CHARLESTON AREA CHURCHES FOOD PANTRY NEWSLETTER

"for I was hungry and You gave me food; I was thirsty and You gave me drink; I was a stranger and You took me in." Matthew 25:35

Hours M-W-F 1:30-4:00

United Way

A United Way Partner Agency

OCTOBER 2026

PANTRY NEWS

The pantry has been very busy, seeing over 400 families each month since February. The number of meals provided has been over 10,000 since then also.

July saw the largest number of guest for quite a long time, with 507 families presenting for food. Thankfully, the pantry has been receiving very large donations from The Eastern Illinois Foodbank as well as from USDA.

These donations have provided extra meat, beans and eggs for distribution, as well as keeping our shelves fairly full. We do occasionally run out of some foods, but can usually replenish is a short amount of time.

The volunteers have been extremely busy keeping up with serving all these families. Whether it is working the front desk, getting food from the fridge and freezer, pulling boxes for the carts, packing boxes, restocking the shelves, helping guest with carry out, breaking down card board, cleaning, or just doing whatever needs done, the volunteers are cheerful and happy to do what needs done.

The volunteers all work very well together. At the end of **every** distribution day the volunteers get a "thanks girls and guys" from Todd, who is also a volunteer.

However, the most appreciated thank you comes from the guest as they leave.

THANKS

We are most grateful to the area churches that are so generous with the donations they give to the pantry. Their support provides so much encouragement for the work we do!

Another group of donors who are very much appreciated is the regular monthly donors. These faithful people help ensure we have the necessary income to meet our monthly expenses. Thank you so very much!

The pantry is still receiving fresh produce as gardens are winding down, it may not be as much as earlier in the season, but is still tasty and appreciated. Thank you area Master Gardeners, and everyday folks for your generous donations!

SEPTEMBER 2026 NUMBERS

Families: 466 Individuals: 1,383
Meals: 12,447
Donated food in pounds:
EIF: 8,961 USDA: 9,384
WalMart: 5,344 Ruler: 2,450

FUN FOOD FACTS

PUMPKINS

- Pumpkins are from the gourd family, and are native to Central America and Mexico.
- Every continent except Antarctica grow pumpkins.
- Pumpkins are planted from the last week of May to the middle of June, and harvested in October.
- Illinois is the largest producer of pumpkins, growing twice the number of acres than any other state.
- The largest pumpkin ever grown was in Belgium in 2016, it weighed 2,624 pounds.
- The largest in the USA was grown in New Hampshire 2016 weighing in at 2,528 pounds

HAPPY FALL Y'ALL!!!