Greetings, Circle Friends!

This year-end newsletter is packed with information about our holiday programs, opportunities to partner in our work and heart-felt expressions of gratitude from client families.

These words of appreciation spur us on and remind us of our purpose—to feed the hungry and, through wrap-around programs, help families to move from crisis and uncertainty toward stability.

This year, our Board, through strategic planning, worked to assess and, where needed, strengthen our programming. With the help of a volunteer committee, our new Client Choice Pantry model evolved. An additional staff position was created to strengthen our volunteer program. And in recent weeks, the Board widened our service area to include all of the 63026 zip code, broadening access to services for low-income families in a community just “a stone’s throw from our campus.”

Each month we serve approximately 600 local families with wholesome foods, coaching and counseling, and an array of other programs. We couldn’t do this without the support of our devoted volunteers and a host of individual donors and community partners. So, we have our own heart-felt expressions of gratitude for each of you. Thank you for making this work possible through your generous financial gifts and your precious gifts of time and talent. Thank you for caring. Thank you for choosing Circle. Thank you for listening and responding throughout the year.

We wish you the happiest of holidays!

Cyndi

Our Mission:
Circle of Concern feeds the hungry and provides assistance to low-income families living in west St. Louis County.

Our Vision:
Improving every life in our community by reducing hunger and poverty.

Current Needs:
- Dinner Helpers – CRITICAL
- Canned Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Canned Carrots, Peas, Mixed Veggies
- Cereal – CRITICAL
- Deodorant – CRITICAL
- Low Dose Aspirin
- Size 5 or 6 Diapers
Your IRA and Required Minimum Distribution

From the year they turn 70 ½, everyone must take a Required Minimum Distribution, or RMD, from their Individual Requirement Accounts, or IRAs. Fortunately, a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD, can satisfy all or part of the RMD. Further, donations made directly from an IRA to a charity such as Circle can be given without the donor having to count the distribution as taxable income. Contact your financial planner or tax preparer before December 31 to see if a QCD to Circle using an RMD from your IRA can benefit you!

3 Things

Gifts of Gratitude

Gratitude is more than a two-way street at Circle; it’s a multi-lane highway! We’re grateful for your investment in the work we do. We are grateful for the chance to serve. Our clients both say and show their appreciation every day. Here are just a few examples of their thanks:

1. A client received a larger check than expected from his small pension, and he gave the difference to Circle in thanks for the help he received.

2. When a young brother and sister saw how the food pantry eased their mother’s worries, they collected canned food from their neighbors and brought it to Circle.

3. A client’s tree was bursting with fruit, and she brought in a big bag of peaches to share with volunteers and fellow clients.

General Stats for August 2018

Shared food with 1,794 people in 615 families

32 families received a total of $6,188 in crisis financial assistance

162 volunteers shared 2,126 hours of valuable time

IN HONOR OF:
June 1 - September 30, 2018

Marriage of Dr David Anderson & Ms Erin Knock
Melinda Brie
Bussmann/Crescent’s 100th Birthday
Brian Clevinger’s Excellent Care of my Dog!
Dean
Ed Finlay’s 90th Birthday
Sue Hoffman
Joel Kamil
Michelle & Ryleigh Lages
Mike Lages’ Birthday
Charles Lunsford’s Birthday
Sally McDonough’s Birthday
Diana Meyers’ 50th Birthday
Mia & Alexa’s 2nd Birthday
Michael Lages & Vince Nygen’s Birthdays
Lambert & Mary Padberg
Emma Jean Phillips
Marylee Pratt’s Birthday
Ann Reese
Nick Silence
Kelly Smith
Unknown Lady Who Paid for Groceries
Terri Warner
Alec West’s 13th Birthday
Chris Wiley’s Birthday
Barbara Woehle
Diane & Gary Zenk

When you share a gift in Memory or Honor of someone you care for, you also honor us with your trust...and we thank you. In the name of your loved one, we work every day to care for families in need who thank you, too.

Buying from Amazon this holiday season? Circle of Concern is registered with Amazon Smile! Designate Circle as your charity of choice on each purchase, and Circle will receive a percentage of the cost of your purchase! Thank you!

The magic of Circle lies in its 300-strong volunteer corps. We welcome new members of the team and miss those who move on. We love our volunteers!

Circle staff gathered with Florida-bound long-time volunteer, Phil Hoffman.
Your Newest Thanksgiving Tradition

For the fourth year, the Genesis Jazz Project—a group of the St. Louis area's finest jazz musicians—is holding a concert to benefit Circle. And after last year's debut collaboration with the award-winning Lafayette High School Jazz Band, these talented students will once again perform with the pros! The concert will take place at Lafayette to accommodate a growing crowd of fans.

This is a hot ticket to kick off the holiday season. Before you roll out a single pie or stuff a single turkey, plan to join us on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving for an evening of the best the St. Louis jazz scene has to offer.

Tuesday, November 20
7:00 p.m.
Lafayette High School Auditorium
(17050 Clayton Road, 3.5 miles west of Clarkson Road)
Admission: nonperishable food items or a suggested $10 donation

Beloved volunteer Bobbie uses a mini-megaphone to make announcements in the pantry. A client asked if she could borrow it:

“Attention all Circle volunteers, Lisa Brown is very grateful for your help. I love you all. God Bless.”

No more pot holes! No more grocery carts getting stuck! One of our most anticipated maintenance projects is the new parking lot—safer for clients, easier for our friends to visit. Please come see us!

Want to give your heart for the holidays? Become a Holiday Adoption sponsor and adopt a family or single client. You will be the joy of someone's Christmas! Visit circleofconcern.org to sign up!
The Choice Pantry’s first client loved the experience. She was glad to be able to plan meals as she picked up items and, as she later told her family in tears, “It felt like I was at the grocery store and not like I had to come in for a hand-out.”

A client with religious dietary rules that do not allow her to eat meat from Circle chose her food carefully from the pantry shelves, picking out items that didn’t have small bits of meat or weren’t prepared with animal products. When she finished getting her groceries, she looked up from the cart with eyes brimming with tears. “I’m so happy to choose things my family likes and not waste foods that I can’t eat.”

Choice Roll-Out

The launch of the Client Choice Pantry model went without a hitch, and from the first client, the response has been positive! Many thanks to our committee, volunteers, board and staff who made this effort possible.

The last client of a busy day was a woman for whom English is a second language. Just as she exited the pantry with her groceries, she turned to her volunteer shopper and said simply, with a smile wreathing her face, “good.”

The last client of a busy day was a woman for whom English is a second language. Just as she exited the pantry with her groceries, she turned to her volunteer shopper and said simply, with a smile wreathing her face, “good.”

After a walk through the reconfigured space, a client stopped and declared, “I like the new method; can you tell whoever changed it ‘thank you?’”
How to Hold a Food Drive

It’s easy to hold a food drive for Circle in your neighborhood, at your work, your school, your church or with any team or group!

• Schedule your food drive to run for two or more weeks to give your group a chance to bring in food.
• Consider holding a “theme” drive featuring just a few needed items, such as a canned chili “cook off” or a request for Pantry Pairs (peanut butter and jelly, pasta and sauce or flour and sugar).
• Offer the option of donating money, and buy items from grocery ads with the funds.
• Distribute flyers and use social media and Twitter to announce the drive.
• Deliver food during open hours on the back page of this newsletter!

For more information about holding a food drive for Circle, including getting a template for a flyer, contact Juliet@circleofconcern.org.

Take the Credit!

New tax law is raising lots of questions about your federal taxes. The Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit (FPTC) answers one question about your state taxes.

How can I pay less in state taxes? When you give a gift of food or money (including stocks) to Circle, you qualify for Food Pantry Tax Credits. These credits directly reduce the amount you pay for your state income taxes. With a simple form verified by Circle, you can earn up to $2,500 in tax credits when you give up to $5,000. Couples filing jointly can earn up to $5,000 in credits when they give up to $10,000.

To make things easy for you, we will proactively prepare, sign and send the verified form to every donor who gives at least $250 in cash during 2018. The forms will be mailed at the end of January 2019, in plenty of time for your tax preparer to submit it with your state income tax return by April 15, 2019.

Please consider supporting Circle this holiday season. The good you give comes right back to you through FPTC!

Campership Round-Up

Parents are sharing their children’s joy at participating in Circle’s 2018 Campership program. Here are comments shared about just a few of the 112 children who attended camps of their choice, and the evaluations are in!

“He hit his first home run.”

“She really enjoyed the science projects!”

“He learned to be happy for someone else as part of a team.”

“They learned about animals and how to care for them.”

“She improved her golf skills!”

If you’ve never forgotten the fun you had at camp, please consider a gift to Circle designated for the Campership program. Our children will remember camp forever, too.
A Donor Story

St. John United Church of Christ

Since our start back in 1967, Circle has valued its church partners as gifts in our work to assist families in need in west St. Louis County. One of these partners has become known not just as a gift, but for their gift cards!

St. John United Church of Christ has supported Circle for many years, and the hallmark of their assistance is the more than $3,000 worth of gift cards they share with us each year. Several times throughout the year, friends from the church walk in the door with a thick stack of cards, each of which is used to benefit the pantry and other programs.

We purchase food when critical items run low. We share them with clients who have specific emergency needs. If a Holiday Adoption sponsor isn’t able to purchase gifts for a client family, we can use the cards to ensure that holiday dreams come true.

Thank you, St. John, for your cards of care.

IN MEMORY OF:
June 1 - September 30, 2018

Marge Aulgur
Jerry Bennett
Walter Beranek
M/M Zack F Bettis
Paul Boswell
Wayne Brown
Robert Bucknell
Kenneth Buermann
Bill Burge
Julia M Burleson
Robert Burt
Jerome Caesar
Pat Caldwell
Mary Grace Coleman
Randolph Constantine
Robert Crews
John Croak
Drusilla DeLisle
Jerry Dudding
Bill Eisenloeffel
Rita Fialka
Dennis Fitch
Mary Fort
Sandra Ruth Ginsberg
Ben Gregory
Sharon “Midge” Hagemann
Herbert Hausman
Warren Hecht
Loren S Hewitt
Don W James
Elaine Jauss
Kay Johnson
Moxelle Kampouris
Dr David Krajcovic, Sr
Marguerite LaMaster
Randy Leach
Mary Loper
Jane Lowell
Jean Luedde
Lynn’s Mother
Dr KC Marshall
Dominic Mikal
Mom
Chris Nelson
Oliver & Helen Newberry
Oner Onergil
Joan Oppliger
Kent Palmer
Paul & Ethel
Dr David Peeples
Ray Powers
Wanda Pritchard
Marianne Schenck
Patricia Shomo
Sedley Siegfried
Virginia & Harry Smith
Mary Steins
Joseph H Struckhoff
Tommy Tullos
Simone Warner
Amy Marie Woods
Your Loving Mother
Your Son

When you share a gift in Memory or Honor of someone you care for, you also honor us with your trust...and we thank you. In the name of your loved one, we work every day to care for families in need who thank you, too.

Black Friday.
Cyber Monday.

#GIVING TUESDAY™
November 27, 2018

Give at circleofconcern.org

Please consider a year-end gift to the Food Pantry. Your investment fills hungry bellies and relieves so much worry.

Apples are a Circle staple, and we get a lot this time of year. With four hours on high in a slow cooker (8-10 hours on low), this easy recipe is the ultimate taste of the season!

Circle’s Recipe for Applesauce

Ingredients: 8 apples ½ cup of sugar ½ cup of water ½ tsp. cinnamon 1 tsp. of lemon juice

Directions: First, Peel, core, and cut up apples. Next, put everything in crock pot. Then, cook until tender. Last, beat and mix. Finally, serve and enjoy!
**Volunteers Needed**

Looking for an on-going volunteer gig? Circle needs help in our office and in the food pantry!

**Office Receptionists** are needed Wednesdays from 9am to 1pm, Thursdays and Fridays from 9am to 12 noon. The minimum age for this position is 21, and the post requires 30 hours of training and shadowing.

The Food Pantry is looking for Stockers and “Shoppers.”

**Stocker** - restock shelves and fridges as needed, sort donated items, take out recycling and trash. Must be able to lift a minimum of 25 pounds.

**Shopper** - walk with clients to help them pick out groceries, assist with stocking and trash disposal. Available shifts include Wednesdays from 1 to 4pm, Wednesdays from 4 to 7pm, Fridays from 12 noon to 3pm and Saturdays from 9am to 1pm. The next required two-hour training is on November 29 from 9 to 11am. Minimum age for these positions is 16.

For all positions, we ask for a minimum commitment of one shift per month. Contact Stephanie for more information at Stephanie@circleofconcern.org.

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**Trees of Green**

In the market for the perfect Christmas tree this season? Stop by the popular tree lot of the Men’s Group of Manchester United Methodist Church at 14374 Manchester Road (just west of Hwy. 141) from November 23 until the trees run out! A portion of the proceeds benefit Circle! Visit [www.manchesterumc.org/christmas-tree-lot](http://www.manchesterumc.org/christmas-tree-lot) for more information.
We share many donations with our clients:

- Food, Canned and Packaged
- Fresh Garden Produce
- Dry Pet Food, Litter
- New School Supplies
- New Blankets, Hats, Gloves

Donations are accepted:
- Mon, Tue, Fri: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Thursday: 9 a.m. - noon
- Saturday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Important Dates:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Old Newsboys Day!</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>Genesis Jazz Project Concert 7pm, Layafette High School, Ellisville</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 22-24</td>
<td>Circle closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Holiday Adoption Gifts Drop-Off</td>
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<td>December 17</td>
<td>Board Meeting at Circle</td>
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<td>December 22-25</td>
<td>Circle closed</td>
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<td>December 26-28</td>
<td>Circle open 9 to 12 noon</td>
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<td>December 31-January 1</td>
<td>Circle closed</td>
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“LIKE US” on Facebook and visit us online at www.circleofconcern.org.

STAFF DIRECTORY

Cyndi Miller, Executive Director ................................. cyndi@circleofconcern.org .......... ext. 117
Juliet Holden, Senior Director .................................... juliet@circleofconcern.org .......... ext. 106
Michelle Lepak, Pantry Director ................................... michelle@circleofconcern.org .......... ext. 107
Stephanie Moreland, Volunteer/Special Events Director .... stephanie@circleofconcern.org .......... ext. 113
Niki Vandable, Client Services Director .......................... niki@circleofconcern.org .......... ext. 108