clothing, please think of St. Francis House for your donations or consider supporting them financially. The love and grace they share with others literally changes lives.

St. Francis House is open from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Monday through Friday at 169 12th Avenue Seattle, WA 98122 with convenient curbside drop off. In addition, they always welcome new volunteers including youth groups. Sandwiches are always needed and making them is an easy weekend project with kids (individually wrapped please!).

Volunteers find that giving back at St. Francis House brings them joy, greater purpose, new friendships, and a better understanding and appreciation of our community. What St. Francis House seeks to do benefits us all. It is the belief that all humans have inherent worth and deserve basic rights and equitable treatment.



To learn more, please visit [www.stfrancishouseseattle.org](http://www.stfrancishouseseattle.org)



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