



FISHES & LOAVES NETWORK

As Christ served others, the Fishes & Loaves Network has a commitment to make his love known through our direct outreach to others in need.

Purpose: To provide simple yet nourishing meals for those in need within the Ballarat region. This ministry began in September 1990 (see History of Fishes & Loaves on the reverse of this sheet).

Description: We hold a monthly “Cook-Up” (10 per year) at the Federation University Kitchens (see map below) where approximately 1,100 meals are prepared. Raw vegetables are peeled and chopped, raw minced meat is cooked. Water is added, along with peas & pasta, and these ingredients are all combined and stirred to create a beef, vegetable and pasta casserole. Once cooked, the casserole is packed into aluminium containers and taken to the ‘Hemco’ freezers on Learmonth Road. When frozen, these meals are then distributed to those in need through the Uniting Church Outreach Centre, Salvation Army and Anglicare as required by their clients.

People Suited to this Ministry: Ideally those over 15 years of age (due to safety issues of the kitchen environment), but really anybody who is able to provide 3 hours of their time on a Saturday morning on a monthly basis, and can chop vegetables, stir the casserole, pack the containers and wash pots. The other sources of assistance are through people’s prayer and financial support. Donations are gratefully accepted and may be forwarded to this ministry through one of the Co-ordinators listed below.

Time Commitment: Three hours (8:30am –11:30am) on the Saturday mornings as listed below.

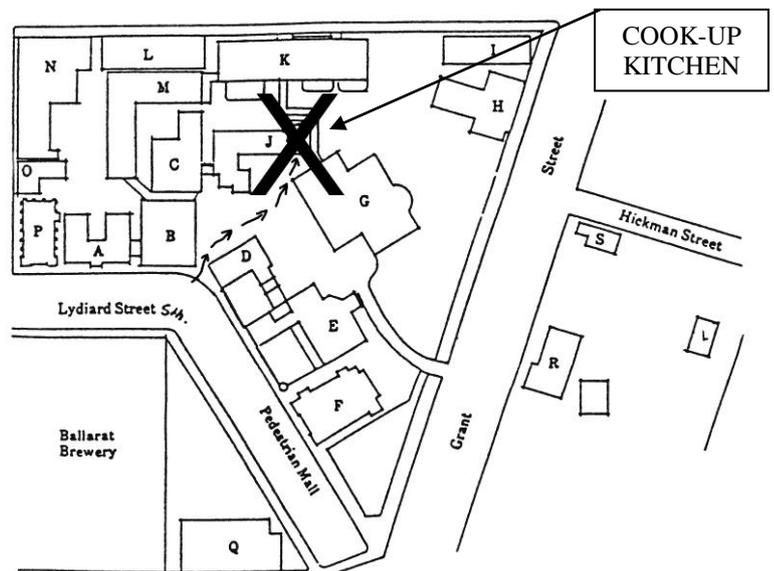
Dates for 2016:

- February 13th
- March 5th
- April 16th
- May 7th & 21st
- June 4th & 25th
- July 9th
- October 29th
- November 19th

CONTACT:

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Federation University (SMB Campus) – Lydiard St. South

History of Fishes & Loaves

The “Fishes and Loaves Network” was started in September 1990 in response to a request for help made to our church. A group of five people met to discuss ideas about how our church could provide some much needed food supplies for local people in need. Our original plan was to grow vegetables and provide these to the Ballarat Aid agencies. We started our vegetable plot, and had a few successful crops but soon discovered God had other plans for this ministry.

In May 1991 we changed direction and began preparing Beef and Vegetable casseroles at the BRACE Home Economics kitchen. These meals were packed, frozen and then provided to the agencies for distribution. At our first “Cook-Up”, 250 servings were produced after 5 hours of very hard work by 20 volunteers. A lot was learned from those early experiences. Our production methods improved, and we started to make 350, then 500 meals at our following Cook-Ups. The response from the welfare agencies was supportive, with requests for further meals if possible.

With our increased production, we soon outgrew these facilities and in April 1992 we were blessed with the use of the much larger, professional kitchen at the University of Ballarat Campus in Lydiard St. South. This provided us with a large and safe environment to produce the meals much more efficiently. At each Cook-Up, with our regular band of 20 to 25 volunteer “choppers & stirrers”, we are now able to produce approximately 1,100 meals in less than three hours, from raw ingredients to packed containers in the freezer. It’s amazing to see how much can be achieved by such a small group of enthusiastic people. God again works miracles.

Valued Support: We have a dedicated group of over 40 “Stirrers & Choppers” on our volunteer contact list, who give freely of their time and energy at our Cook-Ups. (New members are always welcome - simply contact one of the Co-Ordinators). We receive assistance from members of our church, the Church’s Youth Groups, and other members from the Ballarat Community. We have been generously supported over the years by John Harbour Quality Meats, Natures Cargo, Wilson Fruit & Veg, De J’s packaging, Peter Deutscher and Hemco Industries. In 2007 we received a \$2,500 Victorian Government Grant for 24 new large stockpots. Regular financial support is also provided through generous gifts from church members, Apex & Rotary Clubs in Ballarat, the Ballarat Springfest Committee, City of Ballarat Council, the United Way Community Fund, the ED Black Trust and the Robert Clarke Foundation has ensured that this program has continued non-stop for the past 24 years.

Facts & Figures for each Cook-Up:

- **20 volunteers**
- **24 Stockpots**
- **Ingredients as listed** →
- **3 hours**
- **1,100 servings**

Total Meals to-date over the last 25 years:

(as of 1st November 2015) **209,724 meals.**

Average cost to produce each meal:

Approximately **70c / serve**

Funds required to maintain Fishes & Loaves:

\$7,500 / year

Ingredients

58 kg Mince Meat
2 litres of Cooking Oil
20 kg Carrots
20 kg Potatoes
20 kg Pumpkin
15 kg Pasta
4 kg Dried Onions
24 kg Frozen Peas
4 kg Tomato Paste
1 kg Garlic
4 kg Gravox
5 kg Plain Flour
200 g Beef Stock
180 litres of water

Add 3 hrs = 1,100 meals