

MANASQUAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Food for the Soul



Imagine being a single mother of three girls, ages 12-17, sharing a home with people you barely know, just trying to get by, and to raise your girls in a safe, loving, caring environment, with the hope that the sacrifices you make every day will eventually enable your children to lead fruitful lives. Imagine working three jobs, coming home and helping your kids with their homework, and doing everything else you possibly can to set a good example for your children; teaching them how to rise above some of life's great challenges. Imagine now, if you can, that even with all of your hard work, you are barely making ends meet, the environment you are raising your kids in is suddenly not looking very safe, and to make matters worse, you cannot afford to put enough food on your table for your children. What would you do? Who would you turn to?

In the interest of the three girls, I have been asked not to share the family's name, so I will refer to them as the Smith family, but unfortunately, this is a very real story. Even more unfortunate is the fact that this is a problem that affects many families and individuals right here on the Jersey Shore. There are many working class families that are experiencing the same difficulties as the Smith family, and find themselves in a situation that they had never expected to find themselves in; not knowing where their next meal is coming from.

Like many hard working parents who are struggling to meet this basic Human need for their children, Ms. Smith is very proud. The thought of asking for a handout had never entered her mind. She was determined to provide for her family no matter how hard she had to work, and was doing her best. One day at school, her fifteen year old daughter told one of her teachers that she was very hungry and has not eaten. The school staff moved quickly to help this struggling family and eventually it



came to Susan McCoy, who is a member here at Manasquan Presbyterian. Susan, realizing that The Manasquan Food Pantry would be more than willing and able to help this family in need, showed up after hours to the Pantry and was welcomed by the Pantry's caring and dedicated staff. Susan was given enough food to feed the Smith family for five days, and when she showed up at the family's home unexpectedly, she was met with overwhelming gratitude and emotion from Ms. Smith, who cried tears of joy. With the help of the Manasquan Food Pantry, the Smith family was able to meet this challenge head on, and is now doing well enough to be almost totally independent.

This is just one example of a family who is in need of not just food, but also in need of hope. Fortunately, there are places for people to turn when in a situation such as the Smith family. The Manasquan Food Pantry has served the community for many years, helping families and individuals in need. Although it is located here at Manasquan Presbyterian Church, and overseen by our Board of Deacons, it is supported by the Manasquan Ministerium, which consists of The Church in Brielle, First Baptist Church, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hope Community Church, Life Chapel Assembly of God, Manasquan Friends Quaker Meeting, United Methodist Church, St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, St. Mark's Catholic Church, St. Uriel's Episcopal Church, St. Denis Roman Catholic Church, Shiloh Baptist Church, and of course Manasquan Presbyterian.



The Manasquan Food Pantry is not just your average soup kitchen. It serves high quality foods, and is dedicated not only to supplying the food people need to survive, but also helping them to get back on their feet, so they will no longer need the help of the Pantry. For Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, each participant receives a full holiday meal, consisting of a turkey or ham with all the trimmings. They take pride in the fact that they serve such good food, and their motto is, "If we won't

eat it, we don't serve it." Together, all the wonderful volunteers at the Manasquan Food Pantry are determined to make sure that the Pantry is not only clean and serves the best foods, but also that all participants are treated with the respect and care they need and deserve. However, there is a problem. In July of 2011, the Pantry was serving 97 families and 353 individuals. Presently they are serving over 200 families and 800 individuals. The need for more support has never been greater. In addition to what they receive from State and Federal agencies, the Food Pantry spends between \$30,000 and \$35,000 that they receive in donations per year on food. Since the amount of people that the Pantry serves has more than doubled in the last three years, it is not hard to recognize the need for more donations.

Most of us here on the Jersey shore are blessed enough to where we will never have to worry about having enough to eat. That is not the case for many. As Christians, we are called to continue the mission of Jesus. It is not always easy, but God promises us that if we



live as he calls us to, we will be rewarded for our generosity. Scripture tells us, *"The generous will themselves be blessed for they share their food with the poor."* - Proverbs



22:9. Jesus himself told us that when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked or visit the sick, we do it for Him. 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' - Matthew 25:37-40.

Much of our Christian Faith is predicated on the belief that, not only is it a blessing to feed the hungry and minister to the poor, but it is our obligation as disciples of Christ. How are we to shine as an example of Christian love, hope, and charity if our deeds do not back up our words and our faith? "14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." - James 2:14-17.



The Manasquan Food Pantry has been taking action, and leading by example for many years, and is a vital part of Christ's Mission here on the Jersey shore. Not only does it feed the hungry, and share God's love with those in need. Its light shines as a beacon of hope for people like the Smith family, who would otherwise have none. It allows good, hard working people, who may be going through some rough times, a fighting chance to get back on track and restore their dignity. It allows parents who are struggling, to again put good food on

the table for their children. The Manasquan Food Pantry is one of the most important ministries in our community. The high quality food that it serves is a testament to how much the men and women who volunteer so much of their time to keep it running, genuinely care about God's people; but it is more than just a food pantry. It is a place where people can go to find hope. It supplies the needy with more than just food for the belly. It supplies them with food for the soul.

Anyone wishing to support the Food Pantry by making a donation or serving as a volunteer is most welcome to call (732) 223-0898 or [email](#). Or stop by the Food Pantry with any spare food you wish to contribute. Visit their [website](#) for more information. Food pantry hours are Monday-Tuesday 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Thursday-Friday 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

Your help is greatly appreciated!

Blessings,
Rob Petillo
Stewardship Commission

Stewardship would like to thank Cindy Tufts for the beautiful photos.

<p>THE STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION Elder Bob Cardin Elder Bill Reinhard Rob Petillo</p>	<p>Anyone interested in sharing a testimonial about how FPCOM has helped bring Christ's love into your life please contact Rob Petillo at (347) 432-7550 or email.</p>
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Click [here](#) to print PDF version of the Monthly Blessings.

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