

Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief – Special Edition

2 July 2023

We served 241 people this week. Thank you, everyone, for a wonderful weekend!

This week, I'm going to share the Woodstock Pantry story. If you know other parts of the story, please tell me so we can create a full account of the wonderful trajectory of this community project!

WOODSTOCK PANTRY – A COMMUNITY STORY UNFOLDING

Woodstock Pantry: Part I

Prior to the pandemic, All Saints Episcopal Church, neighbors and local businesses shared concerns about increasing food insecurity in our area. With the onset of the pandemic, our community took collective action to create the Woodstock Pantry. All Saints offered its space, organizational skills and volunteer base to host the new pantry. And community members stepped up to help feed our neighbors.

Some of you remember the early days, e.g., getting certified with Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and the federal government to get food, establishing relationships with community gardens and grocery stores, setting up the temporary container for our food, driving to OFB to pick up food every week and serving from underneath a sagging canopy in the rain!



In just 2½ years, the Woodstock Pantry has become essential to our community well-being, meeting a significant and growing need in our community. For example, between October 22 and March 23, WP served 1,297 households and 3,107 individuals. In 2022, monthly demand increased from 396 to 519 households. The average food/month served increased from 8,000 to 14,000 lbs. To meet the need we expanded our volunteer network from 38 people in August 2022 to 100+ in June 2023, 82% of whom are community members. And we doubled our community partnerships.

The Decision

In spring of 2023, the All Saints congregation made the formal decision to support the transition of the Woodstock Pantry from a temporary response to the pandemic to a sustainable food resource for our area. This will change the trajectory of food security in our area, directly contributing to individual safety and community social well-being.

Their decision fit squarely within the congregation's vision and values. All Saints is an outreach-oriented, intergenerational community in the Woodstock neighborhood. It is a catalyzer, using its human, physical and financial resources to create and strengthen the neighborhood and to channel the goodwill of our neighbors into service, the arts, culture and conversations that matter.

All Saints offers services through the Woodstock Pantry, the Clothing Closet and Hot Meals. And it collaborates with a community partner, i.e., Cultivate Initiatives, to provide hygiene, showers, laundry and basic medical services for our unhoused neighbors. All Saints invests in diversity and equity building through events like the parish Pride Celebration, Juneteenth Black Business Fair and the Refugee Art Show.

Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief – Special Edition

2 July 2023

Most recently, All Saints hosted a Town Hall with the Voices Project, featuring Joanne Hardesty, to explore how churches can leverage their resources to invest in black and brown businesses.

Woodstock Pantry: Part II (Year I)

All Saints immediately hired and funded an Outreach Coordinator with skills to facilitate the transition. The Rev. Andria Skornik and Kristen commenced fund raising and grant writing to gather the requisite funds to build a permanent pantry structure. And Kristen and volunteers set to work on program development. The following are a few of the outcomes of our work.

Food Sources We expanded our food sources to include the Clackamas Service Center, Brentwood-Darlington Community Gardens, Neighborhood House Pantry, Dave's Killer Bread and The Pongo Fund. We were selected for continuation in the OFB Food Choice Cohort and have received donations through the Community Food Donation program. We were accepted into the Fresh Alliance and now partner with Safeway. And Davis Peace Grant recipients chose to work with us on their garden project.

Food Choices We expanded food choices for our vegetarian and vegan neighbors, built Ready-to-Eat bags for our neighbors who can't cook and experimented with providing culturally appropriate food. Though we are not a shopping style pantry, we provide food options to our neighbors every week.

Language Translation Volunteers who speak Mandarin, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian and Cantonese translate for our customers during distribution. And a number of our materials are in multiple languages.

Trauma-Informed Food Site We developed a *Trauma-Informed Food Site Plan*, an *Emergency Response Plan* and *Emergency Response Teams*. Environmental and service strategies are being employed to create a welcoming, respectful experience for our neighbors. Shift leads and people in key positions have received F2F training on *De-escalation* and *Trauma-Informed Care*.

Volunteer Engagement We use collaborative leadership to operate the pantry. We focus on volunteer leadership, use a team structure and employ self-managing teams. Every shift is run with teams and a volunteer Team Lead. The Team Lead is responsible for supporting, training, troubleshooting and building community within the team. Each shift begins with a team meeting to organize the work and build team culture. Training focuses on procedures to enable volunteers to independently perform duties, and employs mentors for support. We intentionally welcome new volunteers into our culture of teamwork and 'neighbors helping neighbors'.

When the Outreach Coordinator started, volunteers with expertise were engaged to draft procedures and guidelines for work in their shifts. The draft procedures were tested by shift volunteers, who gave feedback which was used to improve the procedures. We use a Continuous Quality Improvement approach wherein volunteers provide feedback on a regular basis to improve our procedures.

Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief – Special Edition

2 July 2023

We regularly get volunteers from local high schools and Reed College. We are hosting our second Reed student intern.

Outreach Coordinator Team We are expanding our Outreach Coordinator Team to include the ASEC Outreach Coordinator, two Woodstock Pantry volunteers and two Hot Meals volunteers. They are training to cover the Outreach Coordinator duties and are engaged in planning, program development and evaluation for the programs.

Community Engagement Planning Committee The Community Engagement Planning Committee (CEPC) is forming at this time to contribute to the pantry build project. It is comprised of community members and parishioners. The CEPC will create and implement a *Community Engagement Plan* to address: community outreach and communication; volunteer mobilization and support; and evaluation and integration of customer input into operations. Through the CEPC, neighbors who aren't yet engaged with the pantry will be invited to participate through work parties, project evaluation, donations and shared celebrations. The CEPC experience will be employed to establish a community advisory committee for the Woodstock Pantry and Hot Meals Programs.

Program Evaluation & Planning We are engaged in Program Evaluation, the results of which will inform our 2023-2024 Annual Plan. We completed the [Customer Satisfaction Survey](#). We are conducting a Volunteer Survey. And Oregon Food Bank will do a site review in late July. All of this data will be analyzed to identify goals for program development and improvement. The Annual Plan will be published in summer, 2023-2024.

THE BIG NEWS

This last year, Rev. Andria and Kristen have been raising funds and writing grant proposals to build a permanent pantry structure. We are excited to announce that we have just received the last of four grants, which added to generous donations from people in our community, enables us to proceed with the pantry build!

Our grantors include the Episcopal Church Dioceses, the Oregon Food Bank, SE Uplift and Lowes. We are deeply appreciative and excited about all the donations and grants. And we are thrilled to have been chosen to be a Signature Project by [Lowes Hometowns Program](#). We are one of 100 projects selected from among thousands of applicants across the United States!

Completing a structure that is independent of church has many benefits, not the least of which is a better workspace for us, reduced damage to the All Saints sanctuary, better storage for the food and easier access to food by our neighbors. Moreover, it will provide the Woodstock Pantry with a visible presence in our community. With intentional landscaping and a community mural, the structure will increase awareness of the pantry and further mobilize our community. Our community will deepen its identity as a place and people who care for each other. The resultant collective capacity will increase our shared ability to advocate, nurture community partnerships and act collectively to address other social issues for the benefit of all.

We will break ground later this summer and are planning our Grand Opening for November. There will be much more news coming your way! For now, if you have any

Woodstock Pantry ENews Brief – Special Edition

2 July 2023

questions, don't hesitate to contact me! If you are interested in participating on the Community Engagement Planning Committee, let me know. And finally, if you like to build things or work on landscaping, watch for invites coming your way! We will have volunteer days to help us finalize the pantry.

SIGN UP FOR LAST WEEK OF JUNE & JULY SHIFTS

Meanwhile, please sign up for your shifts. Remember to sign up for the weekend by the prior Thursday so we can plan. And if you can't come, please contact me right away so that I can get others to fill your position. Many thanks!

[WP Sign Up June/July](#)

TRAINING

Training is an annual requirement for all volunteers.

1. **Seasoned Volunteers** - it's time to renew your training!
2. **New Volunteers** - Please complete your training prior to your shift.
3. New Volunteers who have already completed training - Please complete the FIFO training.

I updated all the Shift Instructions. **We all need to read them and sign off** (see *First-In, First-Out* training below). Please work to integrate the new/improved practices into your routine. Building a practice requires conscious effort. So, check the Shift Instructions (in the volunteer binder) each week until you consistently incorporate the new practices into your work!

Click on the links to get to the training. After you complete the training, click on the **[Volunteer Training Log](#)** link to document that you have completed the training.

1. People working **all shifts** need to view the **[Oregon Food Bank Food Safety Video](#)** (16 minutes).
2. People who work the **Distribution shift** need to view the **[Client Civil Rights & Confidentiality Video](#)** (20 minutes). I encourage everyone to view it, even if you don't work the Distribution shift, as it introduces our philosophy and values regarding our neighbors.
3. Everyone needs to complete ***First-In-First-Out*** training for the shifts you work. They are included in the Shift Instructions. You will find links to your Shift Instructions on the **[Volunteer Training Log](#)**. (10 minutes).

Celebrate...

It Takes a Community, And We Are It!