Then & Now

Nearly everything you’ve read for the last three months has probably led with words and phrases like unprecedented, trying times and, of course, the new normal. They capture the massive changes we’re all experiencing, due to the pandemic, but day-to-day as we serve our clients at Circle of Concern, we focus on active ideas like adapt, be flexible and let’s make it work.

That’s exactly what we do everyday. We look at what we normally did and then make it work under Covid conditions. Here are just a few ways:

• Pre-coronavirus, approximately 150 families visited the food pantry each week. Now, some weeks see as many as 250 families curbside.
• Since September of 2018, our Client Choice pantry model allowed our clients to “shop” for their favorite foods and flavors. For now, we’re prefilling bags of groceries and offering limited choice on items like personal care to move as swiftly as possible and to limit up-close contact and risk of exposure.
• An average Wednesday before the pandemic might see as many as 46 volunteers and five staff members in the building meeting or shopping with clients, stocking shelves, working on the computer, greeting guests and callers and much more. Now, no more than 10 volunteers work any given shift.
• Face-to-face visits with volunteers connected clients with our programs or other organizations. At this time, to avoid close contact, our phones, email, scanner and fax machine are the vital links to share critical services with our clients.

Our clients miss their face-to-face appointments and the opportunity to choose their own groceries. We miss it, too, as we know it’s a best practice that offers dignity to people, reduces waste of food that a family maybe doesn’t enjoy or that isn’t in line with dietary or religious restrictions. For now, though, we plan to continue this adapted service model for as long as we feel it’s necessary to assure safety for our clients and volunteers, many of whom are in high-risk categories.

These trying times have prompted unprecedented changes during this new normal (I just couldn’t help using them!), but as always, Circle, with your help, will step up and reach out to our neighbors who need us.

Current Needs:
- Jelly – CRITICAL
- Condiments
- Pasta Sauce
- Canned Pasta
- Dry Potatoes/Beans/Rice
- Razors
- Tylenol
- Excedrin
- Tampons, Sanitary Pads

“...we focus on active ideas like adapt, be flexible and let’s make it work.”
In Honor and In Memory

(September 1 - April 30, 2020)

When you give a gift to Circle in memory or in honor of someone you care for, you honor us by linking your loved one to the work we do in our shared community. Thank you.

In Honor
AARP and All Circle Volunteers
Krystle Albert
Austin’s 21st Birthday
Woody Bassman
Patricia Beelman
Mrs. Lacey Boordram
The Book Club Foundation
Alexander Borisov
Kay Boyd
Wayne Brent
Nora Chibnall
Circle of Concern Staff
Circle Volunteers
Coronavirus Relief Efforts
COVID-19 Relief
Creative Circle
John Dietl’s 60th Birthday!
Dinner Group Reps
Mary Ann Enlow
Everyone
Alice & Bill Fleming
Julia Ford
Susan Friesen-Reiser
Emily Frost
Good Moms Who
Raised Good Sons
Health Care Heroes and
All Essential Workers
Health Care Workers
Juliet Byington Holden
The Holderness Family
Joan Kelly Horn
Diane Huck
Jesse’s Recovery
Barb & Boyd Jones
Marilyn Killian
Patricia Koenen
Peter Linck & Jill Stein
The Phillip Linck Family
Manchester United Methodist
Chancel Choir
Evelyn McGeehon
Jackie & Bill McNamara
Megan
Scotty Meyer
Mary Mohl
Sally Morton
Virginia & Dick Navarro
Susan Newell
Nikki
Nurses
Ohio State U Alums
Our First Responders
Doctors and Nurses
Linda Patton
Pioneers
EdieQuick’s Birthday
Dennis Reichert
Rockwood School District
Hazel Rozema
Sacred Heart Men’s Club,
Valley Park
Brian Sprague’s Retirement
Barb Stroh
SW Chapter H236 - Pioneers
Maria Unger
Paul Unger
Valley Park High School Faculty
Volunteers
Dick Vreeland
Jane Walsma’s Birthday
West County Democrats
Whomever Needs Help
Barb Woehle
Rich King
Rick King
Evangelina Kliensorge
Kara Koening
Elias J Kosednar
Irina Kuhn
Haran Kumar
Anne Ledford Meara
Mary Little
Louise & Laura
William Luedde
Jim Lunan
Marilyn & Don Mace
Jean E McCormick
John Meakim
Dominic Mikal
Don Muse
Chris Nelson
Helen & Oliver Newberry
Jerome Novack
Elizabeth Alice Oakes
Gertrude O’Neill
Oner Onergil
Joan Oppliger
William Papageorge
Bill Phipps
Charles Polk
Ray Powers
Susan Quinn
Betty Rakewstraw
Christin Range
Mary & Kenneth Rathert
Raymond Repp
Christine Royal
Maurine Rubin
Marianne Schenck
Avanell Seiler
Donald Smith
Carol & John Spencer
Joseph A Spencer
Helen & Dick Sponsel
Jackie Springer
Ann Studards
Elizabeth Studt
Donald Tanner
Ralph M Theriac
Natalie Timm
Bob Uhlman
Rob Uyemura
Donna Van Behren
Richard “Dick” Wegner
Jean & Harry West
Lloyd Wilkes
Matt Wilson
Gwen Zamberlan

In Memory
Dolores Archer
Marie Barnett
Elaine & Don Baumbach
Jo & Bill Beaman
Hildegard Boese
William (Bill) Brandel
Wayne Brown
Ben Burch
Jean Burr
Debi “Deedee” Calhoun
Laverne Callahan
Dennis Carlstedt
Travor Clark
Judy Cooper
Lisa Copeland
COVID-19 Lost Lives
William Cronin
Katherine Dains
Doug Dalton
Al Del Pico
Drusilla DeLisle
Donald Dempster
L Wind & L Dumontier
John Edwards
Laura Ehouskie
Madelein & Richard Ellsworth
Robert Elsperman
Melissa Endsley
Benjamin & Stephen Ferris
Kip Fischer
Donald Follmer
Colin Forbes
Russell Ford
Bonnie Forsythe
Patricia Garuer
Eleanor Gigliotti
Joan Gilardi
Howard Allen Gleason
Jennifer L Gnau
Tom Gorgas
Jeanne Haddenhorst
Ronald Hall
Evelwe Groene Harman
Pat Harris
Warren Hecht
Cathleen Heitmann
Mary Hofsteter
Jessica Hostert
Fern Irwin
Charlene Jacobs
Marie Jaeger
Tony Kampeter
Patrick Kelly
Grace Kenefick
Many friends help us stock up on school supplies this time of year to outfit children with all they need to start school ready to go. This year, will you consider making a financial gift to cover the costs of gift cards that families can use on their own? Thank you.

St. Louis Strutters
High kicks and high praise for the St. Louis Strutters, beautiful dancers who made a generous $500 gift to Circle. Thank you, and brava, ladies!

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.
Volunteers ~ A Love Letter

❤ To our volunteers who don masks and gloves and work on small teams to provide food and services curbside, you show our clients the face of calm kindness when they are so worried.

❤ To our volunteers who reluctantly decided to stay home out of concern for the health of our clients and themselves, you are part of limiting the spread of this pandemic, which will benefit us all.

❤ To all our current and former volunteers who have sent messages of encouragement, called to make advance “reservations” for volunteer shifts when we reopen fully and sent donations to keep Circle services going, you are the heart of Circle.

Thank you all.

Full Circle

Circle is in the business of sending food out our door, but watching it come in is a thrill. For example, when El Toluco Taqueria & Grocery and MOD Pizza in Ellisville each brought in lunch for the Circle crew, volunteers and staff did the happy dance.

Clients were the big winners, though, when Viviano’s Festa Italiano came by! A friend of Circle made innovative use of her stimulus check by spending it at the iconic Italian-foods market, inviting them to create bundles of dried pasta, sauce, Volpi sausage, olives, cheese and a fresh loaf of Italian bread, all donated to Circle. Extra bags were delivered to Valley Park’s bravest (and hungriest!) at the Valley Park Fire Department. Deliziosa!

3 Things Adaptations!

As in the food pantry, safety guidelines and practices are inspiring adaptations to other Circle wrap-around programs. Here are three examples:

1. Summer Kid Bags provide child-friendly food to families whose children receive free or reduced-cost meals during the school year. Some product scarcity, along with volunteer team size limits and other safety measures, meant we didn’t have the people-power to prepare the 900+ bags needed for the season. Instead of a bag, families this summer are receiving a gift card of comparable value from a grocery store, along with food lists and other information.

2. Summer Opportunities, or Camperships, are still available. Because many camps aren’t operating, however, we broadened the scope of the program. In addition to being used toward camp, families can apply the campership funds to things like school activity fees and afterschool/daycare costs.

3. Planning is in progress for our annual Back To School supply distribution. Mindful of CDC group-size guidelines, we are considering alternative ways to ensure our clients’ children start school with all they need to hit the ground running. Watch for word on use of gift cards, on-site distribution or collaborations with other groups to outfit our kiddos!

Food Pantry Tax Credit

Monetary gifts to Circle, as well as food donations, may qualify you for the Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit. This easy-to-claim 50 percent tax credit program reduces your Missouri income tax bill and allows Circle to feed a rising number of families seeking food help during this difficult time. Contact juliet@circleofconcern.org with questions about limits and how to claim.

Manchester City Drive

City of Manchester mayor, the Honorable Mike Clement, led dozens of volunteers to collect more than 4,000 pounds of food and personal care items for Circle on a beautiful morning. Many thanks to all the City departments and business owners who supported the drive, with a special shout-out to Lola and the troupe at Arthur Murray Dance Center who had the idea in the first place!
July 3 Circle Closed in Observance of Independence Day

July 20 Virtual Board Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

September 7 Circle Closed in Observance of Labor Day

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:
Monday ..................... 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Tuesday .................... 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Important Dates:

Remember...
Money gifts to Circle, as well as food donations, may qualify you for the Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit. Contact juliet@circleofconcern.org with questions about limits and how to claim.

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

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