



Gardens Grow Food and Community

Meet Vonda, a guest of our food pantry and Seed to Feed program. One of the last times Vonda visited the food pantry, she noticed some volunteers disinfecting vegetable crates. Vonda said, "I put my mask on and got out of the car and told them, 'You are doing so much more than just disinfecting crates, what you are doing really matters'". She went on to tell them more about the importance of Seed to Feed in her life.

Vonda grew up in Virginia but moved to Elkhart about seven years ago to be close to family. Unable to work, she relies on disability insurance to help her pay bills. Money is tight, and she's been grateful through the years to know that Church Community Services is here if she needs us. One day she saw a sign in our lobby about Seed to Feed. She soon began participating in greenhouse morning harvests, and would help pick vegetables for the pantry, as well as her household.

This spring, when she saw that we were offering seeds and plant starts so guests could start their own garden, she decided to grow a garden. "We need healthy activities in our lives, so I took some plants and what's happened has been amazing."

Vonda said she hasn't always found it easy to get to know her neighbors, but because of the garden, adults and children alike will ask her questions and comment on the growth of her vegetables and beauty of the huge sunflowers she's grown. She's been able to share what she's grown with three other households, and says neighbors have become inspired to try growing their own garden next year.

Vonda shared, "I told Gabby (Seed to Feed Director), the old saying is teach a man to fish and he can feed himself for a lifetime. I say, learn how to garden and you can feed a whole community."



Neighborhood Block Party!



Neighbors who met at the block party.

On August 1, Church Community Services held its first annual block party. Neighbors came out to meet one another and CCS staff, ate delicious food, and played a few games. It was great to meet each other! Special thanks to Kurt Bullard and Dwight Fish for roasting amazing corn on the cob for us!

Lions Club of Elkhart Selects CCS as Non-profit of the Year!



From left, Julian Smith, Warehouse Manager, Michael Downing, Food Services Director, Karen Terlap, Elkhart Lions, Tom McArthur, Executive Director, and Kris Chumas, Pantry Manager.

The Elkhart Lions selected Church Community Services for its Non-Profit of the Year award for its long list of services it provides the community. The award recognizes CCS for an impressive list of programs and for utilizing volunteers from groups and organizations throughout the community. It also provides valuable training for its clients to help prepare them to become more productive in their own lives.

A Night to Be Heard Told the Stories of Real Women in Elkhart

The second annual A Night to Be Heard event was held Thursday evening to benefit Soup of Success, a program of Church Community Services. The unique event, held at Lex 530, featured three actresses who told the stories of real women who have graduated from the women's empowerment program.

The event is organized by a volunteer advisory group. Nicole Cripe explained, "I think that a lot of local people have heard about Soup of Success, but don't really know exactly what it is. After I learned how incredible this program is, I knew that I had to get involved and I knew other women who would be eager to help Soup of Success, too. Our community is so fortunate to have this free program that helps women who are struggling, overcome obstacles and create brighter, more stable futures for themselves and their families."

After hearing the powerful stories told by three actresses, Candace Hammond, a recent graduate and newly hired Soup of Success production assistant, shared about the impact the program had on her life. "I really enjoy working with the current class of women in the production room. We have some wonderful conversations while making soup and it feels good to be there and be supportive, just like others did for me when I was in the class," Hammond said.

The event wrapped up with an ask for donations and the auction of a painting by Beth Kane, entitled "Wishes for Her Sisters". Before creating the painting, Kane gathered thoughts, wishes and hopes other Elkhart women have for each other and wove them into the painting. The painting was purchased by Joan and Randy Rhoades and donated back to Soup of Success for display on their gallery wall featuring empowering art by women artists.

The event was sponsored in part by Welch Packaging, Bill and Kristen Fenech, Personnel Partners, the Community Foundation of Elkhart County and Rex Martin and Lori Harris. Special thanks to the Soup of Success Advisory Committee.



Julianne Kwasny, Ashley Miller, Lauren Farver, Nicole Cripe, Della Fink, Cherie Nusbaum, Dana Clark and Allison Teich



Candace Hammond,
Soup of Success graduate



Randy and Joan Rhoades, with artist, Beth Kane.

Thank You!



A big thank you to Trinity on Jackson Church for organizing a stuff-a-bus event on August 21st. Pictured is Michael Downing, Food Services Director, accepting the food and personal care items from 7 of the 24 volunteers who helped us collect donations!



Thank you Ruth and Friends for hosting a Yard Sale on September 16 to benefit the Soup of Success program!

A great time was had by all at the Pirates of the Caribbean fundraiser for Seed to Feed at Sports Time Family Pub and Grill on August 28. The event featured hot peppers from Ric Powers, City of Elkhart Horticulturist, which were made into "Black Pearl" Ghost Pepper Sauce prepared by Chef Juan.



Thank you Montana Owners Club for collecting donations for our food pantry at their annual meeting! Pictured are Mary Strom, Montana Owner's Club and Michael Downing, Food Services Director.

Thank You Elkhart Lions!



Lion Cliff Yehle and Seed to Feed Director, Gabby Parrish



From left: Lions Robert 'Bob' Paul, Marlin Culp, Dave Weinland, Lid Morr, Karen Terlap, Terry Vantine, Dennis Gobble and Jack Goodman

For the past year, every Thursday, a group of about five to nine Elkhart Lions come in to help in our food pantry with tasks like filling food distribution boxes, stocking shelves and skids, bagging bulk foods or filling detergent bottles. This year they also donated funds to purchase two "pigs for the pantry" providing ground pork to families in need. "We enjoy giving back and we have fun," Lion, Terry Vantine said. Lion Cliff Yehle has been a great help to Seed to Feed, whether it's seeding and potting thousands of plants the Greenhouse, trellising cucumbers, thinning squash and of course LOTS of weeding! The Elkhart Lions are wonderful supporters of Church Community Services and we are grateful for their service.



We often hear "I had no idea Church Community Services did this!" after giving a presentation or taking someone on a tour. We want to make this eye-opening opportunity available to all. Every month on the 1st Thursday at 10:30 am (English) and 3rd Thursday at 5:30 pm (Spanish), we will be giving tours to everyone interested in learning about the amazing work being done on our campus, and you will receive a bag of one of our famous Soup of Success soups to sample at home! (Please note: We will not be holding a tour on October 21). To register, visit: www.churchcommunityservices.org/i-had-no-idea



Mark your calendars now for our second annual Día del niño (Children's Day) event on Saturday, April 30, 2022. There will be games, juggling, face painting, a bounce house, food trucks and opportunities to pick up boxes of food and sign up for ID cards. If your church or company would like to be a sponsor at Children's Day 2022, please email Yolo at ydemarco@churchcommunityservices.org.

Help us raise \$10,000 to provide homegrown solutions to local hunger for the 10 year anniversary of Seed to Feed!

COW CHIP BINGO!

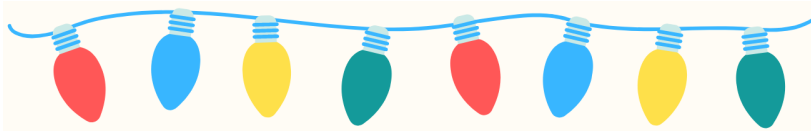
Proceeds benefit Church Community Services' Seed to Feed Program

Saturday November 13, 2pm

\$50 a square
Purchase a square and hope that one of the first three "chips" lands on yours!

Three chances to win!
Top prize \$1500!

TO LEARN MORE AND PURCHASE: <https://bit.ly/cowchip21>



Soup of Success Holiday Store Hours

Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm

Friday 9am-2pm

Saturdays

Nov 27, Dec 4, Dec 11 & Dec 18

9am-1pm



Give a gift that
gives back!



For only \$125 you can buy a pig for the pantry. Your gift will provide 125 lbs (that's 665 USDA servings) of ground pork to those in need in your community!



Donate online at www.bit.ly/pigsforthepantry by designating \$125 to "Pigs for the Pantry".

Thank you Sue Emmack and Trinity Lutheran Church



Pictured are Sue Emmack (holding her granddaughter), her daughter, son, husband and son-in-law, along with Pastor Mielke

In honor of Sue Emmack's 25th anniversary of ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church, the congregation took up a collection of peanut butter for Church Community Services. Emmack, a former board member of Church Community Services, said, "Trinity is so thankful for our relationship with CCS because we know when we donate to CCS, whether it be food goods, our money, or our time- our donations are being put to use in the best possible way to assist those in need in our community. The knowledgeable, caring, hardworking staff and volunteers at CCS provide a partnership to help us to live out our mission of caring for those outside of our walls. In 25 years of ministry, I have learned many things, but the most important is that ministry was never intended to be done alone. We can accomplish so much more together when we set our eyes on Jesus, join Him in His mission, and let Him lead the way." We thank Sue and Trinity Lutheran for all of their support through the years!

Remembering Burt Culver

Burt Culver, a founder of our Seed to Feed program, passed away July 17. Burt, along with Kurt Bullard and Dave Hochstetler spearheaded the effort to bring healthy food choices to pantry guests in 2011. Seed to Feed began with just two gardens, but today has grown to 22 gardens that have produced over 1 million pounds of produce for those in need in our community. His legacy lives on at Church Community Services.



Welcoming Our Newest Participants

Teen Growers Fall 2021



From left: Alyza, Kylie, Mozel, Devin, Garden Education Coordinator Abby Utterback

Soup of Success Class 24



From left: Jessica, Gayle, and Mary. Not pictured are Nicki, Candace and Caritas.

New Faces at Church Community Services



Cheryl Ross joined us as our new Production Manager for the Soup of Success program. Cheryl is originally from Illinois and moved here years ago in search of a better life for herself and her young son. Cheryl began her journey with CCS as a participant in the SOS program in 2014, and after graduating, she has continued working with CCS in various capacities including: board member, volunteer, and staunch supporter of all things CCS. With previous experience in business administration and program management, she brings much skill, innovative ideas, and enthusiasm to the Soup of Success team.

Abby Utterback began her work at Church Community Services in 2019 as a student intern while working on her bachelor's degree from IU in Sustainability, with a minor in Environmental Studies. Abby was drawn to the Seed to Feed program because she saw it as a pioneer in urban gardening in our area. After completing her internship, Abby stayed on part-time to help as a Teen Growers supervisor and then as a garden hand. We are excited that Abby has joined us as our new full-time Garden Education Coordinator. In this role, she will be teaching youth about gardening, nutrition, and the food system through the Teen Growers Internship. She will also be managing the on-site garden spaces at CCS and preparing plants for community gardens.



Candace Hammond is a new Soup of Success Production Assistant. Candace was part of Soup of Success team 23. She graduated in June 2021 and is now working as a part-time Production Assistant, primarily in food production. "I really like working with people and enjoy the challenge of meeting the daily quotas. I really enjoy knowing that I am contributing to the growth of other women. It's great to work here and know that I am a part of something bigger than myself." In her spare time, Candace enjoys hanging out with her kids, quilting, reading and writing fanfic.



Rosy Hinojo is our new Bilingual Financial Services Counselor. Rosy was born and raised in Aguascalientes, Mexico. She has lived in the United States for 30 years, 21 of those in Michiana. Rosy has volunteered in radio on Sabor Latino and has worked at a credit union where she saw how many people struggle with their finances. Rosy is looking forward to being able to help people resolve their emergency financial crises and teach them about helpful resources. In her free time Rosy enjoys spending time with her four children and three grandchildren.



Ebony Hall has joined us as a seasonal production specialist for Soup of Success. Ebony graduated with team 23 in June of 2021. Ebony said, "I love the environment and women of Soup of Success. We all speak with respect to each other, and you can tell that people genuinely care." I see myself in the new class of women and I just say to them, "please stay all the way through the program. It is so worth it!" Ebony enjoys hanging out with her kids at the park as well as singing, dancing, and reading.

Congratulations on 20 Years of Service!

Congratulations to Vonda Horst, our Financial Services Director, for her hard work and dedication to serving those in need through her work for 20 years at Church Community Services. Vonda says the most rewarding part of her job is advocating for her clients and helping them address not only their need for financial help, but



also determining any other needs they have. When people come in with a financial emergency, it's usually more than just money they are in need of. Vonda goes the extra step to see if they are having any issues with other things like their mental health, their kids, health issues, etc. and is an expert at linking them with appropriate resources in our community. We are so grateful for her patience, and the wealth of knowledge and connections she has in Elkhart County.

Saying Goodbye



In October, AJ Delgadillo is stepping down as the Teen Growers Program Coordinator. AJ will be continuing his position with the City of Goshen as their Community Relations Director and working on his business, Post-Waste Worm Farm. We will miss AJ and appreciate all he has done for the Teen Growers Internship. He has made a real difference in the lives of teens he worked with. We wish him the best!

Follow Church Community Services
and our Soup of Success program!



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.

Diapers

Personal care and hygiene items

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.
- Spanish speaking bi-lingual interpreter for the food pantry.
- 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.
- Groups to make Soup of Success Soups. Adopt one Thursday evening a month, 6-7:30 pm. Bring a group of 4-8 people to assemble bags of soup.

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

