

Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief

19 November 2023

This week we served 362 people, another record. We ran out of produce bags and had to make extra dry goods bags. ALL volunteers worked very hard this week! I ordered more food to help people get through the holidays and to prepare for our Community Share (next week). That decision had ripple effects through every shift. Receiving moved a back-breaking 9,000 lbs. of food from Oregon Food Bank! The church is overflowing (including Rev Andria's office) with food.

Packing packed 150 dry goods bags and 160 produce bags to the brim with extra food. And Distribution carried the extra-heavy bags to the cars. On Friday, three groups of preschoolers marched to church with bags of donated groceries! We got 25-30 bags of groceries from parents of Whole Child Montessori School. So, in addition to hefting the heavy bags to cars, Distribution volunteers sorted through all the bags.

Thank you everyone for such a herculean effort to put food on our neighbors' tables for the holidays!!!

COMMUNITY SHARE

Next week, the pantry is closed. We are, however, doing our second annual Community Share. We created it to get food and essential items to our unhoused neighbors over the holiday. You can still sign up. If the shift you want is filled, just add your name next to someone else's.

This year, Reed College, Cultivate Initiatives, Dave's Killer Bread and Woodstock Clothing Closet are joining us! On Friday, a bunch of us are getting together to build the ready-to-eat bags.

Then, on Saturday, after Woodstock Hot Meals finishes serving a warm meal, another group of us will reset the Dining Hall. Then, people will be invited to walk through and select what they need. We will have ready-to-eat bags and other sundry food, hats and scarves, cold weather emergency supplies, blankets, hygiene products and clothing.

PREPARING THE YEAR-END REPORT

The Year-End Report is almost complete. I'm hoping to have it finalized in early December. This has been a monumental year for the Outreach Programs (pantry, hot meals, clothing closet). The report tells the story of our program development and the surging demand at the pantry over the last 16 months.

We all have worked very hard, experimented with improvement ideas and instituted multiple new systems. All the while, demand has increased relentlessly, putting more pressure on us and our physical space. Yet volunteers kept coming back, doing spectacular work, supporting each other and caring for our neighbors. It truly has been a phenomenal, albeit exhausting, year!

KEEPING UP WITH DEMAND

As you all know, we have been experiencing a continual increase in demand. To keep up, we added more volunteers to the shifts. This weekend, we had total of 52 volunteers; 28 in Receiving and Packing, 20 in Distribution and four behind-the-scenes. That, folks, is a continuation of our record-setting! You all continue to respond to the need by showing up and helping to carry the load! It's amazing! And, even with the increased number of volunteers, we still all running the entire time!!

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Despite increasing the number of volunteers on Distribution shifts to 10, we still don't have enough to get the job done without exhausting volunteers. So, I'm increasing the numbers for Distribution to 12.

I have a request for you. If you work the other shifts, but have an interest in Distribution, I wonder if you might consider switching shifts.

SIGN UP FOR NOVEMBER SHIFTS

Remember to sign up for the weekend by Thursday so we can plan. Also, if you can't come, please take your name off the sign-up sheet and contact me right away! Otherwise, people think the shift is full and don't sign up. Thanks!

WP SIGN UP SHEET NOVEMBER

THE WOODSTOCK PANTRY FUNDRAISER & FRIENDRAISER

We are in the middle of our fundraising and friendraising campaign to raise the funds to build our new pantry. As you all know, we cannot continue to operate out of the church. We must have a pantry. So, we need to raise another \$85,000. **We need your help!!**

We are NOT Alone – Imagine all the organizations, groups and people you know. I'm sure we collectively have well over 1,000 community contacts!!! Now imagine those 1,000 people donated just \$50. We would be halfway to our goal!

This is just another demonstration of the power of the community. What we can't do alone, we can do together!!!



My Request of You:

1. Victoria, Laura, Kathy, Janet, Chris, Lisa, Tim and Matt have been sending emails out to people who shared their contacts. Please check your inbox and spam (in case your computer doesn't recognize their email address). Please respond to the email and work with them to get in touch with your contacts.
2. If your community contacts are not yet in the Social Network, that's fine! Please get in touch with people you know in the community and ask them to join us.

We are asking people to join us by:

1. contributing on our [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com) page, or with this QR code
2. and sharing this request with their colleagues, friends and family as well as community organizations and businesses (add to your social media, send emails, make calls).



THANK YOU!!!!

Celebrate...

It Takes a Community, And We Are It!