



NOTICE: In the event that public officials declare a severe infectious disease outbreak for Western Erie County the Christian Cupboard may close. A notice will be put out through the media; television, radio and facebook; and placed on the door of the pantry. Meanwhile, we are modifying procedures to limit exposure by providing pre-bagged food and changing the sign-in & pick-up process to ensure safe distances and limit contact. If patrons have an emergency need ONLY, please call the Girard Presbyterian Church Office at 814-774-3985 M-F 9am-noon to make arrangements.

## The Christian Cupboard's Mission:

**We are called to serve those in need with love as Jesus asks us, not out of pity, but with respect for their human dignity, not just feeding their bodies but providing for their overall well-being--body, soul, and spirit.**

The Christian Cupboard is a community partnership of churches in Girard and Lake City. It operates under a board of directors with representation from the various churches and Love, INC. While independent of the First Presbyterian Church of Girard, the Christian Cupboard is housed on its property and its finance account is held by the First Presbyterian Church of Girard. The account is managed by a CC board approved Treasurer and is audited annually. Operations are conducted by co-directors who coordinate food drives, manage the purchase and distribution of food through 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest and coordinate volunteers for load-ins and distributions.

## What DOES the Christian Cupboard DO to make a difference?

From July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019, the Christian Cupboard registered 285 households and served 813 individuals in the Girard/Lake City zip code area. Eligibility is based on the PA Department of Agriculture guidelines for Emergency Food Assistance (TEFAP) which is 150% of the poverty level. Some households experience only a temporary need, while others need assistance throughout the year. On average we can expect approximately 120 households to come to the food pantry each month. While we are a small community, there are many of our friends and neighbors who are in need.

During the past year the food pantry faced special challenges – limited access, parking and loss of outdoor lighting due to the church fire, demolition and rebuilding. Another challenge to the food pantry in the past year was the loss of a significant portion of our funding (\$13,000) that had been received through grants from the United Way.

Despite these challenges, the food pantry did not have to eliminate any distributions (2x month) and we were able to provide the same amount of food each month as we had before the loss of United Way funding. The Christian Cupboard worked diligently to continue its services through cost cutting and increasing awareness in the community. **We are only able to do this through the community partnership of churches, the participation of many valuable volunteers, the programs we participate in through Second Harvest and your donations and food drives.** The director(s) researched and refined the ordering process to take advantage of special grants through the PA Dept of Agriculture TEFAP program to purchase select foods through Second Harvest at no cost. Through raised awareness and increased generosity, we saw an increase in financial donations to purchase food. The Letter Carriers food drive netted over 4,500 lbs of non-perishable food for the Christian Cupboard. Our participating churches collected specific items each month. We participated again this year in the Erie Times Old Newsies program to provide 140 boxes of food at Christmas. Unfortunately, we did have to eliminate some special programs such as extra holiday items and fresh produce vouchers to cut costs.

It is our hope that the increased generosity we have seen will be a continuing trend. Consider adding the Christian Cupboard to your charitable giving. The next big event in the community will be the Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive – please participate! Hold your own food drive, consider adding a “give back” or “pay it forward” food drive to your special event! Sponsor a specific giveaway like fresh produce or a holiday ham. Simply call the office of Girard Presbyterian at 774-3985 to make arrangements. Call to volunteer. There are so many ways to participate!

We would like to extend a special thank you to our individual donors and volunteers and also to Second Harvest, SCI Albion, Times Old Newsies, American Legion Post 494, Boy Scouts, and other fine organizations and citizens of our community for their support. They are a fine example of what we can do to help the Christian Cupboard fulfill our mission to serve our neighbors & friends in the communities of Girard and Lake City.

### How Can You Help?

Donations of money and food are greatly appreciated. (Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Girard – marked Christian Cupboard in memo line.) Volunteering your time and/or talent also helps. Distribution days are the first and third Thursdays of each month from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Volunteers are needed to register, stock shelves, and distribute food on those days. When the pantry receives its Second Harvest delivery, volunteers are needed to unload the truck and stock the shelves, usually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, it may vary.

### Thinking of Holding a Food Drive?

Should your organization be interested in scheduling a food drive, please contact the First Presbyterian Church of Girard office (774-3985), M-F, 9 a.m. to noon before having an event. IS it time... to look into your heart, your cupboard, or your wallet, and do your part to support your local food pantry?

### Mark your Calendars !!!

Plan to participate in the Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>



**BUILDING NEWS . . .** The Christian Cupboard has long been housed at 34 Church Street on property owned by the First Presbyterian Church of Girard. As we see columns rising, the outlines of a new church can be envisioned. We are excited that the church's plans include space to house the Christian Cupboard – new and accessible in 2021! Please continue your support for the church as they rebuild with thanks for their continued support of the mission of the Christian Cupboard! Please bear with us as the process does create safety and convenience challenges and respect all safety and parking directives!