

Wood Street Chapel Food Bank

Wood Street Chapel operates a food bank in Fortuna. This Food Ministry is supported entirely by donations of money and food from the community. Much of the support, and all of the volunteer effort to run the program, comes from the Wood Street Chapel congregation. Support also comes from other groups, including the parishioners of St. Francis Church, and from individuals. The program is completely independent and is not associated with any governmental agency.

The pantry is a small room, about 8 feet wide and 25 feet long, with an industrial shelving unit on one wall, two refrigerators and one freezer. Each month, one of the volunteers uses donated money to shop for perishable items and bargains.

Occasionally, they receive large donations from individuals and sometimes from someone's estate. They have operated this way for over four years.

Wood Street Chapel is located at 1649 Wood Street, opposite the Toddy Thomas Middle School playground. Food is distributed at Wood Street Chapel on the morning of the third Saturday of each month. This day was selected because many families on food stamps have used their monthly allocation by that day. Each month, volunteers prepare a form listing what food is available.

Distribution begins at 10 AM, on a first come, first served basis. People begin to line up long before the doors open. Screening is minimal but does take place. Those needing food must provide their names, a verifiable street address, and the number of people residing at that address. The applicant fills out that month's form, selecting food from what is available. Volunteers pack the order into a cardboard box and carry it to the

applicant's car. The program supplies food to some 50 local families, serving, at last count, 108 people.

Donations of food and/or money are greatly appreciated. Suggestions for food include:

- Canned veggies; preferably canned corn or green beans, but other veggies are OK.
- Canned fruit.
- Canned chili or hash.

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- Canned tuna, canned chicken, or other canned meat.
- Packaged macaroni & cheese or similar boxed foods.
- Dry cereal, all sorts and sizes.
- Pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Tortillas
- Peanut butter, jams or jelly.
- Crackers
- Fruit juice
- Large bags of rice or beans; these are repackaged for distribution, 2 cups in a Ziploc bag. The program director tells us that St. Francis' gifts of rice and beans are greatly appreciated and asks that they continue.
- Toilet paper. Large quantities are repackaged, 3 rolls in a plastic shopping bag.
- Pet food, either dry or canned.

Donations of money are also needed. The money donated purchases milk, margarine, eggs, bread, meat, sugar and flour.

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