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# AFFTON CHRISTIAN FOOD PANTRY

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*Caring. Sharing. Giving*

## Annual Report

October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016

### Mission

**To live the Christian principles of our member churches by providing a continuous and reliable source of food and assistance to those in need in the Affton Community**



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## OVERVIEW

The Affton Christian Food Pantry sustained its commitment to serving all people in need in the Affton area this year, our tenth since beginning on July 19, 2006. Currently governed by fifteen area Member Churches, the ACFP saw 3,685 family visits in FY2016, providing food for 8,483 individuals over the course of the year.

This year also saw continuation of our Brown Bag program, and the addition of a Book Fair and a Christmas Boutique to better meet the needs of the families we serve. We participated in the Affton Days Parade, expanded the offerings at our Annual Health & Safety Fair, and strengthened our community partnerships.

## PROGRAMS

- **Food Distribution**

The core program of the Affton Christian Food Pantry is the “choice-model” pantry we operate four days per week. After several years of steady growth in the number of new clients, FY2016 was a year of leveling. This year, we had 3,685 client visits, a 7% decrease over FY2015, a sign, perhaps, that the economic uptick is finally reaching people within the lower income levels. Even with fewer family visits, the ACFP still provided food for 8,483 individuals. Our client families receive 7-10 days of food each bi-monthly visit, including a variety of fresh produce, meat, dairy, eggs, bread, and shelf-stable food products. Additionally, we gave away 123 emergency food boxes to people needing immediate assistance, but who live outside our service boundaries.



- **SNAP Program:** In order to provide the greatest assistance for our families, both staff members and several key volunteers attended SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, aka “food stamps”) training this year. The St. Louis Area Foodbank provided this training to the ACFP free of charge. All who completed the training are now eligible to assist clients with the paperwork needed to apply for SNAP benefits, both new applications and renewals/appeals. The Foodbank handles all of the paperwork and guides our clients through the process after we complete the initial paperwork in-house with the clients.
- **Food Sources:** This year, we continued to receive food directly from area grocery stores through our relationships with St. Louis Area Foodbank and Operation Food Search. We also receive food via the Little Yellow Bus, which operates its own independent relationship with both the Foodbank and Operation Food Search.



Area schools, including the Affton and Bayless School Districts, Cor Jesu Academy, Bishop DuBourg High School, St. John Vianney High School, Lutheran High School South, Salem Lutheran School, St. Mark School, St. Dominic Savio School, and Our Lady of Providence School all held food drives for us throughout the year.

- **Fill the Van:** Our mobile food drive program brought the ACFP van to 13 of our 15 Member Churches, collecting more than 14,000 food and personal care items and nearly \$2,400.



- **Brown Bag Program**

The Brown Bag program began in 2014 to fill the gap in our families' food budgets when school is not in session. All of the school-aged children in our families are eligible for free or reduced breakfasts and lunches at school. When school is closed for Christmas, spring, or summer breaks, our families are faced with feeding their children an additional 10 meals each per week, without any additional support or income. The Brown Bag program fills that need.



In addition to their normal distribution, families receive a brown grocery bag filled with 10 breakfasts, 10 lunches, and 10 snacks for each school-aged child. This year, the program was assisted by volunteers and grants through Kohl's Department Store. Led by Gina Javaux of Kohl's, five volunteers visited the pantry on a bi-weekly basis throughout the summer, to fill 100 brown bags each time. Kohl's then made a \$500 donation to the ACFP for each Kohl's team visit. The Brown Bag program continues to be one that sets ACFP apart from other pantries, relieves the added burden on our families, and is self-supporting through donations made directly to the program.



- **Christmas Boutique**

This year, led by Board Member Suzanne Baybo (Affton Presbyterian), the ACFP held its first “Christmas Boutique.” Initially, the boutique was an opportunity for the children in our program to shop for Christmas gifts for their family members. However, donations were so plentiful that the Boutique was opened up to the rest of the ACFP client base as well.



The Boutique was staffed by volunteers separate from pantry operations, and ran concurrent to pantry hours. Volunteers assisted children with selecting items and wrapping their gifts. A wrapping station was also available for adults to use. The Boutique was well attended and greatly appreciated by our client families.

- **Book Fair**

Eden U.C.C., one of our 15 Member Churches, led a Book Fair for the children in our program at the beginning of the summer. Using funds Eden U.C.C. received via a grant from the Deaconess Foundation and volunteers from Eden U.C.C., the Book Fair ran concurrent to pantry hours for two weeks. Each child (or parent/guardian) was able to select two age-appropriate, new books to keep. In all, 66 books were distributed to grateful families.



- **Annual Health & Safety Fair**



For the sixth year, the ACFP hosted a Health & Safety Fair in late September. New this year, the Fair included the Missouri Baptist Mammography Van. The van provided free mammograms to 15 women the day of the fair.

This year, 110 people attended the fair, 81 received free flu shots, dozens had their blood pressure and blood glucose checked, and 20 children received free bike helmets. Students from the SLU Nutrition Program offered healthy snacks to all who attended. Additionally, representatives from ParaQuad, a Diabetes Counselor, National Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, and Medicare counseling were in attendance.

The fair was underwritten by a grant from St. Anthony's Charitable Foundation Physician Ambassadors. Dr. Dana Galbraith of Southfield Family Medicine and several of her nursing staff assisted with the event. Feedback from both participants and vendors was overwhelmingly positive, expressing the hope that this fair will be held again next year.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

<b>Fiscal Year 2016</b> (excluding in-kind information)			
<u>Income:</u>		<u>Expenses:</u>	
Public Support & Grants	\$ 71,214	Pantry Operations	\$ 80,285
Fundraising & Program Income	\$ 40,654	Marketing & Fundraising	\$ 7,164
Other	\$ 1,753	Administrative	\$ 2,804
Total Income:	\$113,601	Total Expenses:	\$ 90,253
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 23,368</b>		

In FY2016, the ACFP distributed 426,788 food and personal care items directly to those in need. The estimated retail cost for these items is \$259,333, though the ACFP spent only \$14,530 in direct food/personal care purchases. The remaining distribution was received as in-kind donations via individuals, food drives, and our relationship with area stores through Operation Food Search and the St. Louis Area Foodbank.

- **Direct Public Support:** Direct support from individuals, businesses and our Member Churches are the most significant source of our annual income. This year, 281 individuals, businesses, and Member Churches made at least one monetary donation to the ACFP, totaling \$55,014. Of this amount, our Member Churches contributed \$12,332, in addition to their on-going support in the form of regular food drives and volunteers.
- **A Place at the Table:** Our monthly giving program, *A Place at the Table*, engages 25 donors on a regular basis, all year long. This program generates more than \$8,050 for us annually and enables us to keep a consistent level of food on the shelves for our families regardless of the season. Expansion of the *A Place at the Table* program remains an on-going goal for FY17 and beyond.

The strong financial position of the ACFP entering FY17 allows the organization to plan for the future, and to consider reasonable growth and expansion of activities and services.



To that end, the Strategic Planning Committee, an adjunct-Board committee, met monthly throughout FY16 and into FY17, to revise the existing Strategic Plan of 2010, creating a new document to guide the ACFP from 2017-2019.

## FUNDRAISERS

The ACFP held 3 larger fundraisers this year: the Annual Trivia Night in September, the Annual Dinner Auction in April, and the Brackets for Good Tournament in March.

- **Trivia Night**: As in years past, the Trivia Night Fundraiser, led by a committee primarily from Rooftop Church, was held at Seven Holy Founders parish hall. The event was sold out, with 32 tables of 8 reserved in advance. The evening included a silent auction, beer raffle, and several other smaller games. In all, the evening netted just under \$8,000.
- **Dinner Auction**: The Dinner Auction, held in April at Pietro's Restaurant in south St. Louis city, remains our strongest fundraising event. This year, the "Fund-a-Need" for the Brown Bag program raised just over \$5,400, helped in part by a short promotional video created by a volunteer. In all, the evening netted just about \$14,000, including the silent auction, dessert dash, and ticket fees.
- **Brackets for Good**: In February 2016, we learned that we had been selected to participate in the Brackets for Good Tournament in its inaugural year in St. Louis. This March-Madness-style fundraiser pits nonprofits against one another in weekly fundraising bids. We were matched against the Multiple Sclerosis Society in Round One, and entered the Tournament with low expectations. To our surprise, we did well, and continued to advance successfully through three weeks of the five week tourney. In the end, Brackets for Good raised just over \$8,000 for us, and brought us several dozen new donors.

## GRANTS

This year, we received grant support from the following funders:

### Restricted Grants:

- Regional Business Council: \$2,500 for capital purchases (laser color printer/copier, air conditioning units, utility carts, and floor steamers)
- St. Anthony's Physician Ambassadors: \$5,000 for our annual Health Fair and Wellness programs

### Unrestricted Grants:

- Annual Catholic Appeal: \$1,600
- Meals on Wheels: \$5,000
- WalMart: \$2,000
- Walter E. Hoestette Foundation: \$5,000

## LOOKING AHEAD

The coming fiscal year presents challenges and opportunities to the ACFP. The new Strategic Plan provides us with guidance in choosing which paths to pursue, but also presents us with opportunities that need careful guidance. The pantry needs to create a solid succession plan for staff and key volunteers; continue to strengthen its financial reserves; expand the use of technology in operations; and consider appropriate methods of expansion and program services to best serve our community.



The ACFP is in its strongest position yet, entering FY17 with a fully balanced budget, healthy reserves, committed people in staff and key volunteer roles, strong inventory, and growing community relationships. The Affton Christian Food Pantry, which humbly began more than a decade ago serving 5 families, is now a model pantry throughout the St. Louis area.