



Extended Hands Pantry



# Letter from the Directors

We were humbled and honored to be named the 1st quarter grant winner from 100 Men of Dane County! The \$93,000 award made a huge impact in the cost of building the food pantry addition at Lighthouse Church and School. We are super excited that the addition is nearing completion! We expect to move inside mid-April. There is still a shortfall of about \$100,000 to finish the work. We have just started a new campaign to match the 100 Men grant! Andy & I have started the match with a \$5,000 donation. Would you please consider helping us with this effort? We are so close to having the addition completely funded.

Soon we'll be able to offer our shoppers a 100% choice pantry, where they are able to select the foods they prefer.

Our current mobile food pantry allows for a few choices, but it's mostly prebagged and boxed items that are loaded into the shopper's car. It's such a simple dignity that we are looking forward to - allowing our shoppers to choose their own groceries.

The indoor food pantry space will also allow us to expand the days and hours the pantry is open, giving our shoppers more options for food assistance. The new pantry location at Casa de Fe on the east side has had a very popular start also. It too gives our shoppers another choice.

"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. Thank you for your part in doing what you do for Jesus!

-Jenny Czerkas

Director Jenny, Friend of the Program Jennifer, and Yodit



## Table of Contents

- 🍴 What's happening now
- 🍴 Client Spotlight
- 🍴 Meet Mandy
- 🍴 What we're fundraising for

## What's Happening Now

1. February was our second month of having another mobile pantry location, this one at Casa de Fe in Monona. We're serving an entirely different population of clients and are happy to see word spreading.
2. We've spent time tutoring children and getting to know families at Packer Townhouses and Northport Apartments. One of these lovely folks has just started her own cleaning business, and we were able to set her up with a logo, some digital business listings, and a brochure. Meet Yodit of Asmara Cleaning, LLC!
3. We want to see you soon! In the first week of May we'll be holding a grand opening event at our new indoor space. Come see what your donations have helped us to create!

## Meet Mandy

In February, Extended Hands Pantry added a part-time Communications Coordinator to the team. Mandy previously worked at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Church in Madison where she served as the Director of Religious Education and enjoys working in service-minded organizations. You can reach Mandy at [Mandy@extendedhandspantry.org](mailto:Mandy@extendedhandspantry.org).



Client  
Spotlight

## What We're Fundraising For

We're trying to grant match \$50,000 of the generous grant we received from 100 Men of Dane County. Some of these funds will be used to purchase additional refrigeration for our warehouse, which will allow us to store more food and better plan for fluctuating numbers of visitors to the pantry.



Our indoor space is almost completed, but we're still trying to fund construction costs. Unfortunately, the initial labor and materials estimates have ballooned due to inflation.



We need to fill the shelves of our indoor space with food and necessities that visitors can shop for when they're planning their family's meals for the week.

Kaylyn\* walks up to the optional table in grey matching sweats with her tousled blonde hair pulled back in a ponytail. She holds the hand of Alex, her energetic four-year-old son. As soon as Alex sees the volunteers handing out food he breaks away, making eagle arms as he flaps his way over to say hello. Todd, our Pantry Manager, carefully signals traffic to go around the little boy while telling him he likes his wings.

Kaylyn picks up and sets down item after item, a faraway look in her eyes as she both browses and keeps an eye on her playful son. When she relays her family's struggles, it is with an air of detachment. Kaylyn says she has an older daughter who volunteered at the food pantry over the summer. It was at church that they heard about the pantry and wanted to lend a hand. The family did not need the pantry's services until a handful of months ago when Kaylyn's husband was rear-ended while he was driving for Uber. The family's car, which doubles as his base of operations, was undrivable without repair. To get the car out of the garage, the family had to pay \$2,300. Like many people, Kaylyn and her husband were just making it paycheck to paycheck. They are still trying to recover from her husband's accident and using the food pantry to meet basic grocery needs.

\*names changed to protect privacy

## Client Spotlight Cont.

A pantry volunteer hurries to help Kaylyn as she packs up her finds from the optional table. She is balancing her food while keeping a hold of Alex's hand. The volunteer asks if Alex will go to kindergarten next year, but Kaylyn says she is not sure. The boy needs to be completely potty trained first and, in this area, they are struggling as well.

"It's not easy," Kaylyn says while lifting her son into his car seat. He leans forward and kisses her while she buckles him up, earning a smile from his tired mother.

## Get Involved

DONATE. VOLUNTEER. TUTOR.

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

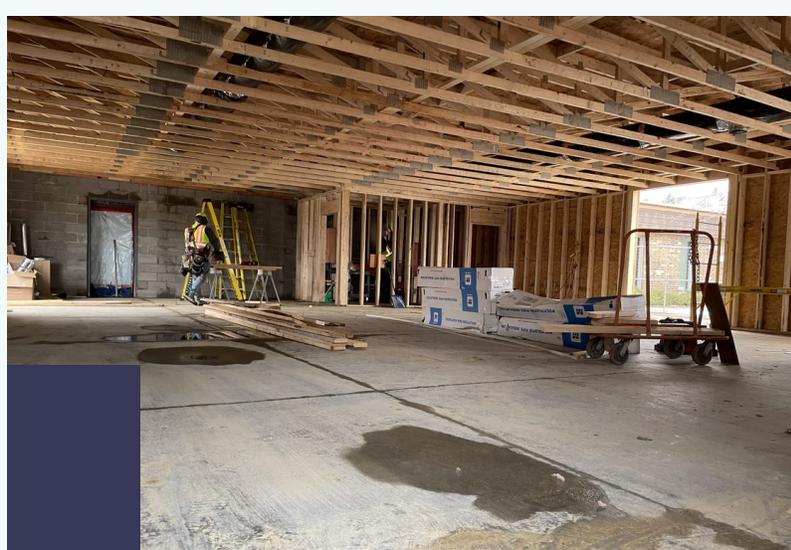
## Trends

According to a recent report by Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization, the number of people experiencing food insecurity in the United States rose from 35 million pre-pandemic to 42 million in 2020.

This represents a 20% increase in the overall food insecurity rate, and an even greater increase among communities of color.

At Extended Hands Food Pantry, we've experienced this firsthand. In the past year, we've seen a significant increase in demand for our services, with more people visiting our pantry than ever before. Unfortunately, we're not alone. Food pantries across the country are struggling to meet the increased demand, with many reporting shortages of food and other resources.

Despite the critical role that food pantries play in providing assistance to those in need, not even half of the funding requests made by food pantries are being met. Contributing to this strain, food costs have skyrocketed and ours are up 80% compared to a year ago.



We're so close. Imagine this space filled with shelves and folks pushing their shopping carts, gathering the food their family needs to have filling, healthy meals for the week.



On March 20th, 86 families came to receive groceries. This was 16 more than we were expecting to serve. It was a tight squeeze, but we made sure everyone went home with meat, eggs, and milk.



Yodit, like many refugees, came to America with very little and depended on our country's promise of safety for her family. She now owns a business, one that you can hire. For all your cleaning needs, including deep cleaning and windows, call Yodit at (608) 888-3724.

# Trends Cont.

Studies have shown that reading proficiency is a critical factor in determining a child's long-term success. Children who read well in elementary school are more likely to graduate from high school, attend college, and achieve higher levels of success in their careers. Unfortunately, there is a significant race gap in reading proficiency in the United States. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 18% of African American fourth-graders and 20% of Hispanic fourth-graders in the United States read at or above grade level, compared to 45% of white fourth-graders. Here in Madison, during the pandemic, the percentage of African American 3rd graders that could read at their grade level dropped to 5%. While those of Latino and Hmong descent scored higher, those students did so by only a few points.

To help address this gap, we've partnered with Northport Apartments and Packer Townhouses to provide group tutoring services to children who are at risk of struggling with reading. We also provide after-school snacks to help children feel comfortable and focused during their tutoring sessions. These include sandwich fixings, fruit, and other goodies high in protein.

We believe that every child has the potential to succeed, and we're committed to doing our part to help them achieve their goals. With your support, we can continue to provide the resources and support that children in our community need to thrive.



If, for any reason, you would like to stop receiving communications from Extended Hands Pantry send us a written request or email us at [info@extendedhandspantry.org](mailto:info@extendedhandspantry.org).

You can follow us on social media!

 [facebook.com/extendedhandspantry](https://www.facebook.com/extendedhandspantry)

 [instagram.com/extendedhandspantry](https://www.instagram.com/extendedhandspantry)

 [linkedin.com/company/extended-hands-pantry](https://www.linkedin.com/company/extended-hands-pantry)