



February 2014 Newsletter

St. Paul United Methodist Church

Notes from the Pantry

By Vicki Morris

Looking back over an incredible year of volunteering in the St. Paul food pantry, I think fondly of the people I've come to know, and with gratitude for what I have learned. It has been a complex, rich and varied way to spend my days that has left me with a deeper and more profound understanding of the human experience. So who does the St. Paul pantry serve, and what is the pantry experience from a volunteer perspective?

No longer is it only the homeless and those caught in the web of generational poverty, although many fall into that category. And often these are the folks who need the most help negotiating everyday obstacles and the encouragement to look in new directions...taking home a book for their child from our donated supply and reading to them. Or the telephone number of a social service agency that might help with an adult child with bipolar disorder who populates their home with imaginary people. Along with them, we now see a new group emerging. As imposed austerity grips the nation, we see the face of hunger changing. Formerly middle class, sometimes highly educated people have lost long-time jobs and careers as businesses downsize or ship their jobs overseas. In particular, those in their fifties, too young for Social Security and Medicare, and yet too old to be hired because of their age, experience, and yes, sometimes too much education. These are the folks who, after a lifetime of productivity are in absolute shock that the rug has been pulled from beneath them.

The tone has changed with the new mix. Conversation with those who come to the pantry varies from the practical to the philosophical. From the importance of Head Start to those who think Kindergarten is enough, to an exhilarating discussion of comparative religion that left half the room sitting knee to knee, joyfully exchanging ideas. Regardless, the common denominator, and the reality that cannot be ignored is their lack of food. Their inability to feed their families. Depending where you live, work and shop, you may never see this level of suffering. But to be sure, the urgency of need is increasingly moving into the suburbs as well.

Ultimately, the ever-increasing poverty we are witnessing is a systemic wrong that must be righted. With the legislated cuts in food stamp funding and the indifference to the impact of ending unemployment benefits, our numbers in the pantry are increasing every month. All too often we see our political leaders place the responsibility for meeting the increasing needs of our citizens in the lap of the church. The assumption seems to be that an abundance of good will and compassion equals unlimited resources and the infrastructure to single-handedly take on that responsibility. The poor and those in need are then more easily eliminated from the founding concept of "justice for all" and relegated to the expendable column in society. *The church will take care of them.* And once freed from responsibility for the citizenry, some of our elected officials will push for more austerity and cuts to social programs. Because, *the church will take care of them.*

The church *does* play a very important role in bolstering society and meeting community needs, and rightfully will continue. But a two-pronged approach is required, and partnering with lawmakers who understand *their* societal obligations is critical. Desperation is an effective motivator. A desperate person will work for three or four dollars an hour, under the table, with no protection from exploitation or abuse. A desperate person will steal. We have seen this happen in our St. Paul neighborhood. And when otherwise good people are pushed to these limits, the toll is not just financial but spiritual as well. Is it not, instead, more useful to motivate by fostering hope through loving and compassionate outreach and trying to make a difference in the lives of those left behind?

In the meantime, we do what we can with what we have to work with. More is always needed and appreciated. And if you would like to experience both the rawness and the beauty of human interaction, I invite you to volunteer in the food pantry. St. Paul is an oasis in an otherwise bleak landscape, doing work that matters. St. Paul is making a difference.

Empowered by the love of Jesus Christ, St. Paul United Methodist Church will open doors of service, justice and peace to the world, and windows into a life in Christ for all people.



Tax season has arrived and in today's economy more people are looking to squeeze every dollar out of their tax return. Tax filing can be confusing and difficult and too many tax filing services require fees and many offer Refund Anticipation Loans (RALs) which strip millions in fees

each year from the earned-income tax credits paid to working parents, ultimately reducing the amount of their tax return.

St. Paul UMC is partnering with The Benefit Bank (TBB), a web-based, counselor-assisted program to help low to moderate income wage earners obtain **FREE** assistance in filing federal and state income tax returns, claiming the Earned Income Credit (EIC) and Child Tax Credit. For married clients who choose to file a joint return, the income limit is now \$95,000. For all other clients, the income limit is now \$65,000.

Your tax refund is your money, so why pay for something that already belongs to you. Call 937-252-4467 to make an appointment to file your taxes for FREE.

For more information about The Benefit Bank, please call 1-800-648-1176 or visit their website at www.thebenefitbank.com.

Tutors are Needed to Teach English

You do not need to know Spanish or other second language to teach English. You don't need to be a trained teacher. This is very rewarding volunteer opportunity.

Tutors are needed immediately! Childcare is provided for children of ESOL students. We are also in need of individuals and groups available to assist with childcare.

If anyone is interested in teaching English to individual students or a class, provide resources, activities or educational information or provide childcare or children's activities to our groups, please call Rebekah Clapp at 931-644-7935 or 937-252-4467.

At a Glimpse...During December 2013 with your support, St. Paul...

- Served **1029 nutritious hot meals** at **Tuesday lunch** and **Saturday breakfast**.
- Provided **groceries** to **974 individuals** for **14,610 meals** through the **Emergency Food Pantry**.
- Put over **1000 pieces** of good used **clothing** into the hands of many grateful people and made \$495.00 for the Outreach Ministry.

Servant Opportunities:



- Food Pantry Escort
- Hostess/Host for the Pantry waiting room
- Tutors to teach English
- OBB Tax Counselors
- Work Groups to do small projects.

PANTRY NEEDS LIST

Canned Fruit
Canned Meat
Cereal
Pancake
Macaroni Cheese
Hot Chocolate
Drink mixes
Saltine crackers

Canned Soups
Canned Veggies
Oatmeal
Syrup
Jam/Jelly
Peanut butter
Sloppy Joe sauce
Sugar

Dish Soap
Laundry Detergent
Shampoo
Toothpaste

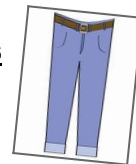


Church Needs:

Adult Winter Hats and Gloves
Paper Shredder
Snow Shovels

Stuff Shoppe Needs

Men's Clothing



Volunteer Spotlight



The people who come to the St. Paul Food Pantry on Thursdays have gotten really familiar with the friendly face of Clyde Kress. For five years, he has volunteered every week as a pantry escort who assists the families in selecting their food. He is retired from Dayton Power and Light Co. as well as Wright Memorial Library. In addition to his volunteer time at St. Paul, Clyde also volunteers one half day per week at the Veterans Administration Center. He is an active member of Christ United Methodist Church in Kettering. When asked why he gives so much volunteer time, Clyde says that at 77 years young, he certainly doesn't want to stay home with nothing to do but sit around! With a big smile on his face, Clyde admits he loves working at St. Paul and loves being missed by the children on the rare occasion when he is sick and can't come to work. Thank God for volunteers like Clyde who take volunteerism so seriously! Our ministry at St. Paul depends on them.



MISSION u

Ohio Northern University

Four-Day Program: July 7-10

Weekend Event: July 11-13

Day Sampler: July 12

TOPICS:

How Is It with Your Soul?

The Roma of Europe

The Church and People with Disabilities

Course materials may be purchased in advance by calling the Mission Resource Center at 800-305-9857 or visit www.missionresourcecenter.org.

REGISTRATION: Register at www.westohioumc.org, click on "Register for Events." Registration opens March 1-June 15, early bird discount through April 15.

If you do not have computer access or need help registering, contact: Peg Addington, Registrar 614-877-4200 maddin0952@sbcglobal.net

SCHOLARSHIPS:

A limited number of scholarships are available for first time adult and youth attendees. Scholarships will be awarded as applications are received. Deadline for scholarship requests is April 15.

St. Paul UMC Semi-Annual Steak Dinner

MENU

**Cubed Steak
with Mushroom Gravy**

Green Beans

Baked Potatoes

Tossed Salad or Applesauce

Dinner Roll Beverage

A variety of Desserts

Saturday, March 15, 2014

From 4:30pm - 7:00pm



Adults \$9.00

Children (10 & younger)


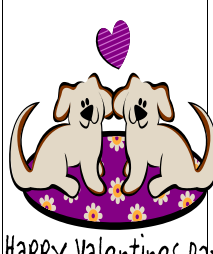

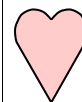
\$4.50

Come Dine with Us!

Office Hours 9:00am ~ 3:00pm M—F
 Food Pantry 10:00am ~ 2:45pm M,W,TH
 Stuff Shoppe 10:00am ~ 2:45pm M,W,TH
 12:30pm ~ 2:00pm T

FEBRUARY 2014



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)</p>						<p>1 Community Breakfast 9:00am Served by Belmont UMC</p>
<p>2 Worship Celebration 11:00am</p>	<p>3 Meeting of The Governing Board 2:00pm Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm ESOL Classes 6:00pm—7:45pm</p>	<p>4 Worship 11:20am Lunch 12 noon Served by Christ UMC Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>5 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm Las Amigas 5:00pm—6:30pm Spanish Bible Study 6:30pm—7:30pm</p>	<p>6 ESOL Classes 10am—11:45am Koffee Hour 11:00am Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>		<p>8 Community Breakfast 9:00am Served by Aleyn UMC</p>
<p>9 Worship Celebration 11:00am</p>	<p>10 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm ESOL Classes 6:00pm—7:45pm</p>	<p>11 Worship 11:20am Lunch 12 noon Served by Faith Community UMC Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>12 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm Las Amigas 5:00pm—6:30pm Spanish Bible Study 6:30pm—7:30pm</p>	<p>13 ESOL Classes 10am—11:45am Koffee Hour 11:00am Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>		<p>15 Community Breakfast 9:00am Served by Normandy UMC</p>
<p>16 Worship Celebration 11:00am</p> 	<p>17 PRESIDENTS DAY CHURCH CLOSED</p>	<p>18 Worship 11:20am Lunch 12 noon Served by Normandy UMC Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>19 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm Las Amigas 5:00pm—6:30pm Spanish Bible Study 6:30pm—7:30pm</p>	<p>20 ESOL Classes 10am—11:45am Koffee Hour 11:00am Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>		<p>22 Community Breakfast 9:00am Served by Belmont UMC Youth</p>
<p>23 Worship Celebration 11:00am</p> 	<p>24 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm ESOL Classes 6:00pm—7:45pm</p>	<p>25 Worship 11:20am Lunch 12 noon Served by Lewisburg UMC Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>26 Sr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm Las Amigas 5:00pm—6:30pm Spanish Bible Study 6:30pm—7:30pm</p>	<p>27 ESOL Classes 10am—11:45am Koffee Hour 11:00am Jr. Peacemakers 4:00pm—6:30pm</p>	