Sharing Thanksgiving
Holiday Hunger Program Relies on Friends Like You

This Thanksgiving, we are more aware than ever of individuals and families struggling to make ends meet. Rising prices and floodwaters remain on our minds.

Here at God’s Pantry Food Bank, our annual Sharing Thanksgiving food box distributions will take on new meaning this holiday season. We are working to ease hunger among more neighbors than ever before, while delivering hope and compassion to nourish their spirits as well.

You can be part of Sharing Thanksgiving by making a thoughtful donation or participating in person or virtually through our Basket Brigade events to help us fill 6,600 boxes with all the ingredients for a deluxe holiday meal, allowing an extended family to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving dinner with plenty of leftovers.

Truckloads of healthy produce and nutritious groceries will also make their way across Central and Eastern Kentucky throughout November. For every $10 you send, we can gather and distribute enough food to create 70 hot, nutritious meals through our service area network of more than 475 food pantry and meal program partners.

Won’t you open your heart to our neighbors in need with your generous Sharing Thanksgiving gift today?

To donate by check, money order, or cash, simply mail back the enclosed reply coupon with your thoughtful gift today! Gifts of stocks and securities, donor-advised funds, and IRA qualified charitable distributions are a wonderful way to support this program as well. Visit gods pantry.org/fallmeals to make an online gift. Contact Tammy Taylor, Development Officer, at tataylor@godspantry.org or 859-288-5335 with any questions or to make a gift by phone. Thank you for Sharing Thanksgiving!

— FLOOD RESPONSE —
God’s Pantry Food Bank met emergency needs for food and water. Story, page 3.
A Bountiful Season of Hope and Thanks

We are so grateful to you, our friends and neighbors who’ve come to the rescue this summer and fall. Without your selfless compassion, many more children and adults would be at risk for hunger right now. But you wouldn’t let that happen.

When the torrential rains flooded hundreds of Eastern Kentucky homes and businesses in July, your generosity made it possible for the Food Bank team to respond quickly to immediate needs for food, water, and other supplies. Countless lives in communities both large and small were upended and changed forever, and many of our food pantry partners lost refrigeration and sustained heavy food losses in the aftermath. Every dollar donated represented a measure of healing, hope, and hunger relief needed by thousands.

As our neighbors continue their recovery efforts, God’s Pantry Food Bank will be there to help in the months ahead. With the holidays and colder weather approaching, we hope you will join us in these ongoing efforts by participating in our annual events.

Our Sharing Thanksgiving program, now in its 19th year, demonstrates compassion in action, making a real, life-changing difference for people who need generous servings of hope, kindness, and nourishing food. Through the Basket Brigade packing and the Thanksgiving food distributions, we give from our hearts so that others facing hardships might know some comfort and joy as the holidays draw near.

Your sharing is a gift that God’s Pantry Food Bank will never take for granted. Please partner with us and take action this season to provide meals and encouragement for thousands of children, teens, and adults who need a helping hand, taking a worry off their shoulders.

Thank you so much for Sharing Thanksgiving with our neighbors across Central and Eastern Kentucky, bringing hope to them through your thoughtfulness and generosity. May you and yours enjoy a warm holiday season filled with good company, delicious food, and happy celebrations!

Michael J. Halligan, CEO

2022 Basket Brigade Events: Join Us in Person or Virtually

Gather your family, friends, and co-workers to help 6,600 households enjoy an extra special Thanksgiving dinner! We have three locations for our annual Basket Brigades where participants will pack the Sharing Thanksgiving food boxes on site. Virtual participation is available if you are unable to join us on Nov. 5 in London or Morehead, or on Nov. 12 in Lexington.

Cost per person: $30 for onsite (13 years and older) or $60 for virtual participation; includes a commemorative t-shirt.

Register and get event details at godspantry.org/events.

Thanks to Our London Sharing Thanksgiving Sponsors!
(as of press time)

The Creek Church — Presenting Sponsor
Randall and Victoria Weddle — Turkeys and Food Distribution Bags Sponsor

Sponsorship opportunities remain. Contact Julia Curry (859.288.5332, jcurry@godspantry.org) or Ann Marie Francis (859.288.5305, amfrancis@godspantry.org) to learn how your organization can help our neighbors enjoy a bountiful Thanksgiving.

Save the Date!

The Spirits of Kentucky Rare Bourbon Raffle
Tickets on sale Oct. 20–Nov. 27, 2022
Drawing on Facebook Live — 2 p.m. on Nov. 28, 2022
Gaming license number ORG0002695

For more details, visit godspantry.org/bourbonraffle

Stuff Your Stocking Silent Auction
Nov. 21–Dec. 5, 2022
For more details, visit godspantry.org/stuffyourstocking
July’s catastrophic flooding exacted a devastating toll on Eastern Kentucky. God’s Pantry Food Bank grieves with so many neighbors affected by tragic losses—homes, cars, jobs, and the lives of loved ones.

Our response was immediate and strong to fill critical needs for food and water. We also assisted food pantry and meal program partners in our service area who faced significant water damage, resulting in tremendous losses of food, refrigeration, and other equipment.

In fact, the Food Bank mobilized what may be our largest disaster relief response ever undertaken. In the first seven weeks after the floods, we:

- received more than 1.8 million pounds (905 tons) of bottled water, ready-to-eat meals, disaster food boxes, baby formula, hygiene basics, and more.
- delivered more than 1.4 million pounds of food and water (739 tons) to sites in Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Knott, Laurel, Lee, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Perry, Pike, and Wolfe counties, plus staged food and water at our London Regional Distribution Center for pickup by responding food pantry and meal program partners.
- activated an Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief Fund for gifts to support our disaster response, raising more than $331,600 from 300+ donors, including $80,000 from Kentucky Farm Bureau, $50,000 each from The Metallica All Within My Hands Foundation and the PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc.; $20,000 from Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry; and $10,000 each from the Brother’s Brother Foundation, the Gene Haas Foundation, and the Schultz Family Foundation. Other donors, such as Arby’s of Central and Eastern Kentucky, have held fundraisers.

The Food Bank’s disaster preparedness response could not remain in place and effective at a moment’s notice without year-round giving from generous friends like you. You remain a lifeline for thousands in urgent need across Central and Eastern Kentucky.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has made this emergency response possible — donors; volunteers; neighboring food banks in Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee; local, regional, and national food suppliers; Feeding Kentucky; Feeding America; Save the Children; the Arby’s Foundation; Central and Eastern Kentucky media partners; local, state, and federal officials; and many more friends who have devoted their time, skills, funds, trucks and drivers, and other resources to help thousands of neighbors impacted by this natural disaster. We are truly grateful to you and for you!

Melissa Scruggs Brashear of Viper, KY, in Perry County said, “I drove to one of our elementary schools that is a distribution hub and saw an 18-wheeler from God’s Pantry unloading. Thank you! My community is devastated. Our area as we know it is gone.... The pictures on the media don’t really show it. It looks like the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Many of my friends have lost everything.... From the bottom of my heart, thank you to God’s Pantry.”
Talkin’ Turkey — and Tennis!

Mark Wides is a lifelong resident of Lexington. His involvement with God’s Pantry Food Bank goes back many, many years. “As younger adults, my sister and I spent time volunteering to sort and pack food,” the 74-year-old retiree says. “We were brought up to do that.”

In 2010, Mark had the idea to start a Thanksgiving Day fundraiser among a small group of friends. “A group of guys, between eight and 12 of us, would play tennis on Thanksgiving morning at Lexington Tennis Club. That had been going on for 20+ years. I had an epiphany. Why not invite everyone to make a donation so that other families could enjoy a Thanksgiving a little more like what we were all going home to?”

The idea went over well. Each year, Mark expanded things a little more. Players beyond his own group joined the Turkey Tennis fundraiser. Club management began donating the court fees and balls. In the past five years alone, the event has raised $30,000+ (enough for 240,000 nourishing meals) for the mission of God’s Pantry Food Bank.

“When you go to the Food Bank, you see pallets piled high, row after row. Then you learn that food lasts only a couple weeks, and you realize how much it takes to keep things going,” Mark says. “I think there’s something wrong in a country like ours when kids go to bed hungry and wake up hungry. It doesn’t matter what your politics are, you just realize we need to do better. This is my little way of helping.”

As Mark’s original group have begun hanging up their rackets, they continue to donate. Mark realizes that the Thanksgiving Day tennis tournament has potential to be spread to other Kentucky clubs and even other cities across the nation. “To think of the number of meals our little group has provided is just amazing—and we’ve not done anything on a major scale with marketing or media coverage, so there’s definitely room to grow things from here. The tennis community is very generous.”

Thank you to Mark and all of the Turkey Tennis participants for their entrepreneurial spirit to create and continue this special “fun-raiser” for God’s Pantry Food Bank. What a great way to Share Thanksgiving! 🍉