

THE RIVER

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MAD CITY CHURCH ANNOUNCES THE RIVER FOOD PANTRY

Local missions efforts at Mad City Church are taking a big step forward with the establishment of The River Food Pantry on the north side of Madison.

The pantry organization is being led by Tom Thuemling and Andy and Jenny Czerkas.

Over the last six years, Mad City Church volunteers have been making an impact in the Northport Apartment and Packer Townhouse communities by serving dinner the last Friday of every month.

Over \$100,000 in meals, Christmas presents and school supplies have already been donated to these neighborhoods through Mad City Church efforts.

Earlier this year, Mad City established an emergency food pantry at the Northport Apartments. "The need is greater than ever before," according to Andy Czerkas. He continued by saying, "With poverty becoming a greater problem in Madison and Wisconsin, food pantries are overwhelmed with requests for support. More needs to be done in Madison, especially on the north side."

Because the need is greater than ever before, Mad City Church is expanding the emergency food pantry into a permanent facility. This pantry is designed to serve all of the low income neighborhoods concentrated along Northport Drive and the north-east side of Madison.

The food pantry project has received support from a number of community leaders, including public officials as well as the Madison faith community.

"We want to provide for the basic needs of families that are having a difficult time making ends meet financially or spiritually," said Jenny Czerkas, who is also leading the new effort. Additionally, the food pantry will be a service to those in need by providing basic food stuffs and supplies, free meals and free clothing. The focus will be to treat those they serve with respect and give them hope and encouragement.

This is no small effort.

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THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO HELP!

There are many ways for members of Mad City Church to help The River Food Pantry get off to a strong start.

Financial donations are always welcome and are encouraged. Providing financial assistance will allow the food pantry to purchase food stuffs at discounted rates

from non profit organizations like Second Harvest Food Bank. You can make a financial contribution to the pantry by writing a check to Mad City Church. Please make a note on it that is for "The River Food Pantry". If you are making a cash donation, please make the note on the envelope containing your donation.

Additionally, you can always drop off non perishable food stuffs, clothing and other items every Sunday at Mad City Church.

Until we open at the warehouse, all food donations will be used for the existing pantry at the Northport Apartments.

(Continued on Page 2, "Help.")

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"WE WANT TO PROVIDE FOR THE BASIC NEEDS OF FAMILIES THAT ARE HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME MAKING ENDS MEET FINANCIALLY OR SPIRITUALLY."
- JENNY CZERKAS

VITAL STATISTICS

- *The U.S. poverty rate was 12.7% in 2004, with a total of 37 million Americans living in poverty.*
- *It is estimated that 1 in 10 households in America goes hungry or is threatened with the possibility of going hungry.*
- *Nearly 13 million children in American live in households that are food insecure.*

HISTORY OF OUTREACH ON THE NORTH SIDE



School supplies being handed out at the Mad City/Northport "Back to School Picnic."

"NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE INCREDIBLY GENEROUS AND LOVING HEARTS THAT MAKE UP MAD CITY CHURCH."

Mad City Church began its outreaches to the Packer Townhouses neighborhood in the summer of 2000. At first, we did mainly servant evangelism style outreaches, going door to door and giving away light bulbs, ketchup, etc along with a little business card which had the message of God's love on one side and our church particulars on the other.

That Christmas we had the first gift program for the neighborhood. We discovered later that the Packer Townhouses were the only low income neighborhood in Madison without a sponsor for a gift program for the children. But our program covered all residents, not only children. It was a great way to share God's love. We still remember a grown man crying because someone gave him a wrist watch and the joy and excitement of the children that first Christmas.

The following spring, Pastor Dave and the children's ministry team helped us plan and

execute a memorable Easter Egg Hunt, with tons of activities for the children, prizes and of course the egg hunt itself. In 2001 we also added our participation in the already going back-to-school picnic, transforming it into giant party.

In November of 2001 we began serving free community wide dinners every month. We added dinners at the Northport apartments in 2003 and also started including Northport Apartments in the Christmas gift outreach.

We have made many friends in the two neighborhoods. We've helped with moving families, provided meals during hard times for families, prayed with families. We've taken people shopping and to doctors appointments. Our children play with the neighborhood children. We visit each others homes. We share meals. We share a lot of life. The neighborhoods have become part of our lives.

During the last year or two our relationship with these two neighborhoods has developed into a truly cooperative one. We plan activities together with the Learning Center staff, the neighborhood management and the residents and work together to make them happen.

In January of this year we began supplying an emergency food pantry at the Northport Apartments. It has been very helpful to people. About five families per week make use of it. It is managed by the Northport Learning Center staff.

None of this would have been possible without the incredibly generous and loving hearts that make up Mad City Church. You are the gift givers, the volunteers, the food donators, the drivers, the friends when needed. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of you for all you've done to bring God's love down to earth in a tangible way. As Pastor Shane stated not long ago, "Your actions speak much louder than your words." [END]

HELP (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

There are a number of items still needed before The River Food Bank can open. Please check the "Items Still Needed" section of the newsletter and contact Andy or Jenny Czerkas at (608) 268-6342 to make arrangements to donate items.

Finally, another very important way you can help is by just volunteering your own time at the food bank. Over the last six years, volunteers have been preparing and serving dinner

once a month. Once the food bank is open, more volunteers will be needed because we will be serving dinner every Friday night. We will also need volunteers to sort and stock food shelves, clean up and for many more tasks.

Most importantly, this is a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord. We must never forget that the Lord has a message of mercy for everyone in Madison. Getting to

know people who you may not meet otherwise and getting to know members of Mad City Church will benefit you and everyone else involved.

Please don't be shy about helping out. Feel free to contact Andy or Jenny Czerkas at (608) 268-6342 or stop our table before or after Sunday services to discuss volunteering your time. [END]



ANNOUNCEMENT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Plans are to lease 8,000 square feet of warehouse space at the end of Northport Drive.

The facility will include a kitchen area, an area for serving meals, the food pantry itself as well as a stage area for live Christian music.

Mad City Church and the management of Northport Apartment and Packer Townhouse communities have already made generous financial commitments to help with the launch of The River Food Pantry. These initial contributions will help with securing

the lease, the design and build out of the facility.

“I’ve had it on my heart for a long time to start a food pantry on the north side of Madison. As believers in Jesus Christ, we can have a strong impact on the north side of Madison by just showing kindness and generosity. This is a great way to share Christ’s message of hope and mercy,” said Shane Holden, Senior Pastor at Mad City Church. At this time, volunteers are meeting with the architect to assemble plans for building

The River Food Pantry facility. Plans are to open the food pantry by the end of this year.

Further details regarding the opening of The River Food Pantry will be available once additional details are finalized.

In the meantime, if you have any immediate questions about opportunities to help with this vital program, please feel free to give Andy or Jenny Czerkas a call at (608) 268-6342. You can also e-mail them at jandaczerkas@charter.net. [END]



MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT NORTHPORT

BY PAT STEELE, PROGRAM COORDINATOR/NORTHPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

It is hard to believe that it has been about six years since Mad City Church first reached out to the people in the Northport/Packer Community. Since that day, things were never the same! Many great things have happened, many wonderful people have worked side-by-side together over many meals. Many families received the help and support they needed, children had fun and we made new friends all the time. We shared many stories, many laughs, and there were also sad times too that we shared together. You have invested your time, energy and money in our people and you have become a part of our community.

We were blessed then and we are blessed today! We cannot say enough how much we appreciate the friendship and partnership we have built over these past few years. Your

endless support in our after school program, summer program, Back to School Picnic, Halloween, Christmas, Easter Day, food pantry and monthly dinner have shown to us that you are with us for the long haul and that you have the desire to serve our people.

My personal experience working with Mad City Church has been wonderful! I have met so many great people with hearts of gold. Some of you have inspired me so much to love and to do more for the people. I have learned a lot by watching you, and when you guys are around I can’t help but to feel the energy around me and it makes me move faster (only way to keep up with you all!). I have a great time working with all of you and I sincerely appreciate every little and big thing you do for us everyday!

There are similar stories like mine that I frequently hear

from different residents and children. People have noticed you and speak of you with respect and appreciation. For years you have been reaching out to our residents and you have built personal relationships with many people and made differences in their lives. It seems like you are doing all the right things mainly because you honor our people and you understand what we are about as an organization, and your willingness to work with our staff and residents to help each other. Your passion is the key to success! I hope that we will continue to work together, support one another and discover new things together in the coming years. We look forward to many more years together with you! [END]

“WE CANNOT SAY ENOUGH HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE THE FRIENDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP WE HAVE BUILT OVER THESE PAST FEW YEARS.”
- PAT STEELE





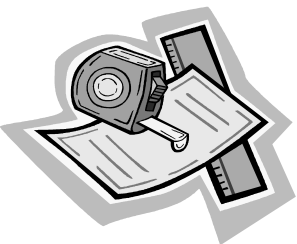
LIST OF ITEMS NEEDED FOR FOOD PANTRY

KITCHEN AREA	MAIN AREA	PANTRY	OFFICE
3 upright freezers	1 water fountain	50 foot of multi-level shelving	1 desk
3 large refrigerators	Air handlers	2 electronic scales	1 filing cabinet
2 gas or electrical stoves	20 long tables	Checkout table/large desk	1 computer
1 commercial refrigerator/freezer	200 folding chairs	1 table lamp	1 printer
1 walk-in cooler	10 standing lamps	3 fluorescent overhead fixtures	1 back-up hard drive
50 feet of counters	1 data projector	10—20 shopping carts	1 lamp
2 stainless steel racks	2 large outdoor signs	Secure storage area	1 chair
3 tub style sinks	1 sound system	1 forklift	1 copier
1 large capacity mixer	4 speakers	2 pallet jacks	Multi line/unit telephone
1 outdoor multi-burner gas grill	1 amp	2 dolly carts with air tires	1 copy of QuickBooks
3 fluorescent overhead fixtures	1 compact disc player	6 walkie-talkies	
1 water heater	1 radio		
1 water softener	1 large television		
2 100 cup stainless steel coffee makers	1 wheeled television cart		
2 cambros (insulated coffee dispensers)	1 dvd player		
4 shelved serving carts	Multiple fire extinguishers		
6 rubber mats			

The River Food Pantry will need a number of donated items in order to become operational later this fall.

Maybe you have some of these items at home, know someone who can donate an item or are willing to purchase any of these items on behalf of The River Food Pantry.

Please review and feel free to contact Andy or Jenny Czerkas at (608) 268-6342 to make arrangements to donate items.



IT'S CONSTRUCTION SEASON AT THE RIVER FOOD PANTRY!

It won't be too long before we are ready to begin construction on The River Food Pantry.

To the right, you will find pictures of the facility before construction begins.

There's a lot of empty space right now. However, by the time Christmas arrives, with your support, we hope to be operational and serving families in need in northeastern Madison.

We're now in the process of signing the lease, meeting with the architect to design the floor

space and reaching out to other faith based organizations in the area.

If you or anyone you might know is in the construction industry and would be willing to volunteer time to help with the construction, please contact Andy or Jenny Czerkas at (608) 268-6342

This is a work in progress, so we'll continue to keep you updated on our progress!



Front Entrance of The River Food Pantry.



8,000 square feet of space ready to go!