

# DOES YOUR CHURCH PROVIDE HELP FOR THOSE WITH FOOD INSECURITY?

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.



## FOOD ASSISTANCE

- If your church runs a food pantry, consider extending the days/hours or offering emergency distributions as needed.
- If your church has a Blessing Box, try to ensure that it is well-stocked with staple foods.
- Create meal kits made from staples like rice, pasta, and beans, including a recipe for making an easy meal. These can be given away through backpack programs, Blessing Boxes, or food pantries.
- Host community meals (such as soup kitchens or potlucks) that are open to all.
- If your church does not offer food assistance, consider volunteering at churches that do or with non-profit organizations like food pantries, food banks, produce giveaways, etc.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Offer emergency financial aid for groceries, utilities, rent, or transportation. The less people spend on other necessities the more money they will have for food.
- Provide grocery store gift cards or vouchers so people can purchase their own food.

## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

- Coordinate with schools to identify families in need and what would be most helpful.
- Make and distribute “backpack meals” for children missing meals due to SNAP loss.
- Offer snacks or meals during after school programming or tutoring sessions.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Organize food drives in your church and community.
- Check in on vulnerable members of your church and community (elderly, disabled, single parents).
- Create a volunteer network to deliver food to shut-ins and immigrants.
- Create a list of food pantries and community meals in your area, calling 2-1-1 can help you do this.

## OTHER PRACTICAL HELP

- Offer cooking classes or provide recipes using low-cost ingredients.
- Provide hygiene kits, toiletries, and household essentials.
- Offer job search support, such as assistance with resumes or access to the internet.

*From Mariellyn Grace, director of Mission Engagement, Ohio Episcopal Area of The UMC*



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