

Annelle Delorme-Hagerman Food Pantry
at the Church of Our Saviour
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2013 Year End Report for Annual Parish Meeting

This was an exceptionally busy year for our Food Pantry. It was a year that saw us realize our goal of adding a third monthly distribution. Each month we now distribute groceries and clothing on one Friday evening and two Saturday mornings each month. This was a major undertaking that we'll discuss in some detail below.

So, what prompted this change? Our attendance records indicated a steady increase in average pantry attendance from 120-220 families per month from 2004 to 2009-2010. Average attendance in 2010-2012 was 206 families per month. Another factor that puzzled us was, that although we registered over 200 new families each year, our average attendance remained the same. Because of higher unemployment and weaker economy, we naturally expected attendance to be increasing. Our conclusion was that we had reached our capacity.

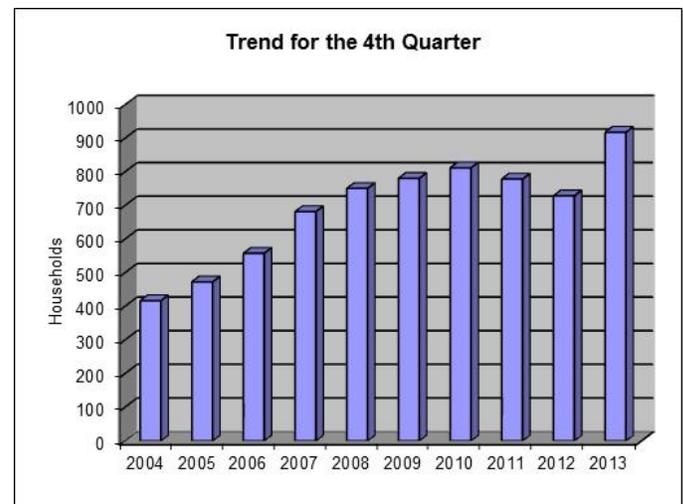
After considering options we decided to try adding a third monthly distribution. Our hope was that some families currently attending would shift to the new distribution, allowing room for new families to attend.

The planning involved to determine if this was possible occurred over many months. A team was organized to prayerfully discern if we should take this on, produce a plan, recruit new pantry leaders, organize a kickoff meeting, train new people, and finally implement the plan. We wanted to serve more families without overburdening our existing leaders and volunteers.

The team attended several Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) meetings that were extremely helpful in planning, goal setting, identifying resources, and planning execution. Despite our chaotic efforts, our LDI coach Lallie Loyd, helped keep us on track and offered much encouragement. Our team consisted of food pantry leaders, meal ministry leaders, Church of Our Saviour clergy, and Christ Church volunteers.

We went to area churches and organizations to tell of our needs and invite people to join us for an "informational" meeting. Seventy-nine people attended that meeting in May 2013. Many different denominations were present at this meeting as well as community organizations, businesses, and pantry volunteers and guests. Because of the support we received from those present, and the commitment of many new volunteers, we made plans to implement the additional distribution.

October 2013 was the first month for our added distribution. Right away we saw a 20% increase in the number of families attending from the 2011 and 2012 attendance. For Oct-Dec 2013 we served 190 more families than we did in 2012. This is an average increase of 26% in the number of families attending for those months.



We are encouraged to see that all our hard work is allowing us to serve more families. Continued review of our attendance statistics will be made to determine whether this trend continues through the following year.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who worked so hard at making this successful.

Other general accomplishments and highlights for 2013 are presented below.

We thank God that we were able to provide food to 682 distinct families representing 1,800 individual guests. With the help of staff, parishioners, and the local community to include businesses, churches, and organizations, we received donations that allowed us to provide services to an increasing number of guests. We registered 312 new families in 2013, and our total guest attendance increased by 9%.

For the 5th year in a row we averaged over 200 households each month, representing guests from 15 nearby communities from Tiverton to Taunton. For Thanksgiving we also gave away over 357 turkeys to our guests.

The list of people deserving thanks is huge. In reviewing the volunteer sign-in sheets we found that there were 192 different volunteers ranging in age from 8 to 84, who helped during 2013. The volunteer effort that supported the pantry is over 2,970 hours with an estimated value of \$44,000. Each month it took an average of 250 work-hours to register guests, sign them in for USDA foods, walk guests through the pantry and help bring bags to their cars, sort and stock shelves, pick up food, setup and distribute clothes, repair and maintain our pantry, and other administrative duties. So, for each distribution, an average of 125 work-hours is involved. Our volunteers can spend as much or as little time as they want. Individual volunteer times varied from 1 hour up to 254 hours.

In 2013 we registered our 2,407th household and our 6,621st guest. Our guests came from 15 different cities or towns and represented at least 5 different ethnicities (No formal records of ethnicity are kept). The age range of the guests we provided food to was from infant to 98 years old with 28% being under 18 years old, 57% being between 18 and 64, and 15% being 65 years old or older.

The number of active guests fluctuated between 623 and 807. During November, when we distributed turkeys, we served 397 different households representing 997 different guests.

We conservatively estimate that we picked up, sorted, stocked, and distributed about 84,000 pounds of food at an estimated value of over \$67,000. About 3,600 pounds of that amount was received during the Somerset and Swansea Postal Workers food drive and 2,750 pounds were donated by local Scouts. We are also the recipient of many food drives from local schools, churches, businesses, and organizations. In addition we estimate that we distributed over 8,000 articles of clothing.

Thanks to food and monetary donations from our parishioners and the community; the tireless effort of our staff and many dedicated volunteers; and support from the Greater Boston Food Bank, Project Bread, and C.R.O.P Walk (Christian Rural Overseas Program) we were very efficient in using our resources to provide food to our guests. In fact, it cost us an average of \$7.45 to provide several bags of food to a family each month. Between food, maintenance, supplies, utilities, and the maintenance on our “new” truck, our expenses this year were about \$19,490. With contributions from parishioners, individuals, organizations, churches, businesses, and grants, we took in about \$11,400. Because of our frugality in previous years we are able to absorb this year’s deficit.

Once again this year, our guests continued to enjoy the fine meals provided by Paul Ouellette and his volunteers of the Rev Alden Burhoe Meal Ministry.

We are extremely grateful for all the Church of Our Saviour food pantry volunteers and parishioners who regularly support our efforts. We are also extremely thankful for the efforts of those folks in our community that support us with their time as well as monetary donations.

We strive to provide more than just groceries by treating our guests as neighbors and friends.

Anyone interested in getting involved can contact the Church at 508-678-9663 or George Paiva at 508-677-3825