



# ***Feeding the Hungry***

## ***During the Pandemic***

### ***At Community of Faith United Methodist Church***



#### ***How is distribution done during the Pandemic***

Since March 2020, we have moved to a touchless distribution where (1) cars line up in the parking lot and a registration person moves from car to car to check persons in. (2) Cars then drive to the loading zone in front of church where volunteers load several boxes of groceries. (3) Clients then depart. Each Tuesday we distribute between 4:30PM and 6:00PM.



#### ***A difference from the pre-pandemic method***

Boxes of food are prepacked rather than clients choosing what they desire. While not as desirable, this method allows the distribution to be touchless. Clients do not need to wait for a number to be called, nor need to congregate around distribution tables. This keeps folks physically distanced – both clients and volunteers.

#### ***What kind of food is provided?***

Produce, bakery items, non-perishable foods from canned goods to cooking oil, frozen meats of all kinds and salads are the most frequent items provided. Occasionally we have baby diapers and other items depending on the donors of the previous week.

#### ***Where do you get the food?***

Because of the generosity of the Franklin Farm Giant, Food Lion at Centerville & McLearen Roads, Trader Joe's of Reston, Mom's Organic Market, Target, and Wegmans in Chantilly, we receive and distribute baked goods, dairy items, deli products, and meats. During the pandemic, several neighborhoods have held canned good collections and brought them to church. It's been a wonderful outpouring of generosity. Because of the high demand of clients, we also buy food from several sources to supplement what is available from our donors.



Donations to the food pantry at [www.cofumc.org](http://www.cofumc.org) (see "donate" at the top of the page) help make our purchases possible. The annual "Scouting for Food" event in November provides 85% of our canned goods.



#### ***Who is eligible to receive food?***

Anyone who needs food is eligible. People may visit the pantry weekly as long as they are in need. Often area social service agencies and local elementary schools refer clients.

### ***Where is the food stored?***

COF has 13 household and commercial freezers and refrigerators to store perishable items and our neighbor, Epiphany Episcopal Church has a commercial walk-in fridge and freezer that is used. On a few occasions, we've borrowed capacity from other neighboring churches and church families. Non-perishable items are kept in our 1200 square foot storage "barn" on our campus.

### ***How does food get to COF?***

Volunteers pick up food daily to bring to church and sort and store. If you can help with pick up, email Hannah Godfrey at [food@cofumc.org](mailto:food@cofumc.org)

### ***Is there any food left over?***

Simply, no. However, food that is received Wednesday through Saturday and is more time-sensitive such as breads and some refrigerated items are shared with other distribution programs.

### ***Can I help?***

**Absolutely!** We can accept non-perishable items on Monday & Tuesday mornings as well as in the bins by the front doors.



**Volunteers** are always needed to assist with pickups and putting food away, prepare food for distribution, and help give it away on Tuesday evenings. Youth find this to be a good program to earn service credits for school. To volunteer or find out more, contact Hannah Godfrey at [Food@cofumc.org](mailto:Food@cofumc.org). **Contributions** can also be made online at [www.cofumc.org](http://www.cofumc.org) and are tax deductible!

### ***Where are we?***

Community of Faith is at the corner of the Fairfax County Parkway and Franklin Farm Road sharing the same driveway as KinderCare.

### ***How long has this been going on?***

The pandemic – way too long. The program? Since 1999 Community of Faith United Methodist Church (CoF) has offered a food distribution program for the hungry of Fairfax County. The high cost of living here means a missed paycheck or an expensive health crisis can create financial peril, including a loss of housing.

What began as a group of 12-20 families during 1999 has now become a gathering of 120-200 families Tuesday afternoons. Thanks to a partnership with **Epiphany Episcopal Church**, ([www.coe.org](http://www.coe.org)), the Junior Volunteer League, the BlueBells, The Young Mens Service League, and LDS missionaries the Food Pantry served over 30,000 individuals last year.

Over the last several pre-pandemic years, we would serve from 80-185 families each week with an average of 100 families weekly.

Our clients are persons who need food – what they receive in groceries means there is money to pay for rent or utilities or gas to get to one of multiple jobs. As one client said, *"The food I received each week saved my life. I was able to focus on getting my life together, not worrying about eating."* Some families are in need because they have recently been unhoused, some have been victims of domestic violence and some have experienced a health crisis without insurance. A few are new to the U.S.; many are single parents but 95% are employed in one or multiple jobs.

Some of our restaurant partners include:

**KFC – Kentucky Fried Chicken**

45960 Denizen Plaza Road, Sterling

**Longhorn Steak House**

14056 Thunderbolt Pl, Chantilly, VA 20151

**Chipotle**

South Lakes Shopping Center  
Franklin Farm Road, Herndon

**Nando's**

20556 Easthampton Plaza, Ashburn



In 2017, we've become a partner in the Capitol Area Food Bank which offers numerous resources and bulk purchases of food.



**Community of Faith United Methodist Church**

13224 Franklin Farm Rd., Herndon, VA 20171-4034  
703.620.1977 | [Office@cofumc.org](mailto:Office@cofumc.org) | [www.cofumc.org](http://www.cofumc.org)

**Epiphany Episcopal Church**

3301 Hidden Meadow Drive, Herndon VA 20171  
[www.coe.org](http://www.coe.org)