

OLS Food Pantry



Established for over 40 years, the OLS Food Pantry is a volunteer-led effort supported by our parish Church. Donations of food and funds and our volunteer team come from the parish and many individuals, businesses, and non-profit organizations from the communities of South Orange and Maplewood. The Pantry is a member of MEND (Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity), an interfaith support network of 20 food pantries across Essex County.

The Pantry is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday morning of each month when approximately 150 individuals and families in need are provided with a full bag of food as a supplemental enhancement to their food security. Primarily, we give non-perishable foods (shelf-stable milk, cereal/oatmeal, peanut butter, pasta, sauce, canned tuna and chicken, canned fruits and

vegetables, beans, and rice). Local shops donate fresh bread. During the summer and fall, community gardens and CSAs supply fruit and vegetables, and at other times of the year we purchase fresh produce. For Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and the 4th of July we provide grocery gift cards, personal care items, and special foods. Our Children's Book Pantry operates alongside our Food Pantry. We provide books that are at the pre-K through middle school reading levels and help our patrons, many of whom are parents, grandparents and other caregivers, select books for their children.

Food donations can be dropped off at the Rectory front door from Monday-Saturday from 7am-4pm, and Sunday from 8am-12pm. If you have a large food donation or would like to run a food drive for us, please contact Kate Cahill.

In order to ensure our shelves remain full, we rely on a team of dedicated volunteers as well as food and monetary donations and food drives. Our volunteers shop, transport, and shelve food, monitor food levels and client volume, organize client intake, schedule volunteers, pack food bags, and serve clients. We use our monetary donations to purchase food from local stores and the Community Food Bank of New Jersey. We receive no direct state aid or local governmental support. Our focus is on caring for our patrons with good nutrition, kindness, patience, and dignity, and we stress all of these aspects in fulfilling our mission.

You can: Volunteer via the Sign-Up Genius: <http://bit.ly/OLSPANTRY>, make food and children's book donations, and provide monetary support. Checks can be made payable to OLS Food Pantry and sent to the Parish Office. Donations can be made on line at <https://olschurch.com/parish-giving/>

Contact: Kate Cahill at 973.220.8495 or katecahill50@gmail.com; or Nancy Piasecki at 415-786-4720 or npiasecki@hotmail.com