

CROWN HILL Food Pantry

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me"

-Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:40)

Winter, 2013



Loyal volunteers stock the shelves in preparation for a Food Pantry day



A heavy load from the Akron Regional Food Bank lifts the front tires off the ground. That's a lot of food! (Don't worry, the load was re-arranged before driving home)

Got Food? Some Don't.

Its not difficult to picture this: the economy on a downward spiral, unemployment rates surging, cost of living on the rise, real estate bubble bursts and home foreclosures erupt. Put these factors together and you're left with a lack of basic needs for many people in our community, the most essential being FOOD. In 2008 a member of the Crown Hill Mennonite Church realized this basic need was not being met in too many

area households. February that year marked the first open date of the bare bones food pantry. That first month brought 3 families, but within 6 months word had gotten out and it was expanding rapidly. In the fall of 2008 the pantry was serving around 60 families. At this point a room in the church basement was dedicated to this mission project. Grocery shelves, carts and wagons were donated which allowed for a more organized process when serving clients.

In April 2009 the pantry was granted membership to the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank. Now the pantry had the ability to choose and purchase a wider variety of foods at a discounted price. Joan Gasser and Michele Vierheller, the pantry's early organizers, decided to operate it as a "choice" food pantry. This gave a chance for the clients to "shop" with a volunteer, choosing what foods were appropriate for their families. This approach would allow more dignity for the client and result in less food wastage. It also gave additional

opportunity for pantry volunteers to reach out and build relationships through conversation with clients.

Later that same year Pleasant Hill Baptist Church joined the mission by providing volunteers and a monthly stipend. Outside donors also make up a large part of the pantry's monthly budget as well. Even though the majority of the food is purchased at discounted rates through the Akron Food Bank, bills add up quickly when you're trying to feed so many. A consistent monthly income is imperative to keep the mission going.

The pantry is approaching its 6-year anniversary. It is now serving over 350 families, feeding more than 1100 people. Take one look around on a pantry day and you'll see that it is near capacity for the amount of families it can serve. Storage areas are filled, freezers are packed and the client waiting areas are stuffed. Michelle and Joan continue to spearhead this big mission project along with fellow organizer Joan Sinclair. There are many other loyal volunteers whose hands play a role in making this happen each month as well. The Bible calls us to give to those less fortunate: Happy is the generous man, the one who feeds [those in need] Proverbs 22:9. He who is generous to the needy honors his Maker, Proverbs 14:31. The Food Pantry at Crown Hill Mennonite Church is doing just that.

The Food Pantry is always open the last continuous Thursday and Friday of the month, unless that conflicts with a major holiday. Usually, in November and December the Food Pantry is open the third Thursday and Friday. Thursdays the hours are from 2:00-5:00pm and on Friday the hours are from 10:00am-1:00pm. If you have any questions, visit www.crownhillmennonite.com for more information.

Want To Donate?

Make checks payable to: **Crown Hill Food Pantry**

Mail to: 9693 Benner Rd, Rittman OH, 44270

Want To Volunteer?

Call or the church office at 330-927-1716 or

email the church at info@crownhillmennonite.com

How Can I Help?

Here are just a few suggestions for how you can support the food pantry:

1. Pray

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain (Ps 127:1). It is only through prayer that all the labor invested into the food pantry will bear fruit.

2. Volunteer

The food pantry has no paid staff. Every bit of work, every ounce of food moved, every mile driven, every wagon towed, every bag bagged and countless other behind the scene tasks are done by volunteers.

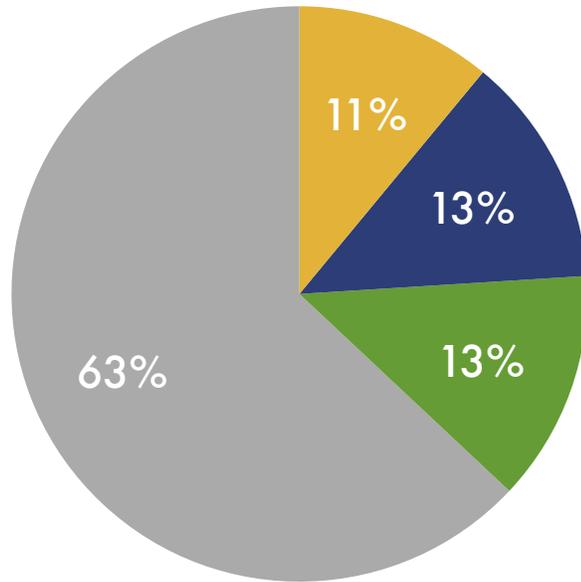
3. Donate

The food pantry is run 100% from donations. It has never received a grant or generated a profit. It is only out of the charity of local Christians and Christian churches that the food pantry is able to exist.

4. Spread the word

In order for items 1, 2 & 3 to happen people need to be made aware of the need. Be an ambassador of the food pantry!

● Apostolic Christian ● Pleasant Hill
● Crown Hill ● Anonymous Donors



Who's Food Pantry Is It?

The food pantry is known as the "Crown Hill Food Pantry," but does that mean that it is Crown Hill's food pantry? As the chart above shows, that is certainly not the case. Crown Hill is the host of the food pantry but the ministry is truly a shared ministry among the area churches.

At one food pantry day a volunteer noticed that there were three different pastors helping out from three different churches. Although there is little doubt that the three pastors and the three churches that they represent have some theological differences, it is a joy to see these minor theological differences not get in the way of the major kingdom work that God has called us to do.

The pie chart above shows the funding sources for the food pantry. You will see that the three churches give from their budget at a similar level. The majority of the 63% anonymous donations comes from individuals within these three congregations that have chosen to give above and beyond what their church has designated from their budget.

The food pantry does not generate any revenue on its own. The food pantry survives solely on the generosity of Christian individuals and churches that are seeking to be obedient with the material blessings that God has given. Is God calling you to follow this example and give back a portion of what God has given you?

