The Food Pantry in 2021

January 31, 2022
2021 Highlights at the Food Pantry

• As variants of the COVID-19 virus continue to evolve and infection rates remain high, adverse effects from the pandemic persist: unemployment, financial hardship, hunger, food insecurity

• The Food Pantry continues to operate with a core crew of volunteers on weekdays preparing for Saturday operations and on Saturday mornings distributing food at reduced hours

• Food distribution continues outdoor on a drive-through or walk-up basis. Grab-and-go of food bags has been replaced with clients choosing their food
2021 Highlights at the Food Pantry

- Letting clients choose their food has allowed closer interaction with the clients and God’s Closet to follow up on specific needs and prayer requests
- Pantry shelves continue to be stocked through
  - Drive and Drop Donations
  - Donor Direct Online Ordering
  - Neighborhood Food Drives
  - Virtual 5K Run and Walk
- In collaboration with Neighborhood Health, two COVID Vaccine clinics were offered onsite to clients
- Regular Drive and Drop on the 3rd Saturday of each month expanded to include donations for God’s Closet
Operating with Columbia Core Values at Work

- Warm Welcome
- Authentic Community
- Intentional Caring
- Genuine Witness
- Constant Prayer
- Joyful Giving
- Demonstrated Integrity
2021 – In Numbers

34,501 Bags of Food Distributed
10,564 Families Served
5,632 Volunteer Hours
198,265 Pounds of Food Received

On average, 203 families per week
### Food Pantry Trends 2015 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Families Served</th>
<th>Number of Bags</th>
<th>Pantry Volunteer Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>9,534</td>
<td>39,075</td>
<td>14,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>9,772</td>
<td>37,638</td>
<td>15,777</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>11,371</td>
<td>56,900</td>
<td>17,123</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>12,174</td>
<td>42,879</td>
<td>16,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>11,467</td>
<td>57,415</td>
<td>14,121</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>11,275</td>
<td>39,309</td>
<td>7,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>10,564</td>
<td>34,501</td>
<td>5,632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Food Received Trend 2015 – 2021
(weight in lbs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Donation</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>133,235</td>
<td>195,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>145,008</td>
<td>216,376</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>169,886</td>
<td>217,375</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>200,704</td>
<td>183,889</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>131,096</td>
<td>182,230</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>97,326</td>
<td>113,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>85,598</td>
<td>112,666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2021 Volunteer Hours

- Immunizations: 1%
- Shop and Share Delivery: 1%
- Others: 0%
- Shopping: 3%
- Drive and Drop Food Drive: 5%
- Pantry - Other: 5%
- Saturday Food Distribution: 29%
- Pantry - Admin: 10%
- Preparation for Saturday Operations: 28%
- God's Closet: 18%
Sources of Food Donations in 2021

- Target Skyline: 27,191
- ** Shop and Share: 23,412
- ** Drive and Drop CBChurch: 11,337
- Scouting for Food: 6,967
- ** Thanksgiving Share: 5,283
- KidsCare Meals: 4,321
- Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church: 3,780
- Lee Boulevard Hts. Community Association: 2,034
- Others: 1,273

** Donations from Columbia Baptist Church community = 47% of all donations
Food Distributed Weekly

Bakery: 12,030 lbs, 6% of which Bread 10,091 lbs

Meat: 8,986 lbs, 4%

Misc: 155,863 lbs, 79%
Includes eggs -- 5,800 lbs, Rice, canned fruits, canned vegetables, pasta, tuna, milk, canned soup

Produce: 21,385 lbs, 11%
Of which
Carrots -- 3,500 lbs
Bananas -- 5,600 lbs
Apples -- 5,000 lbs
Oranges -- 4,200 lbs
The Spend Yourself Garden
God’s Closet

With the onset of the COVID pandemic and the mandate for social distancing, God’s Closet became the outreach ministry of the Food Pantry in the Culmore neighborhood. While God’s Closet is focused on the needs of children, it has also helped vulnerable pregnant women and the homeless.

Food Pantry clients submit client requests and needs forms during the Saturday food distributions. God’s Closet then contacts the clients, discuss their needs, prays with them and then collects the items requested. These are either picked up or delivered, on a short-term basis, to those who are sick or without any means of transportation.
Donations to God’s Closet

God’s Closet has distributed to families:

• gently used children and adult clothing
• undergarments, socks, gloves, hats
• personal grooming essentials
• feminine hygiene products
• diapers
• hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, soap and lotion
• furniture, car seats, highchairs, strollers, cribs
• toys, Bibles, backpacks, blankets
Stories From God’s Closet

• God’s Mercy and Healing

Among the many clients at the Food Pantry three years ago (2018) was J, a young boy who had leukemia. Many members of the Food Pantry had been praying for God's healing of J since then.

In January 2020, God’s Closet learned that J's leukemia had gotten worse and he needed monthly blood transfusions. When the COVID pandemic erupted, J’s mother had to quit her job to care for J.

God’s Closet assisted the family from January 2020 to April 2021 with visits, providing rides to appointments with doctors, food from the Food Pantry and necessities from God's Closet, while engaging in fellowship and prayer.

In January 2021, J’s mom was informed that J would need a bone marrow transplant if he were to have any chance of surviving his bout with leukemia. In February 2021, J was matched with two people who were willing to donate their bone marrow. After the transplant on April 19, 2021, J was supposed to spend 45 days in the hospital. But when J’s body responded well to the transplant during the first three weeks, the doctor allowed J to leave the hospital and finish his recovery and medicinal treatment at home.

God’s Closet continues to be in touch with J, who sounds very upbeat and positive. To God be the glory for all the prayers that were showered upon J and his parents.
Stories From God’s Closet

• Gratitude in the Face of Great Need

One Saturday, God’s Closet received a form not requesting anything but rather to thank the Food Pantry. The note reads as follows. “I just want to thank you for what you do every Saturday. For my family, it is very helpful. My husband was diagnosed with brain cancer and since then I am not working and your help is of great value to my family.”

God’s Closet contacted the client and learned that her husband had been diagnosed with terminal brain cancer and they have a 16-year-old daughter. When asked how the Food Pantry can help, the client indicated that they needed a winter coat for her daughter, a dehumidifier for their basement, and food. God’s Closet was able to provide the winter coat and dehumidifier and food was delivered to the family on a weekly basis for six months until her husband passed away from cancer.
God’s Closet received a phone call from a lady with three young children and a husband who was hospitalized on a ventilator with COVID. The lady needed clothing for her children, hygiene products and food. God’s Closet was able to meet her initial needs and continued to provide food on a weekly basis for two and a half months until her husband passed away from COVID. Afterwards, the lady’s friends in Richmond, VA offered to help her and her children relocate to Richmond.
"And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday."

-- Isaiah 58:10