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Sit Down Evening Meals Returning to WHEAT Community Connections April 3, 2023

As life continues to return to normal after the COVID-19 community health crisis, WHEAT Community Connections, a direct service of the United Way of Tri-County, is happy to announce that our Community Café will reopen for in-person evening meals beginning Monday April 3, 2023.

Indoor dining service will be held Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings from 4:45pm to 6:00pm with a takeout option still available for those who choose to eat at home. Thursday evening dinners will continue, **but on a take-out basis only**, to accommodate WHEAT's food pantry hours.

Lunches will continue to be delivered to senior housing authorities in Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster, and Sterling Monday through Friday and remain available for pick-up at WHEAT on those same days from 12:30pm to 1:30pm.

Food pantry hours have been expanded to meet increased demands and are from Monday – Thursday 10:00am to 1:00pm and Thursday evenings 3:00pm to 6:00pm, as well as the second Saturday of every month from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

"We were fortunate that our pantry and café were able to continue services during the pandemic," said Jodi Breidel, North County Regional Director at WHEAT. Smaller food pantries and meal programs were forced to close. Thanks to our donors and hardworking volunteers and staff that filled in the gaps, we were able to make it work for individuals, families, and seniors who count on us for help."

"Our model has always been to provide space for people in the community to come in to eat, socialize and connect with staff and each other," adds Breidel. "We are incredibly happy to return to that model."

We are blessed to have the many companies, churches, civic organizations, and groups generously sponsor meals and volunteer in our Café. The first week back

to in-person service we'll have the Item Appeal / Turini's Catering, Jabil Healthcare, the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the MAEVE group of North Central MA leading the way.

WHEAT Community Connections has been serving as a hub for residents of Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster and Sterling for over 40 years, providing food security programs and wraparound services through case management and community partnerships to screen, educate and connect residents to eligible benefits like SNAP, the Healthy Incentive Program, MassHealth, Fuel Assistance, Housing, Rental and Utility Assistance Programs, Training & Employment, unemployment services, clothing and household goods through our thrift store and so much more.

Volunteer opportunities are always available for individuals or groups. To register please go to WHEAT's website at www.uwotc.org/wheat and click on WHEAT Community Connections, then at the top of the page select the area where you would like to volunteer. Café, Meal Prep/Delivery, Food Pantry, or the Hidden Treasures Thrift Store.

If you cannot volunteer, consider making a donation to WHEAT Community Connections here at <https://www.uwotc.org/WHEAT> or mail a check to WHEAT Community Connections, 272 High Street, Clinton, MA 01510.

About WHEAT Community Connections

WHEAT Community Connections has served residents of Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster, and Sterling since 1982 and became a direct service program of the United Way of Tri-County in 2012. WHEAT continues to be a local organization supporting residents through care, compassion and quality programs and services. www.uwotc.org/wheat

About the United Way of Tri-County

The United Way of Tri-County is a community building organization that brings people together to care for one another. We provide programs and services, connect volunteers, strengthen agencies, teach social responsibility, and meet the critical needs of the community with the help of people like you. For more information visit the United Way Website at www.uwotc.org

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