# Circle Newsletter



Circle of Concern Food Pantry

## It's Nice To Be Able To Count On You

"Consistency is the true foundation of trust. Either keep your promises or do not make them." Roy T. Bennett

In a year that has daily thrown wrenches in plans and made chaos out of order, there's a lot to be said for consistency. Far from a hobgoblin of little minds, consistency has been an anchor to the comfort of what we once considered normal.

As we've served a rising number of clients here at Circle of Concern, the goal of maintaining consistency has been a cornerstone of every program decision we've made. When CDC safety guidelines demanded we rethink how we implemented Holiday Adoption without large gatherings, we looked for a way to provide a consistent value of gifts with gift cards to each member of our clients' families. Keeping a consistent distribution of scholarships to graduating high school seniors led us to a series of ZOOM interviews with remote-learning students. Cancelled and postponed food drives in the community has meant smaller food drives, but targeted requests for pantry items and careful ordering of purchased food have assured that our client families receive a consistent amount and variety of foods when they come to Circle.

That consistency is appreciated by our clients. As one woman said as she got a large supply of regular groceries plus a turkey and holiday foods in November, "I was worried you wouldn't be able to help with Thanksgiving dinner this year. It's nice to be able to count on you when we need you so much."

We can say the same to you. **It's nice to be able to count on you**, on our community, to meet these very real needs of our neighbors. Fear of illness, of running out of money, of hunger is a fact of life for the 750 families who come to us each month, and your support of our programs has allowed our clients to trust they will get relief here.

If you've been a friend to Circle over the course of our 54 year history, you have helped foster that trust. If you are a new donor, welcome to a Circle of support our neighbors know they can rely on. We thank you and, consistently, our clients thank you, too.

#### **Current Needs:**

- Cereal
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Dinner Helpers
- Pasta Sauce
- Shampoo
- Razors
- Ibuprofen



Feeding Families is Just the Beginning

## A Note from Cyndi

There are those moments that forever change the way you think. I had such an occasion a few weeks ago. Oprah would say I had an "Aha moment."

I was in the warehouse, working with our volunteers to sort through the sea of food donations that had arrived just before the holidays. Our pantry director, Michelle Lepak, and client services director, Niki Vandable, came through the door. We had helped a new client family earlier that day, and the mother sent an email – a heartfelt thank you. Michelle and Niki waited for my reaction to the note.

The mother explained that both she and her husband had lost their jobs due to Covid-related cutbacks. Unemployment had run out for one, and the other was receiving just over \$100 each week. Because there was so little food in the house, the children were staying with a family member.

Now, however, the family had food, and Mom was elated. "I cannot explain how happy I am," she said. "I love to cook and can really make what you gave us last. Thank you so incredibly much. Know that when I pick (my children) up tomorrow that it is because of you."

Her words struck me. The hopefulness and excitement, despite the challenges that lie ahead for her family, jumped from the page. Her graciousness – it was important to her that we know we had made things better.

Finally, the simple idea that food—nutritious, filling food—can help a family to be together.

Of course sharing food is the biggest part of what we do here at Circle of Concern, but that is just one of our many programs. When speaking about our services, I often share that our rent and utility assistance program can keep a family safe and together, under one roof. I am reminded that food can do the same.

We are deeply grateful for the extraordinary ways you stepped forward to help others this past year. Please know that you are an integral part of keeping families together.

Cyndi

Executive Director Circle of Concern

## A Cup Raised to Mae

If you ever sported your fanciest hat to take tea with Circle – or if you've received a cookie and a tea bag in the mail for a virtual tea – you've enjoyed the handiwork of our



long-time friend, Mae Hudson. With fellow volunteer Gloria Van Dover and their friends from Delta Tau sorority, Mae was passionate about collecting money and other items for distribution to Circle's clients, and her tea was a such a fun way to do it.

Mae passed away recently, and, with her family and friends, we are missing her very much. Please join us in raising a cuppa in her honor and in honor of all those we are missing this year.



## Our Donors Ask the Most... With Answers!

What is happening to your number of clients during the pandemic?
Circle is seeing a significant rise in our client roster. At the start of 2020, we served approximately 600 families each month. We are now seeing as many as 750 families. We expect that number to go much higher.



## Does Circle get government grants?

We receive very little government funding. Our donors are almost entirely local households, businesses and foundations.

What do you need the most?

Foodwise, we post a list of needed items on our homepage at circleofconcern.org, and it usually includes things like cereal, pasta sauce and PB&J. We also need funding to purchase fresh foods for clients and to assist the rising tide of clients who can't pay all their utilities or rent. The biggest thing we need is you – to share support and to tell your friends about us!



## Like us on Facebook and watch our homepage at *circleofconcern.org* for our food needs.



Our friends filled our warehouse to bursting at the end of 2020, for which we are so grateful. By the beginning of March, though, much of that food will be in the hands of our clients, and our shelves will empty. Thank you for keeping tabs on foods our clients need.



## A Legacy of Care

The future can change in an instant, but planning gives comfort in a changing world. If estate planning is on your 2021 calendar—and if you trust Circle of Concern to care for our neighbors—will you consider including Circle in

your will or trust? For more information about how to extend your legacy of care into the future, please talk to your financial planner or contact cyndi@circleofconcern.org.

## **Take Credit**

Our friends mostly give to assist their neighbors-in-need. Happily, some gifts to Circle also qualify for an incentive to encourage giving.



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 makes it easier to feed Circle families. Contact juliet@circleofconcern.org for more information about limits and how to claim your credit.



## Food Drive Today!

Some of our most visible volunteers are those who hold food drives or third-party events in their neighborhoods, places of work, schools and in the community. If you are planning to collect food and personal care items for the clients of Circle, maybe we can help with tools to promote it. Contact stephanie@circleofconcern.org to request:

Personalized Sign Templates Digital Signage Circle Info Sheets Food Drive Tips Tabletop Flyers Social Media Promotion

Will you take a Required
Minimum Distribution from
your IRA this year? Please
consider giving that RMD
as a Qualified Charitable
Distribution to Circle.
The families we serve
will be grateful!





Left: Chase D. pulled \$50 from his savings to buy toys for the Birthday Club!

Aboue: Girl Scouts stepped up to collect food when other food drives were cancelled.

### In Memory, In Honor

We are deeply honored when you recognize those you care about with a gift to Circle. Thank you for trusting us with your kindness.

#### **IN HONOR**

Mary Ackerman's 92nd Birthday AJ's Birth Rob Akred for Christmas Nancy Akred for Christmas Jim & Sally Allen The Amundson Family Jayne Baggett The Bagwasi Family The Bagy Family Bryan & Lysle Baker The Bartlett Family Marylee Pratt Baygents Bella Chic Home & Gifts Karen Bellville John Bender Todd Bender Barbara Bess Dave & Debbie Black Maurice A Boehmer Jr's **Birthday** The Boelter Family Peq & Chris Bolen's 40th Anniversary Jim Bornholdt's Ordination Boy Scouts Scouting for Food Brian & Sarah Our Brightleaf Friends Barbara Brown Meaghan Brueggeman John & Jill Brueggemann Matthew Buehrig's Wonderful Family & Friends Alan, Tessa & Susan Burchardt Laur & Ryan Burkhardt Juliet Byington Holden All the Carolines & Annes Heidi & Scott Carver CCI Employee Fund Daniel Cherry & Ellen Smolyar Chesterfield Hill Garden Club Christi Childers Christmas Food Needs Christmas! Circle of Concern Staff Circle Volunteers Susan & Larry Clark -Thank You & Happy Holidays

Catherine Cloyd Sheila Cohen for Christmas **Dave Combs** Community Christian Church Staff & Friends Community Christian Church's Christmas The Compton Family Mary Cook Efforts to Combat COVID-19 Families Affected by COVID-19 Margaret Croner Shelby & Cruz Croner, Our Grandchildren The Crossing's Give Food Crossings of Chesterfield Mary Ann Cutelli's Birthday Lion Nelson Davenport The Davidheiser Extended Family M/M Robert Dierberg for Christmas Joan Duffv's Volunteer Work The Dunn Family Nora Ericson M/M James Eschenbrenner **Essential Workers** Ray & Claire Evans at Christmas Carla Ewing Eric & Kelly Eyster First Responders & Healthcare Workers Bobby Fitzgerald Five Angels Foundation The Folks That Work There at Circle of Concern Kay Folsom Peggy & Sid Ford **Emily Frost** Girl Scout Troop 1126 Linda Glassner The Gleason Family Global Surgical Corp Joe & Alicia Goedde Marquita Goldsmith Our Grandkids -Mat & Tim Suellentrop, Jill Kedzuch. Chad Martin.

Olivia & Chad Prager

D/M James Gregory

Rev Dr/Mrs Kevin Gregory The Grelle Family John & Karla Groenenboom Parker Grove's 10th Birthday Frank Haase David Habecker Beth Habecker & Steve Delamater Steve & Becky Hagar Hagenhoff Family Dean & Betty Hammann Hanna Bend Homeowners **Board of Trustees** Happy Birthday, Heidi! Dave & Ruth Harmon Todd Harper Health & Service **Professionals** Dawn Held & Pam Mayrose for Christmas! DeAnna Helfer Tom & Diana Helis Julie Helland Katie Helland Marshall Helland Trenton Helland Michelle Hennessey Henry Elementary School The Herpel Family Kathleen Higgins Carrie Highbloom's Siblings! Hightower Wealth Advisors Sue Hoffman Bob & Mariann Hubbard Merle Huffman Jesus Christ Boyd & Barbara Jones Elise & Steve's Siblings -Karen, Julie. Steve & Neil Aland & Sylvia Kaufman Christmas from the Kemp Family Emily & Adam Keough Gina Kerls The King Family Staff of King of Kings Lutheran Church Doug & Angie Kirkland Kittykins Kiwanis Support of Circle Adopt-A-Family Bill & Nancy Klusman

Carla & Don Koss

Mark & Deborah Kumming

League of Women Voters of Metro St Louis M/M M Lefkowitz Mel & Dorothy Lefkowitz's Wedding Anniversary Christ Lembeck M/M Richard Long Bill & Connie Lowry The Lucas Family Pat & Diane Lurkins The Lurkins Family Boyd MacDonald John & Carolyn Marshall -Christmas Greetings! Bob & Marilyn Merlo A Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays for All! A Merry Christmas! Scotty Meyer Jo Ellen Miller's Birthday Elaine Milonski Trish Moore Ray & Claire Moulis for the Holidays! MSMF Wealth Partners -Mark Finke, Tom, Mengel, Tom Murphy Gerald & Karen Nash The Neise Family M/M Ed Neuman for Hanukkah Justin Newcomb Lindsey Helland Newcomb Clairee & Peter Newton M/M Dick Nicholas' Christmas Kate O'Neill M/M Ross Osiek for Christmas Judith Parker Erin & Chris Parkin for Christmas Mrs Wayne Pennington M/M Matt Pennington for Christmas The Rev Margaret Philip for Boss's Day Emma Jean Phillips' Birthday! Emma Jean Phillips' Christmas! The Pierle Family **Pioneers** Chip Piper Shelly & Carol Politte Becky Littrell Poole

The Popp Family D/M Kevin Postol DDS Linda Powers Carl & Betty Quicksall John & Susan Quinn Rich Race Madeline Raile Cindy & Dick Reinking Dave Roberts Roque Dining The Rome Group Tony Rosso & Tom Calkins at Christmas Dale Rowe Family Hazel Rozema Gary & Elaine Ruiz John & Joyce Ruiz Richard & Barbara Ruiz Tim & Sherri Ruiz Penny Ryan's Birthday Cassie Saxon Lisa Schikore -Weiss Charitable Volunteer Work Dianne & Michael Schilling Heidi Schindler Gene Schlatter Ben Schwartz Leslie Scoopmire becoming Rector Dr Jason Selk for Christmas Dr Jason Selk's 50th Birthday! Delpha Senay Deb Shearer Jennifer & Doug Shoen Bobbie Siesennop Rita Smith Dianne Snyder & Family Bonnie & Carol Sonderman St John UCC Manchester St Martin Episcopal Church Angela Staples Stimulus II...We Hope More People Follow & Donate Their Stimulus Barbara Stroh's Christmas Tacony Corporation Barbara Tanoff & Ed Watson The Tasch Family Merry Christmas to Steve & Lisa Taylor Steve & Lisa Taylor Team DKM Hope Wins Food Drive, The Crossing Church Wanda Theriac Thomas, Eleanor & Aiden's Christmas The Underhill/ Nepute Families

Faculty of Valley Park School District Valley Park School District Vianney High School Judy & Ron Vogler Stalwart Volunteers & Staff Volunteers at Circle Bobbie von Ritter The Scott & Nicole Voss Family Mike Vroman M/M Paul Warner **Emily Warzici** Judy Weast Karin Weast Hannah Weatherwax West County Democrats Westermann/Butler Families for Christmas Mary Kay Wiesehan Bill Wiley & Steve Wiley Candyce Willis Hannah Ruth Wilson Dave Wisland's Birthday! Lura Beth Withers Barbara Woehle

#### **IN MEMORY**

**Betty Wucher** 

Dale Wright

Thomas Aldridge Alice Virginia Allen James (AJ) Ananis Jim Anderson Jim Andres Andrew Michael Ellen Ankrom Arlon, Alta Hanson & Bella Harry & Litsa Athanas Sahron Austermann Elaine Bachman Jurata Jo Baniak Joyce Barnes Sally Barnhart Joann Barton Thomas Bates Ruth Bechle Kenneth Berkbigler Ryan Blank Lucille "Lucy" Blesi Carl Blevins Lois Bliss Lois Bockenkamp Bob Bockserman Hilde & Mike Boese Pea Boland Margaret Mary "Peg" Bolen David Borisov Karen Seibert Boyd Joe P Brent Bridgett

Janice F Brooks Diane Bryant Ken Buermann Sr Marie Charles Buford CSJ Jane Bumb George Burr Sandy Buschmann Jerry Caesar Pat Caldwell Richard A Camden Debra Carr Betty Clark Trevor Clark Martin Charles Connor Connie Conrad Jackie Corev Susan Cox Robert Crews Ray Davis Merle Dean Deboer Drusilla DeLisle Robert Demper Kathryn Oppermann Dieckmann Orville & Patrice Druehl Harry Duffey Harry & Virginia Durham Helen Earls John Edwards Kenton Eiffert Richard Eissfeldt Donna Ellebrecht Peter Elliott Robert Elsperman Eugene Enchelmaier James Faerber Benjamin & Stephen Ferris Michael "Mike" Fink Gene Fleher James Floyd Donald Follmer George Franck Deborah Frein Dr Eldon Furlong Dede Garcia Mike Gassert The Mother of Brenda Gay Joanna Gerst Ruth Bader Ginsburg Mil Glaser Howard Allen Gleason Irwin J "Teddy" Goldman Jeanne M Gough L Graser

Norvell Green

Freddie Gross

Tillie Gruen

Kenneth Guier

Edward & Norene

Grossmann

Herbert & June Groff

Robert & Ginny Guinther

**Dorothy Gulley** Michael Halley Warren Hampp Karen Hampton Ronald C Hanks's Birthday (father of Judy Richardson) Jim Hannick Ted Hawkins Warren Hecht Irene Hecker Jamie Hecker Marlene Hedrick Steven John Heffernan Dr William Herbold Glen Herbst Robert Herigon Loren S Hewitt Tom Heygele Barbara Hibbard Jeff Hockert Bernie Hodae Beau Horner Linda Horrell Odis David Houston Mae Hudson Bob & Delores Hughes, Former Circle Volunteers Patricia Hurster Jacque Jack Johnson Emil & Dorothy Kammer Betty J Keller Richard "Rick" King Evangelina Kliensorge Margaret & Ted Kogut Elias J Kosednar Jane Kostelc Dorothy Kraujalis Eleanor Kubernat Margaret Kunst Ronald Douglas Kuntz Evie La Rock Richard Lamzik Barbara Lauber Randy Leach Kenny Lederich Esther & Andrew Lehmann Levi Dr John Lind Gus Lindauer John Linder Norma Linke Rose & Syl Liss Grace Loeffelman Jeanne Marie Long **Brian Loomis** Louise & Laura Chuck Luntz Vincent Mahoney Dee Malvern Kathy Marcario continued on page 6

## In Memory, cont.

Dave McCarthy Karen McGinnis Dr Bill Mchugh Lauretta Mersinger Mandi Mesey Daryl Metzener Warren "Brent" Meyer Dominic Mikal Bess Millonas Clara Milster's Birthday Jack Mitchell Carol Mitulski Rose Moore James M Mozlev Norma & Everett Munsell Sue Murphy My Dad Oliver, Ralph & Helen Newberry Our Daughter,

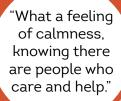
Oner Onergil Flip & Arleen Pallozola Julein Pankaist Papi Wayne Peters Donald Piekarski Paul Pike Maureen Pollard Michael A Postiglione Mrs Prasad Henry W Pullen Catherine Quick Mary & Kenneth Rathert Susan (Delabar) Rempert Virginia Brendle Richey Paul Rickles Allen Ricks Doug Roth Neil Eltz Roth Barbara Rutyna Theresa Sauer

Sylvia Scheer Marianne Schenck Carl Schiley Charles & Dorothy Schmidt Kevin Schnurbusch Abigail Jones Scholl Gerard Sharkey Marie D Shore Jackie Sieberg Barbara Smoltz Snodgrass/Spencer Loved Ones Linda Steffen Nancy & Richard Stevens Lenore Strathern Janice Strinko Earl Stroud Jr Justin Sutterer Richard Sutterer Raymond "Ray" Sutton Jennifer Terry Russell Theiss

Those Who Have Died of COVID-19 This Year Sam Turk Raven Vail Marietta Veluz Patricia Viazanko Richard A Wagner Sr Marilyn Walters Dr Wayne Weaver **Bob Weiler** Robert E Weiler Jr Ruth M Weinberger Jean West Ron Whitley Leo Kennedy Wiethop Mary Willman Mary Helen Winsby Nancy & Richard Wirick Jerry Withers Amy Marie Woods Kathleen Zvanut

Circle Clients Speak

Tracy Nichoalds



"I'm thankful for those of you who have kept the blessing alive at Circle thru these trying times."

Richard D Savage

"Your smiling faces and helping hands are contagious. Your dedication shines bright. I want to celebrate the positive effect you and your organization have on others."



Circle's inclement weather policy is usually tied to whether the three school districts in our area – Parkway, Rockwood, Valley Park – are closing. If schools are doing remote-learning, it might not be so easy to tell. If snowy or icy weather is forecast and you have plans to be at Circle, the best way to see if we are open is to call Circle at 636.861.2623 and press "8" or check our Facebook page. We will also update our website and alert local TV stations.

Stay safe out there!

#### **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.



Watch For Details! Virtual Trivia Night September 2021



Volunteer Cindy W. safely delivers Holiday Adoption gift cards to families.

## Circle Holiday Adoption





The Big Man, himself, checked out Circle's Holiday Adoption distribution event for clients!



Amy V., Emma W. and Bella V. direct clients to the Holiday Adoption distribution event.



Boyd J. pointing the way to Santa's Workshop.



Volunteers Margaret and Linda sort food in Circle's warehouse.



West County Rotary members collect daily essentials for Circle.



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## New Year, New Hope

## Board of Directors:

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PRESIDENT

#### **Delores Rodenberg**

**VICE PRESIDENT** 

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Allison Love

**SECRETARY** 

Lana Biondo
Charlotte Bukowski
Thomas Chibnall
Frank Haase
Brandi Hamm
Virginia Pearson
Edie Quick
Cindy Wolk

## We share many donations with our clients:

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

#### **Donations are accepted:**

Monday	9 a.m 3 p.m.
Tuesday	9 a.m 3 p.m.
Thursday	9 a.m 12 p.m.

## **Important Dates:**

April 2 Circle Closed for Easter Weekend

April 24 Girl Scouts April Showers Collection

May Scholarship Application Deadline

myscholarshipcentral.org

May 8 Letter Carrier's Food Drive

September WATCH FOR DETAILS Online Trivia Night!

#### Remember

Your monetary gift or food donation can qualify for MO Food Pantry Tax Credits. Contact *juliet@circleofconcern.org* to find out more.



"LIKE US" on Facebook and visit us online at www.circleofconcern.org.

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