



November 2020

**Extended Hands Pantry**

*Feeding Body & Soul*

## Welcome!

We hope you enjoy catching up with us! If you would rather not receive this newsletter, please let us know. Email us at [info@extendedhandspantry.org](mailto:info@extendedhandspantry.org) or call 608-213-5114.

We need more volunteers! Please let us know if you are able to help sort and organize food boxes or load them into cars. All work is safely done outside.

Have you signed up for email updates yet? You can do that from our website, [www.extendedhandspantry.org](http://www.extendedhandspantry.org).

Here is our mailing address:

Extended Hands Pantry

PO BOX 7372

Madison, WI 53707-7372

Our Mission: Serve our area families and individuals with compassionate acts of love. Encourage, educate, and nourish our children as a servant-hearted expression of Jesus Christ.

## Filling a Critical Need – Lighthouse Church and School Food Pantry

The mobile food pantry at Lighthouse Church and School has been operating every week since April 2020. In just these few months, we have served about 2000 family visits! The people who come are very grateful for a chance to pick up healthy and nutritious food for their family. It seems there isn't anyone who has not been impacted by job losses, layoffs, or reduced work hours.

Recently, we were able to catch up with Lily\* who visits the pantry every couple weeks. She has been struggling with her three-grade school-aged children's online classes. While the public school has provided

(\*name changed for privacy)

notebook computers, Lily has trouble with paying the internet bill each month. Some days her internet service is too slow for the kids to stay signed in for their classes. Lily lost her part-time job and her husband's work hours were reduced by half, and now he is working a second job at night in a high COVID risk environment to try to make up the difference.

Lily shared this with us, "My heart breaks because of all the struggles my family has right now. But at the same time, I feel truly blessed by God that I do not have to worry about feeding my kids every day. When I

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### Food Pantry Continued

drive up and get in line for food, I feel at peace for a few moments.”

While we are not able to help Lily\* with all that she is dealing with, we can provide her with healthy and nutritious food. Thankfully, we have had the refrigerated truck since early September. This allows us to provide milk, cheese, fresh fruits, vegetables, and more every week. Thank you for your partnership in providing food to those less fortunate.

\*Name changed for privacy

Are you interested in volunteering? Tasks include sorting and organizing the food boxes, then loading them into cars. **We could use your help!**

Please contact Jenny at [jenny@extendedhandspantry.org](mailto:jenny@extendedhandspantry.org), or call 608-213-5114.

### Truck Update

Thank you to almost 50 people that donated towards the truck! Our refrigerated truck has allowed us to distribute 50% MORE food in October than in August! Many families received not just one but two gallons of milk! Along with eggs, cheese, yogurt, fresh produce and more! Growing children really need the added nutrition from dairy products for healthy bodies.

Word is getting out about our ability to offer dairy. Last week, as cars lined up to receive food, the first question people would ask is, “Do you have milk?” With great pleasure we were able to respond with, “Yes, we have milk, cheese, and eggs today!” The people were incredibly appreciative,

leaving with their car trunk full of healthy and nutritious food along huge smiles on their faces.

### Thanksgiving Baskets!

It just wouldn't be right to not have a turkey and all the fixings for Thanksgiving! We are planning to provide a



generous turkey basket to around 100 families! The turkeys will be distributed on Friday, November 20, from 11:30am until they are gone. Would you be willing to contribute towards the cost? Please visit [extendedhandspantry.org/donate](http://extendedhandspantry.org/donate) or mail us a check with turkey in the memo line.

We are feeling very thankful that we can provide nutritious food to those who are struggling heading into the holiday season.

Thank you for any consideration!



## A word from the Founders and Directors



Andy Czerkas  
Executive Director



Jenny Czerkas  
Operations Director

that families are struggling with. Starting with many families stuck in low wage jobs that are not enough for them to

We have been working in low income neighborhoods for over 20 years. We have focused on building community relationships, fighting hunger, encouraging education, and helping where and when we can. There is little that is more fulfilling to us than helping a child read or filling up someone's car with a week's work of groceries.

In all these years, I don't think there has ever been a time of greater need than right now! We see many families that are worse off now than during the great recession a few years back. A recent Feeding Wisconsin report states that in Wisconsin 1 in 11 people now struggle with hunger, this includes **1 in 4 children who also struggle with hunger right now.**

There are many layers of difficulty

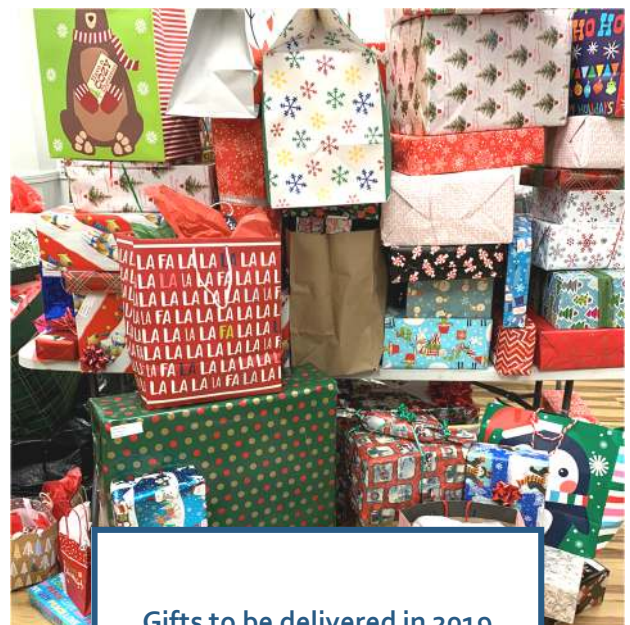
make ends meet. Then add in a global pandemic with layoffs and reduced hours, lost insurance, infections, and quarantines. This is parallel to schools being closed. For many parents, no school means no childcare for them to go to work. Next add in some of the most divisive racial protests and election period our country has ever endured.

We are eternally grateful to be able to continue to offer assistance in these trying times. Although this is not something we could do without the partnership of many. God has put one of our favorite verses in our minds for this season, "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" Matthew 25:40

## Christmas Gifts!

For over 20 years we have partnered with the Northport Apartments and Packer Townhouse communities at Christmas. Resident families can opt into a gift program for everyone in their household, young and old. There is a humble \$25 limit for each person. For some children, this is often the only gift they receive all year! It is something they look forward to for months.

With COVID-19's restrictions on gatherings we realized that having the annual Christmas party would not be possible this year. But we also realized that providing a humble gift would be more important than ever. The gift wishes we offered this year are for \$25 gift cards. We are kindly asking people to donate a \$25 gift card to Walmart, Target, or Kwik-Trip. Can you help? Please let us know if you can make someone's Christmas a whole lot merrier this year!



Gifts to be delivered in 2019



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# GIVING TUESDAY

## Donation Match up to \$5,000!

We are thrilled to announce that our founders and directors, Andy & Jenny, will match all Giving Tuesday donations up to \$5,000!

Giving Tuesday is on December 1<sup>st</sup>. It is a global generosity movement, unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world. The society we build together can unlock dignity, opportunity, and equity for all in our community.

Extended Hands Pantry is raising funds for its programs; the fast-growing parking lot mobile food pantry, and the daily, healthy snacks for the community learning centers in the Northport Apartment and Packer Townhouse neighborhoods. It is a well-known fact that hungry kids can't learn. Having a snack as they settle in for an online class can make all the difference. (Our other program that

include tutoring and community dinners are on hold due to COVID-19.)

The pandemic is having a severe and lasting presence in

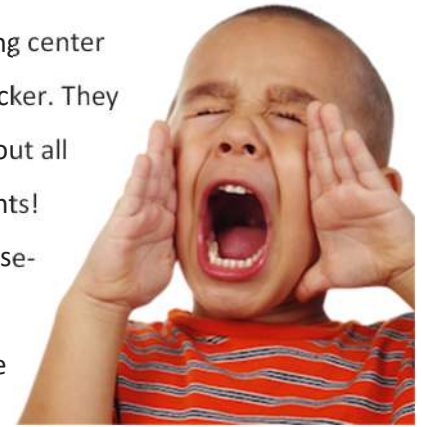


the lives of the low-income families. These families are pressured on every side from having to work jobs in a high-risk environment, to losing jobs or having hours reduced, to COVID-19 infections and quarantines.

This is the worst economic and health dilemma we've witnessed in our 20+ years of working with food pantries and low-income neighborhoods.

## A BIG SHOUT OUT

To the community learning center staff at Northport and Packer. They have consistently pulled out all the stops for their residents! Low-income children are seriously disadvantaged in distance learning because their families don't have



the economic advantages of high speed internet and com-

puters. The children receive assistance every day in the centers to help them keep up with their schoolwork in an electronic environment. We are honored to support them with snacks and look forward with much anticipation to when we can join them onsite again next year.

Extended Hands Pantry, EIN 83-4321269, is a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization and your contribution is tax deductible.