

Food Pantry

What: An active mission of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

Where: Housed in the basement of BMPC

When: Open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month from 9:00am to 11:00am (and by appointment)

Who: Eligible persons should reside in the Cottage Grove community (village/town); Clients required to provide names, address, telephone number, and birthdates of all household members

Supply increased by: Food drives; food donations/cash contributions by individuals/groups/businesses/organizations

Supply reduced by: Client use and disbursement of holiday baskets

The Cottage Grove Food Pantry has provided service to clients whose family's household size ranges from one person to nine persons; whose client's age ranges from infant to the elderly; from single parent to multiple adults/generations in the household. Every family is provided with canned and boxed food items, household and personal hygiene products and fresh or frozen protein items during open pantry Saturdays or by appointment, and with food baskets at Spring Break, Thanksgiving, and Winter Break. We worked in collaboration with the social services/support staff of our local elementary, middle and high schools to determine the total number of families most in need of food at that time. Each family designated to receive a food basket also received intentional outreach information about the food pantry, including location, open hours and eligibility.

Throughout 2025, the food pantry never closed and continued to serve those in need. While the number of visits by clients on pantry days continued to fluctuate from month to month, the 2025 year-end usage total of (586) individual clients increased by 45% compared to 2024 totals of (408) and more than twice the number from 2023 (280). The count of 586 is nearing the totals during the years prior to 2020, during which the numbers we served were in the six- and seven- hundreds. The profile of current pantry users seems to consist of households with fewer children than in previous years and more households with single, fixed income residents.

Number of Persons Served in 2025

Monthly Clients	Households		Adults	Children	Total (A+C)
January	17		29	30	59
February	18		28	31	59
March	21		38	17	55
April	13		28	19	47
May	10		18	12	30
June	15		24	20	44
July	15		23	23	46
August	14		29	20	49
September	19		28	27	55
October	17		32	24	56
November	19		29	28	57
December	10		18	11	29
Total Monthly Clients ^	188		324	262	586
Holiday Baskets*			Adults	Children	Total (A+C)
Spring Basket	73		166	208	374
Thanksgiving Basket	75		193	203	396
Winter Break Basket	76		193	208	401
Total Baskets ^^	224		552	619	1171
Total Served ^ + ^^	412		876	881	1757

This chart (top 2/3) indicates the number of households and individuals **served each month, Jan - Dec 2025. (Total number of households served = 188).**

The total number of adults (A) **324** and children (C) **262** within those households is also recorded: (A+C) **individuals served = 586.**

(This is a 45% increase of use on Saturdays compared to 408 in 2024 and 2x as many as 280 served in 2023.)

Overall, **we served 412 households consisting of 876 (A) and 881 (C) for a total of 1757 individuals in 2025.**

***The distribution of Summer Baskets was discontinued in 2025.**

The total number of 1757 individuals served is 3.5% less than 1821 (in 2024), yet nearly a 10% increase from 1590 (in 2023) which did include Summer Baskets.

During 2025, significant quantities of **food and toiletry items** were added to the pantry shelves when several organized groups continued their annual food drive events:

Taylor Prairie and Cottage Grove Schools -- Great Kindness Challenge

Cub/Boy Scouts --Scouting for Food

Granite Ridge School -- Third Grade Community Services Food Drive

Cottage Grove Police Department -- Parking Ticket Forgiveness Program (Channel 15 News on 12/19/2025)

Continued contributions also from:

Abiding Shepherd Lutheran Church
St. Patrick Church

In addition, great quantities of food were donated by:

MGHS Athletes of Faith

Metro Market

Ryan Construction (Amazon)

Summit Credit Union

The residents, businesses, service organizations, and churches of Cottage Grove and the surrounding community were also very generous in providing **monetary donations** -- as an annual gift from many of the usual donors, some from new supporters. Because of the government shut down from October to November, and concern about the SNAP program, several Facebook postings by local residents, prompted an outpouring of monetary donations:

American Legion Post 248

Anonymous community member -- donated \$ for 100 Piggly Wiggly grocery cards

Bank of Sun Prairie

CG Community Foundation

CTW Carpet & Floor

Cottage Grove 4-H

Craft show

Culver's -- Can for a Cone

Hope Lutheran Church

Memorials

Oakstone -- 2% of sales

Piggly Wiggly -- Round Up Program

St. Paul's Liberty Lutheran Women

Very generous residents of CG and surrounding communities

West Koshkonong Lutheran Women

These monetary donations help defray the cost of supplemental school snacks, juice, cheese, cold cuts, fresh produce, holiday meats, personal hygiene items and grocery cards.

The food pantry has been fortunate to be supported by helpful and compassionate volunteers who assist clients and sort and shelve food; clean the refrigerator, freezer, tables and shelves; take inventory, receive contributions, send acknowledgements, fill baskets, purchase and transport groceries and much more. With the help and generosity of the many groups and individuals of our community, the food pantry program will be able to continue its effort in the mission work of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Stapleton, Pantry Coordinator