



**CHURCH COMMUNITY
SERVICES**
inspiring positive change

Spring 2023



Scan the QR code with your
cell phone camera to donate!

Our 55/25 Anniversary



Announcing our Marvelous Million Dollar Magnifier Campaign!

2023 is the 55th year of Church Community Services serving Elkhart County. It is also the 25th year of Soup of Success empowering women to make a positive change.

The 55/25 Anniversary is our year-long celebration of Church Community Services, and the impact CCS has made on the community. We will be raising \$1,000,000 to serve families, improve our campus, and hallmark these anniversaries. There will be stories of hope and redemption, families assisted, women and children lifted, along with a good bit of fun and celebration! There will be stories, contests, and a mid-year block party!

Be part of the CCS Legacy!

Families in our community are struggling.

Magnifying your donation is easy to do. Use the enclosed envelope or go to givetoccs.com

The Marvelous Million Dollar Magnifier Campaign will provide needed help for families and bring needed upgrades for our campus. Just like CCS has helped revitalize so many people's lives, we will be revamping our campus with needed upgrades to our facilities, including addition of classrooms, roof, HVAC, food storage, buying needed equipment, and more. **In the years to come, more high schoolers will learn, more parents will cook, more families will stay in their homes, and more people will be fed, all because of you! The work we do every day will be marvelously magnified with your help.** Included in the \$1,000,000 goal are funds to magnify Soup of Success and their 25 years of life changing programming, ensuring future generations access to empowerment through Soup of Success.

Check back often on our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts for updates on upcoming events. Join the Marvelous Million Dollar Magnifier Campaign by going to our website, or scan the QR code on the top right of this page to donate! You may also wish to leave your story on our Facebook page or submit it for feature by sending an email to mivey@churchcommunityservices.org.

"There was a time when my wife & I needed help, and you helped us. I'd like to help someone in need like you did for us." - Food Pantry Guest

Food Pantry seeing rise in guests

It's been a challenging start to the year 2023 for our Food Pantry and the local community. We've seen a rising number of both "Unique Guests" and "Total Guest Visits" to our pantry in the first three months of the year.



Our Food Pantry considers a "Unique Guest" each individual who comes to the food pantry no matter how many times they come. For example, if Person A comes in 12 times in a year & Person B comes in 1 time in the same year, the "Unique Guests" value is 2. The "Total Guest Visits" for that year would be 13.

In 2022, our Food Pantry's "Unique Guests" total was 4,705. Our "Total Guest Visits" were 13,357.

In January and February 2023 alone, our Food Pantry's "Unique Guests" were 2,050. Our "Total Guest Visits" were 2,778. We expect "Unique Guests" to be double the 2022 number and "Totals Guest Visits" to exceed last year's total by at least a couple thousand.

"We know that we have new visits coming at a much higher rate than previous years because of layoffs, and there are more and more families coming to our pantry that never would've thought they would have to come here," says Michael Downing, Director of the Food Pantry. "We're getting close to serving around 10% of the City of Elkhart's population."

Our Food Pantry has been working on a plan to meet the growing number of visitors.

"We're checking other resources for food," Downing says. "We've also started to form a relationship with a local grocery store, and we pick up from them regularly. We're picking up refrigerated items, frozen meat, salads, vegetables, fresh food, and freshly made sandwiches. That helps because it gives our guests more of a selection to pick from here on the pantry shelves."

All donations to our Food Pantry are making a real difference in the lives of families in our community. Please consider making a food donation, Monday – Friday: 8 AM - Noon, 12:30 PM - 3 PM at the yellow door of our Food Pantry building or go to our website to make a monetary donation. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



**Our Food Pantry served
1,340 guests during the
month of February.**

We want to give a big thank you to Concord Community Schools for conducting a food drive for Church Community Services during a time when we see a drop in donations and providing us with 2,361 pounds of food!!

Thank you, Concord East Side Elementary, Concord Intermediate School and Concord High School!

Taking family size into account, that means over 4,850 individuals needed assistance.



givetoccs.com

Food
Pantry



Discover Soup of Success!

A women's job and life skills training program

Join us every Friday at 11 am

*Take a tour - Hear from a current participant
Ask questions - Fill out an application*

www.soupofofsuccess.com

soupofofsuccess@churchcommunityservices.org

574-523-1551

We look forward to meeting you!



We celebrated a new class of seven amazing women at the Soup of Success graduation on February 23rd! Congratulations ladies!

Celebrating Betsy Ayrea's 25 years at Soup of Success

We recently celebrated Betsy Ayrea, our longtime Soup of Success Director, for 25 years with Soup of Success and Church Community Services!

A true role model, Betsy has spent the last 25 years empowering countless women in Elkhart County through the Soup of Success program. Many former and current co-workers, volunteers, board members, and friends stopped by to congratulate Betsy!

Thank you, Betsy, for all that you do for the community! We hope you enjoy your new reserved parking space!!



"I am now being the person I always wanted to be!" - Soup of Success graduate

GREENHOUSE EXPANSION PROJECT!

\$89,812

THANK YOU!!!

80K

70K

60K

50K

40K

30K

20K

10K

5K

Seed to Feed
A program of Church Community Services

riveroaks church

Cargill

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF ELKHART COUNTY

CORNERSTONE CHURCH

MICHIANA Master Gardeners ASSOCIATION



Everence



Our community has gone above and beyond and donated a total of \$89,812 to our Seed to Feed Greenhouse Expansion Project! We are expanding our greenhouse space to TRIPLE the production of winter vegetables we grow for our Food Pantry guests.

Thank you to the churches, organizations and individuals who gave and continually support Seed to Feed!

We are currently in the replanning phase as we look at doing the most for our community with what we now have! Stay tuned for updates and a breaking ground ceremony this June!

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF ELKHART COUNTY



Thank you to the Community Foundation of Elkhart County and the Well Foundation's Greatest Need Fund for their donation and support of the Greenhouse Expansion!

This year, the Well Foundation Greatest Need Fund awarded a total of \$181,160 in grants to multiple organizations in Elkhart County. They offer unrestricted grants to support community initiatives dedicated to helping Elkhart County citizens live longer, healthier lives.

Thank you to Cargill Incorporated for their donation and support of the Greenhouse Expansion!

Cargill has brought food, agricultural, financial and industrial products to people around the world since 1865.



Our current Seed to Feed Director, Gabby Parrish, has accepted a position at a farm in Colorado and will be leaving CCS at the end of April.

She had these words to share:

"While I am excited for this new adventure, I am saddened to leave. Seed to Feed and CCS feel like a part of me and I am humbled by the whole community of staff, gardens and volunteers who overflow with compassion and service and whom I love deeply. I feel incredibly blessed that I was able to be a part of it. Thank you for investing in me, I will miss it all!" - Gabby

We wish Gabby the best of luck in Colorado!! Stay tuned for updates on the next Seed to Feed Director.

Thank you to River Oaks Community Church for their donation and support of the Greenhouse Expansion!

Located on County Road 115 in Goshen, the Church's Mission is "developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who GO to our neighbors with the message of Christ, GROW with our neighbors in the pursuit of Christ, and SHOW compassion to our neighbors with the love of Christ."



I am not sure where I would be today if I had never taken the leap of faith that landed me in my past and present internships at Seed to Feed!" - Teen Growers Graduate



DÍA DEL NIÑO

APRIL 29TH 2023

1:00PM-5:00PM



Join us to celebrate a Latino holiday, Children's Day, with games, bounce houses, face painting, and much more! Admission is free!

Amazing Volunteer Corner - Tom Yoder

“The vision of my church is to ‘Passionately Follow Jesus,’ and this is one way that I can try to do that. I want to share Jesus’ love with others.”

Tom Yoder volunteers three days a week in our Food Pantry, most of the time as a guest processor. He started volunteering at Church Community Services in 2019 and has become an integral member of the volunteer staff.



“My favorite thing is just being able to serve the community,” Yoder said. “I really appreciate the other volunteers that I work with. I also enjoy working with Michael, Kris, Gabriela and Julian very much.”

Food Pantry Director Michael Downing is one of many people with a high opinion of Tom.

“Tom is so patient and so even keel, and he speaks so well that he’s become like our processor trainer,” Downing said. “Whenever we need to train someone to process guests, we send them to Tom, and he teaches our processors how to work the Food Bank Manager program. He also interacts well with our guests and answers their questions.”

Tom has begun studying Spanish and has significantly improved his ability to communicate with our many Spanish speaking guests.

In addition to being a great communicator, Tom has also helped the Food Pantry with his woodworking skills. Known by some as the “cart-meister,” he’s spent time repairing and fixing old carts.

“He bought additional wheels and installed them and fixed carts we thought were old,” Downing said. “He even saw where the other carts eventually weakened, and he built a cart that already fashioned another strengthening member so it wouldn’t fail as soon as other carts would.”

In late 2019, when guests were using shopping carts to collect pantry items with point values, Tom designed and built a grid system out of wood to fit inside the shopping carts to enable the counting of points to be easier and more efficient.

Follow Church Community Services
and our Soup of Success program!



Food Pantry Needs

- Canned meat and vegetables
- Beans
- Tortillas
- Yams
- Poblano
- Peppers and chilies
- Legumes
- Hearty soups and ready-to-heat canned pasta meals
- Cereals (hot and cold)
- Crackers
- Rice
- Pasta
- Spaghetti sauce
- Hamburger Helper-like meal helpers
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Condiments
- Boxed potatoes
- Toilet paper
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Feminine hygiene products
- Diapers, wipes, baby shampoo and body wash
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Can openers

Volunteers Needed!

We need volunteers for the following:

- Seed to Feed needs volunteers to help harvest, wash and pack greens from our greenhouse on Monday mornings for food pantry visitors.
- Seed to Feed is looking for someone to come in weekly to help organize and input seed donations.
- Seed to Feed needs individuals or groups to help wash and organize donated garden pots in the greenhouse.
- Sorting and repackaging food and cleaning/organizing for our food pantry.
- Delivering food to homebound individuals. Volunteers are needed the third Wednesday of each month to deliver food in their own car to approximately 6 people.
- Assisting the Food Services Director as we serve our guests Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- Drivers for our box trucks (26 and 16-foot trucks) and vans for food pick-up. CDL required for 26-foot truck, but not necessary for other vehicles.

If you are interested, visit www.churchcommunityservices.org/vol or email volunteer@churchcommunityservices.org

Financial Services Hours

Monday and Thursday: 9am-11:45am & 1pm-3:45pm

Wednesday: 9am-11:45am



Food Pantry Hours

Monday 11am-3pm

Wednesday 11am-3pm

Thursday 11am-3pm & 4-7pm



Food Pantry