

BLUE MOUND FOOD PANTRY LETTER FOR November 2024

CHURCH OF THE MONTH – FIRST CHRISTIAN

Suggested items to donate this month – any kind of cereal or oatmeal; canned fruit and vegetables; **canned soup**; canned pasta; **macaroni & cheese**; shampoo

New Volunteer Expectations

It was decided at our quarterly meeting that starting now member churches need to send **4** volunteers each Saturday instead of 2. One person that can lift boxes in and out of shopping carts and into cars. One person that can assist people with produce and table items. Both these volunteers will be out in any kind of weather and should dress accordingly. Two people to sort, prep items, etc. as you have been doing. Please park on Lewis Street on the west side of the building. You can enter through either the front or back doors. A donation of \$200 from the church of the month is requested to help share in the cost of rent, electricity, and pest control. Checks are payable to Interchurch Council. The extra volunteers in front have been a great help to us. I am officially registering families online on an iPad, so someone to manage the table keeps the traffic flowing. The days when no volunteer has been available have been very wearing for me as I am doing 2 jobs at once. The extra person to help with the carts is a great help also!

The Blue Mound Dollar General had to close for a few days due to cash register issues. Their employees searched the shelves and donated an abundance of slightly outdated food that they are not allowed to sell but is still safe to consume. Thanks to all the supporting churches and the individuals who donated items this last month.

The USDA has continued to send large quantities of free commodities over the past few months. We get some kind of fresh fruit with every delivery. We are looking for people who can lift boxes to help with our deliveries from the Central Illinois Food Bank. We have had several volunteers not available this last month, so new volunteers are vital! These deliveries come on the first and third Mondays of each month around 9:00 am, except for holidays.

The plastic shopping bag crisis is over. Thanks to all who have been donating, especially those who checked and folded the bags before donating. We will still take donations of them as we continue to use several weekly.

The Meridian High School FCS Club held a food drive in connection with Homecoming Week. Donated were 103 cans, 28 macaroni & cheese, 34 Ramen soups, 20 boxes and bags, and \$133 cash.

The Meridian Jr. High School National Honor Society held a food drive last week. The food will be arriving tomorrow

(October 28th) around 1:00 pm. This is our biggest food drive of the year. I would greatly appreciate any volunteers who could help sort the food items. I have a high school student coming in after school Monday to work service hours. I will be working at the pantry on Wednesday all day, and Thursday and Friday mornings.

The local Masonic Lodge recently donated \$1,128 to the Wee Care Fund from their sweet corn sales. This money will be used to shop for Christmas gifts for children in the families from the Meridian School District and Stonington whose families come to the pantry for food. Any donations to this fund would be appreciated. The shoppers will be Leah Lookabaugh, Julie Bonn, and Alice Reed. Donations of wrapping paper and tape would also be helpful.

The Jubilee Community Garden in Blue Mound donated a large quantity of vegetables, blackberries, and some apples to the pantry this year which were greatly appreciated by our families. Thank you as well to all area gardeners who donated extra garden produce and tree fruits. The Jubilee Community Garden is always looking for volunteers to help in any way. I have started getting prepared for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. The Central Illinois Food Bank has had several items they purchased and offered to us that are holiday related. For Thanksgiving I am most in need of these items: pie filling or frozen pies, cake mixes, frostings, and boxes of Jello & pudding mixes. I will let you know in the next

newsletter what I need most for Christmas. I will start packing the boxes for Thanksgiving on November 16th. The Thanksgiving distribution will be Saturday, November 23rd and the Christmas distribution will be December 21st.

The Blue Mound United Methodist Church will be hosting a Bake & Craft Sale on Saturday, November 9th from 9am to 1 pm. If your church is having a fundraiser or any event open to the public, please contact me by the 20th of the month so I can add the information to the newsletter.

Member Churches

2024

December – Old Stonington Baptist

2025

January – Macon United Methodist

February – Holy Trinity Catholic

March – Stonington United Methodist

April – Remnant Church

May – First Baptist Church – Stonington

June – Meridian Church of God

July – Blue Mound United Methodist Church

August – Joy Assembly

September – First Christian