

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS FOOD PANTRY REPORT WINTER 2023

IT'S A WRAP! 2022 ACTIVITIES

During 2022, LCC Pantry serviced just under 5,000 (4,904) recipients at its weekly Tuesday operation which translates to helping feed nearly 15,000 individuals (14,687) taking into account family members (in 2021 our numbers were 5,386/17,977). Due to both the economy and possibly an influx of refugees in the area, some weeks we were seeing about 5-10 new clients register for our services. Although the Greater Chicago Food Depository is generous, they do place a cap on how many cases, etc., we can order from them and from time-to-time we needed to purchase foods from stores in the area such as Meijer, Jewel, Walmart, Menards, and Tony's Market. And, we are always grateful for steady food donations from LCC and other local churches, particularly St. John UCC, Congregational UCC, (both of Arlington Heights) and Trinity Lutheran of Rolling Meadows as well, along with food and monetary donations from other generous folks in the surrounding communities.



Last year saw the return of the Post Office Food Drive sponsored by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) which was held again in mid-May after a two-year absence due to the pandemic situation. We received nearly 10,000 pounds of non-perishable food items due to the hard work and coordination of NALC, some local Scouts and pantry and other volunteers from the area who helped sort and box up the donations to make this activity a success and allowed LCC Pantry to be the beneficiary of this generous experience again. Then in early November 2022 we were finally able to return to inside food distribution – again using our South Fellowship Hall – after multiple years servicing pantry recipients via the North door (drive-up) and South door (walk-up) outside method. It was with the Depository's urging that we return inside in order to allow 'clients' to have more choices of food items to fit their needs as they walk through Fellowship Hall with a cart and can make some choices of their own and we required everyone to wear masks in order to be serviced—this all seemed to go very well.



And, in November and December through the generosity of Jewel Foods, we partnered with three of their stores (Rand Road, Vail Street and Golf Road) again as in years past as the recipient of holiday dinners also made possible by donations from local shoppers too. Just prior to Thanksgiving we were able to hand out approximately 192 turkey dinners and during Christmas week a combination giveaway of both ham and turkey dinners – 311 altogether!

The Depository's somewhat new *Link2Feed* intake system (first initiated here at LCC Pantry in October 2021) also seemed to go well. Clients use their 'card' to register with us when they arrive and are allowed to come every other week. The Depository requested that we tighten up our recipients to include those folks who live in Arlington Heights and the surrounding towns of Mt. Prospect, Des Plaines, Elk Grove, and Rolling Meadows – the towns that we had always serviced but during the height of the pandemic we were told to service anyone in the Depository's boundaries which includes Chicago and the rest of Cook County, thus we did have some other folks coming to us for a while and we've been working on narrowing that back down to the five towns mentioned above.



We always like to mention that we could not operate without our dedicated volunteers and supporters that help keep the Pantry's weekly services up and running and it is so appreciated – we pray for God's blessings upon all!

Debbie Paddack, Julie Malin, Lori Becker, Co-Directors, Lutheran Church of the Cross Food Pantry

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