



## HAVING FUN WITH MISSION: 1

**Information and fun ideas for food bank and food pantry donations**

### **Mission: 1**

November 1-11, 2011 ... **ONE UNITED CHURCH** on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice. The United Church of Christ will collect more than **1 MILLION ITEMS OF HEALTHY FOOD** and other household items for local food banks, pantries and outreach services.



### **Having Fun with Mission: 1**

*"For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink . . ."*

*[Matthew 25: 35-Amplified]*

Historically, religious organizations and nonprofit agencies have distributed food and meals to people in need. The sharp increases in such requests associated with high unemployment, cuts in the social safety net, decline in the value of public assistance benefits, and increases in housing and other costs has led to unprecedented growth of food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and emergency food programs.

Below are some ideas that your church might like to do for fun.

We suggest that a large box be placed in a convenient spot at your church so that members can deposit food items that will be delivered to the food bank or food pantry by a designated person at the church. Your church may wish to encourage its members to deliver items to the food bank/pantry themselves.

**For each day beginning November 1 through November 11, 2011 please consider the following fun projects related to food donations.**



## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

**“Plant a Row Tuesday”** – On this day you may want to begin to “plant a row for the hungry.” Plant an extra row in your vegetable garden and donate the harvest to the food shelters. You can also begin this project in the spring or begin to plant a container garden. Donating your extra produce will help others live better and healthier lives. It is important to first contact the local food pantry and make arrangements with the director or staffer at the food bank/pantry to receive your produce. Compile a list of all the government and independent food pantries in your county/community who accept donations of fresh fruits and vegetables. Circulate this list to other congregations.

Information on “Plant a Row” – <http://www.gardenwriters.org/gwa.php?p=par/index.html>.

If weather where you are located does not support planting a row in November, consider “planting a seed” by forming a group to work with your state Cooperative Extension agency to identify local Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) farms and recruit members for an early spring garden start.



## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2

**“Casserole Wednesday”** – On this day have your church members make Casseroles. Deliver these casseroles to the shelters and outreach centers. Volunteer at the shelter on this day by helping to serve the meal. Show extravagant hospitality by sitting down and breaking bread with community recipients.



## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3

**“Souper Thursday”** – On this day donate cans of soup. Soup contains many nutrients and has many health benefits. Choose soups that are lower in sodium and fat.



## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4

**“Festive Fruity Friday”** – On this day donate canned fruits that are packed in their own juices or have light syrup. Inquire if the food bank/shelter accepts fresh fruits before you donate these.



## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5

**“Tasty Tuna Saturday”** - Go fishing and catch a Tuna or bring canned, your choice. Canned meats would work too. Bring these items to your church to be delivered to the food bank/pantry. Fish and meats are good sources of protein and can be mixed with lots of vegetables and grains for a nice meal.



## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6

**“Dedication and Commitment Sunday”** – On Sunday, October 30, announce that members are encouraged to bring canned goods on Sunday, November 6. On November 6 designate a special time in the morning service where the congregation may come forward with their food donations and drop them into a special basket in front of the altar. Have a special dedication and prayer over the food items. The items may be delivered to the food bank/shelter during the week. In addition, on this Sunday have pre-made simple “pledge” cards that members can complete in which they pledge to donate food to pantries and food banks for an entire year. Have members drop their pledge cards into the offering plate. Print out a list of those who have pledged and post it somewhere in the church. Encourage others to make this pledge on other Sundays.



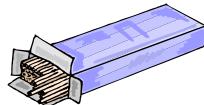
## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7

**“Many Miscellaneous Monday”** – On this day donate Whatever ya got! Bring it to the church to be donated to the pantry/food bank.



## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

**“Cereal and Oatmeal Shoppers Tuesday”** – On this day donate cereals that are multi-grain with low sugar content. Donate low sodium oatmeal. Cereals supply protein, vitamins and minerals.



## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

**“Pasta Wednesday”** – On this day, donate all kinds of Pasta! Pasta is a food source of carbohydrates. Don’t forget to add the sauce – tomato-based sauces are good.



## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10

**“Thankful Thursday”** – On this day donate items for Thanksgiving dinners. Many shelters will prepare and serve thanksgiving meals. Donate turkeys that can be frozen (check to make sure that the food bank has a freezer), dry mashed potato flakes, canned vegetables, condiments, bread, etc. Don’t forget the cranberry sauce!



**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

**"I Love My Pet Friday"** – People are making choices between feeding their pets and feeding themselves. Many families have to give up their pets because they can no longer feed them. Give donations of pet foods to the shelter or food bank so that people do not have to give up their pets when they are struggling financially.

## **Helpful Information on food banks, food pantries and donations**

### **What is a Food Bank?**

A food bank is a non-profit organization that distributes non-perishable goods and non-perishable food items to non-profit agencies involved in local emergency food programs. The first food bank in the nation was started in 1967 in Phoenix, Arizona. Food banks are like the wholesale arm of the food distribution system (think Sam's Club). Food banks receive their food from companies, supermarkets and from donations from the general public. In addition, federal and state government also contract with food banks to distribute USDA surplus commodities and FEMA food. Some Food Banks are members of Feeding America, the food bank network organization. Feeding America was formerly known as America's Second Harvest. [Source: *Wikipedia, Feeding America and RoadRunner Food Bank* at <http://www.foodbankenm.org/index.asp?PG=14>]

### **What is a Food Pantry?**

Food Pantries are agencies that receive food from food banks, non-profit organizations, churches, government or community groups. Food Pantries may also be known as Food Closets, Food Shelves, and Soup Kitchens. Food pantries provide emergency, unprepared foods to those in need. In some instances, shelters or other outreach programs prepare and serve community meals to those in need. Some food pantries serve only a few families each month, but there are many that provide emergency food support to hundreds of families each month.

[Source: *Wikipedia, Feeding America and RoadRunner Food Bank* at <http://www.foodbankenm.org/index.asp?PG=14>]

### **What are Emergency Food Programs?**

Emergency food programs provide immediate hunger relief to individuals and families who are unable to afford food and who receive governmental financial assistance from programs such as - **SNAP** (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) formerly known as the Food Stamp Program; **WIC** (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) and Meals on Wheels.

### **What is Food Security?**

The World Health Organization defines Food Security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. In 2009 according to USDA 85.3% or 100.8 million U.S. households were considered food secure.

## What is Food Insecurity?

According to “Household Food Security in the United States”, a report released by the USDA, almost 15% (approximately 18 million) of U.S. households had trouble getting enough food at some point in 2009. Food insecure households are those who are uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal, or temporary, and it may occur at the household, regional, or national level. Food insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

### References: Food Security/Insecurity

[Food Insecurity - nutrition, deficiency, body, health, protein, vitamin, weight](http://www.faq.org/nutrition/Erg-Foo/Food-Insecurity.html#ixzz1WXthr16a)

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/measurement.htm>

## Some Hunger Facts

- 1 in 6 Americans do not have access to enough food. More than 50 million Americans live in “food insecure” households. [Source: *Feeding America*]
- 23 million Americans, including six-and-a-half million children, live in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods that are more than one mile from the closest supermarket. These communities, where access to affordable, quality, and nutritious foods is limited, are known as “food deserts.” [Source: *Let’s Move Toolkit for Faith-based and Neighborhood Organizations*]
- With an unemployment rate stuck above 9 percent and millions of people working part-time jobs because they cannot find full-time positions, a record 45.8 million people -- one of every seven -- received food stamps from the government in May. Demand for this kind of federal help has risen in all 50 states. [Source: *CNN*]

## Why Donate to Food Banks and Food Pantries?

*“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, defend the rights of those who have nothing. Speak up and judge fairly and defend the rights of the poor and needy.” [Proverbs 31:8-9]*

Food banks and food pantries perform vital functions in our society – providing food and resources to those in need. Food banks and food pantries survive on donations from corporations, organizations (including churches) and individuals. They have the greatest need for foods that are nutritious, multipurpose and non-perishable.

## **What Should You Donate?**

- ▶ Healthy, non-perishable foods
- ▶ Frozen foods (check with the food bank or pantry to make sure they have a freezer)
- ▶ Healthy snacks
- ▶ Dry goods, canned goods
- ▶ Powdered milk
- ▶ Items with intact, unopened, consumer or commercial packaging
- ▶ Items with non-breakable packaging (no glass, please)
- ▶ Food within the expiration date on the packaging
- ▶ Food from your community or backyard garden
- ▶ Healthy beverages (100% fruit juice and dehydrated and evaporated milk)

## **What are the most-requested food items?**

- ▶ Canned meats like tuna, stew and chili
- ▶ Canned fruits and vegetables
- ▶ Dried Rice, Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- ▶ Beans
- ▶ Healthy Cereals and Oatmeal
- ▶ Peanut Butter

Source: [http://www.ehow.com/list\\_6311705\\_items-donate-food-pantries.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_6311705_items-donate-food-pantries.html)

Source: <http://www.cagcny.org/Suggested%20Food%20Pantry%20Items.htm>

## **What are some other things to consider when donating items?**

- ▶ Provide canned goods that are lower in sodium
- ▶ Provide canned goods that are packed in natural syrup and no added sugars
- ▶ Provide nutritious foods for babies, infants and toddlers (formula with iron and jars of baby food)
- ▶ Provide a basket of simple healthy recipes for recipients to pick up
- ▶ Provide simple handouts on ways that recipients can access food resources in their community; i.e. how to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP); Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Meals on Wheels, etc.
- ▶ Provide condiments – toppings such as lower sodium ketchup, mustard, salad dressings, jam, jellies, etc.
- ▶ Consider making a CASH donation. Food pantries are often able to get more food for the money by purchasing in bulk and may get discounts from large suppliers.
- ▶ Consider donating pampers for infants and toddlers
- ▶ Consider In-Kind donations to the pantry such as refrigerators and freezers, vehicles for transportation, office supplies, office furniture and equipment, printing services, soup bowls, silverware, cups, plates, napkins (either ceramic, recyclable or composted materials)

## **References**

Capital Area Food Bank of Texas: *Donate Food*; MSN Money: *10 donations food banks need most*; Atlanta Community Food Bank: *Donate Food*; Food Bank of the Rockies; San Francisco Food Bank; and Feeding America.

## **Advocacy**

In December 2010, President Obama signed into law The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. This law authorizes funding for federal school meals and child nutrition programs and increases access to healthy food for low-income children. The bill that reauthorizes this program is often referred to by shorthand as the child nutrition reauthorization bill. This particular bill reauthorizes child nutrition programs for five years and includes \$4.5 billion in new funding for these programs over 10 years.

The law sets nutritional standards for all food offered in schools -- including food served in cafeterias, vending machines and stores -- increases spending per meal and enrolls about 115,000 more children in school lunch programs. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act would pay for childhood nutrition programs by cutting SNAP funding. Please write your legislator and ask them to restore the SNAP funds and to continue to find other sources of funding for the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids program.

This **Mission:** 1 resource guide for food donations was prepared by members of the UCC Let's Move Task Force which includes clergy and lay persons, faith community nurses and other health and human service professionals who work with Justice and Witness Ministries Staff to provide helpful resources and information on ways that UCC congregations can be actively engaged in the Let's Move campaign launched by the First Lady, Michelle Obama. The goals of the Let's Move campaign are to: 1) promote healthy eating; 2) provide healthy foods in schools; 3) increase physical activity; 4) improve access to healthy and affordable foods. For more information contact Barbara Baylor, MPH, Minister for Health Care Justice.

[baylrb@ucc.org](mailto:baylrb@ucc.org)

### Acknowledgements

Rev. Adora I. Lee, People's Congregational, Washington, DC

Aly Breisch - Chapel Hill United Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Barbara Williams - Eastview United Church of Christ, Cleveland, OH

Deborah Dee Brayton - St. Albans UCC, St. Albans N.Y.

Justice and Witness Ministries

Kay Jones - St. John UCC, Orwigsburg, PA

Rebecca Anton - Parkside Community Church, Sacramento, CA

Rev. Wade Schemmel - Northern Plains Conference, Bismarck, ND