



A Great Kick-off to Celebrating 50 Years of Hope!

On April 26th we had wonderful time celebrating our 50th year of providing help and hope to those in need in our community at our Sounds of Celebration Community Concert! The concert was held at Trinity Church on Jackson and we were delighted by performances by: Agape Sanctuary Choir, Daughters of Praise, Ebenezer Praise Team, Trinity Men's Quartet, Golden Beats Drumline of Michiana, Notable Women, St. Thomas School Choir, Servant's Heart Praise Team and Vertical Life Student Choir. We were amazed by the talent we have right here in Elkhart and hope those of you who joined us were, too.

A special thank you to our sponsors, Welch Packaging Group, Rex Martin, Will & Sarah Weed, Chemical Bank, D&W Incorporated and Martin's Supermarkets.

In addition to the wonderful entertainment, we unveiled our new logo! The new Church Community Services logo represents a community of people who love their neighbors and are here to offer them help and hope in Elkhart County!



Signs with our new logo being hung on our building.



The Gift of Hope: Chanel's Story

Chanel first started visiting the pantry in 2009, soon after she moved here from Arizona. Life in Elkhart started off as a challenge, as she was unable to find a well-paying job during the recession while also attending college. Chanel's visits to the food pantry at Church Community Services helped her and her husband through that tough stage. Visiting the pantry gave Chanel hope, "Every time I walked in those doors I knew I was going to be taken care of. It made a huge difference to help my husband and I stretch our dollars to get us on our feet to being independent adults."

In her last few months of visiting the pantry, Chanel started noticing more produce available, due to the implementation of the Seed to Feed program at Church Community Services. She was very thankful for this, as most of her experience at food pantries only involved canned goods.

Since obtaining a full time job, Chanel has sought ways to give back to the community. She found an opportunity for that at River Oaks Community Church (ROCC), the congregation she has been a part of since moving to Elkhart. This past summer she began helping at ROCC's Seed to Feed garden. Chanel brings her young children along to the weekly gardening days, using the opportunity to teach them about where food comes from, as well as how the food in that garden is helping others. Chanel shared "I am glad not to have to worry about the needs of my kids and instead be able to turn around and help others". Chanel intends to continue volunteering in the garden next summer, while improving the porch garden she started at home. Through it all, she points her experience back to God. "He was there every step of the way. Looking back, I see the love God spread through the food pantry at Church Community Services and I have now been inspired to do the same. It's just so surreal to think about how God's love touches our life in the midst of the chaos and confusion life throws at us. The people who worked in the pantry obeyed God's command to help the less fortunate, to do something and not expect to receive anything in return, for it is God's awesome love that they share. Besides food, love is the greatest gift Church Community Services has given me and my family."



Seed to Feed Greenhouse Move

During the winter months it was wonderful to be able to share fresh produce from our greenhouse. This past winter we produced about 200 pounds of produce through the greenhouse, and the greenhouse also allowed us to get about 2,000 plant starts ready for this growing season to distribute to our sixteen gardens.

Unfortunately, we have learned that the current location of our greenhouse is not particularly safe. The greenhouse fell victim to vandals who repeatedly punctured numerous holes in the walls. As a result, we are planning to move the greenhouse from its current location, to be located directly on Church Community Services property. The new location will be well-lit, on a busy main corner and allow the greenhouse to be protected by fencing on three sides.

Moving the greenhouse will also allow us to connect to a more accessible water supply, as well as electricity to maintain better control over the temperature with heating pads and fans. As we improve our greenhouse, we plan to create raised beds to make gardening easier for our volunteers, many of whom find bending over to be difficult.

We are excited about moving the greenhouse, but we will need support in the form of donations and volunteers to make the move possible. If you are interested in supporting this project, please contact Morgan at 574-295-3673 ext. 122 or mshort@churchcommunityservices.org.

Breaking Barriers to Get and Keep Employment

Church Community Services is excited to announce our Breaking Barriers to Get and Keep Employment project as part of our Financial Services program.

Funded by the United Way of Elkhart County, this project will allow us to provide support to those who need help with products or services required for them to be able to obtain a new job or stay employed at their current job.



**United Way
of Elkhart County**

Goodbye Pastor David

We would like to thank Pastor David Howe for his service to our pantry guests and wish him well as he leaves us to take on more responsibility with hospice work. Pastor David leads both Grace Family Fellowship Church in Elkhart and New Beginnings Community Church in Fort Wayne. Pastor David is from Flint, MI, but has lived in Elkhart for about 10 years with his wife and children. He says working in the pantry has been a personal growth journey for him and it has been a great opportunity to meet more people and let them know they are card for. Thank you and best wishes Pastor David!



Welcome Back Pastor Joel

After taking some time away from working in the pantry to complete his training and become ordained, Pastor Joel Irvin is back with us at Church Community Services. Pastor Irvin currently serves as Associate Pastor of Michiana Covenant Presbyterian Church. He enjoys meeting and praying with and for those who visit our pantry and has found the experience humbling at times. He has been able to use his experience in the pantry to help illustrate God's message in today's world. We appreciate Pastor Irvin's assistance and calming presence in the food pantry! Welcome back!



Thank you to our summer interns!

This summer CCS was privileged to be part of a new community health initiative through IU School of Medicine in South Bend called S-CHIP – Summer Community Health Innovation Program. Students in this program worked with local organizations in combination with classwork, critical reflection in small groups, and researching/prototyping community health initiatives. Julie and Hannah were invaluable assets to us this summer and we wish them the best as they finish up their internship with us!



Hannah Stanley's main area of focus has been our food pantry. Hannah is completing a demographics and needs survey of our food pantry guests. The information she is gathering will help us better understand how we can best assist them. Hannah is an undergraduate at IUSB and plans to study physical therapy.



Julie Kovalenko's main area of focus has been our Seed to Feed program. Her tasks have ranged from tilling and harvesting produce, to guiding other volunteers and releasing vegetables in the pantry. Julie is a student at IU School of Medicine in South Bend with interests in dermatology and neurology.



Thank you Heritage Employees Donation Fund and AEP for providing us with funding to fix our damaged ceiling.

New Soup of Success Items for Sale!

Soup Of Success is excited to announce an expansion of it's upcycled textile line - "Home goods by Soup Of Success"! We take fabric that is no longer being used by the RV industry and the home interior design stores and turn them into several different styles of purses and totes, pillows, place mats, table runners and napkins. We also have added coasters that are made from the seams in the wool sweaters that we use to make our popular mittens and trees. Our goal is to have as little waste as possible in the textile line, so we utilize the tiny scraps of wool sweaters and use it to fill the pillows with. It has been a delight to be with the women as they have designed some adorable purses and pillows that are being well received by the community. Be sure and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for some peeks of these earth-friendly one of a kind creations!



Church Community Services
PO Box 2343
907 Oakland Ave
Elkhart, IN 46515

We can't serve without YOU.
Thank YOU for building
positive change!

Calendar

September is Hunger Action Month

September 13: Hunger Action Day: Wear orange to show you care!

Oct. 7: Crop Hunger Walk

Food Pantry Needs

Canned soups, meat and vegetables

Cereals (hot and cold)

Crackers

Rice

Hamburger Helper-like meal helpers

Peanut butter

Jelly

Condiments

Boxed potatoes

Cash donations allow the pantry to purchase items at an unbeatable price of 18 cents a pound.

Personal care and hygiene items

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Did you know that when you make purchases through Amazon, 0.5% of the price of your AmazonSmile eligible purchases can be donated to CCS? Support CCS by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

Volunteers Needed!

The Financial Services program needs a front desk receptionist to check in guests, answer phones, and file. The weekly, available shifts are Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9 am – Noon. Substitutes are also needed.

The Soup of Success program needs volunteers who are willing to help with cutting, sewing or even designing textile products. We take wool sweaters and other textiles and upcycle them into unique, one-of-a-kind mittens, trees, positive word signs, purses, coasters, etc.

The Seed to Feed program needs individuals or groups to help weed and harvest in our gardens.

The Food Pantry is need of volunteers to ***

If you are interested contact, Gwen Hershberger at 295-3673 ext. 112 or volunteer@churchcommunityservices.org

Go Green and Save Us Green!

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email, contact Hayley to join our list!
htessier@churchcommunityservices.org

Financial Services Hours

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

Wednesday: 9am-11:45am

Tuesday and Friday: Closed



Food Pantry Hours

Monday 11am-3pm

Wednesday 11am-3pm

Thursday 11am-3pm & 4-7pm

