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Helping Hands of Cass County

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**Our Mission: To serve the economically challenged who live in Cass County and help them bridge the gap.**

## People Receiving Food



Averaged 164 families/459 people per month receiving food boxes

- 5,507 Food Pantry Services
- 1,790 Feeding America truck
- 258 TEFAP
- 607 Senior Commodities
- 70 Cass Jail Inmates
- 300 Seasonal Workers
- 100 Sam Adams Backpack

**8.632 TOTAL FOOD SERVICES**

## Utility Assistance

40 Families Helped



## 283 People Received Clothing

## Medicine

5 People

## 21 People Received Household Items

## Transport Vouchers/Bikes

55 People Helped



## All Pantry Visitors Received Hygiene Products

## 111 People Attended Financial Literacy Sessions

## 2,645 CHILDREN RECEIVED SERVICES OR SUPPORT

- Hygiene products for 480 students
- Clothing & other essential items for 1,870 students
- Christmas for children of jail inmates 20 kids
- Volinia Outcome life skills class 40 students
- Head Start clothing for 71 children
- Decatur Family Shelter – essentials 42 people
- Support for Robo Rangers – 22 students
- Family resource fair – 100 people



### 2025 Staff/ Volunteers

Tina Grice, Store Manager, Miki McKnight, Pantry Manager, plus 4 other part-time staff, and 30 regular volunteers processed donations and provided services to the community.

*“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”*  
 Matthew 25:40

### 2025 Board of Directors

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Joan Murphy, Pres.    | Sue Ann Stewart |
| Diana Nita, VP        | Carl Ross       |
| Leigh Goyings, Treas. | Melissa Curtis  |
| Cheryl Groner, Sec.   | Robin Ememaker  |
| Diane Seifert         | Marty Eby       |
| Roger Leach           | Mary Howie      |
| Vicki Vaughn          | Mark Howie      |

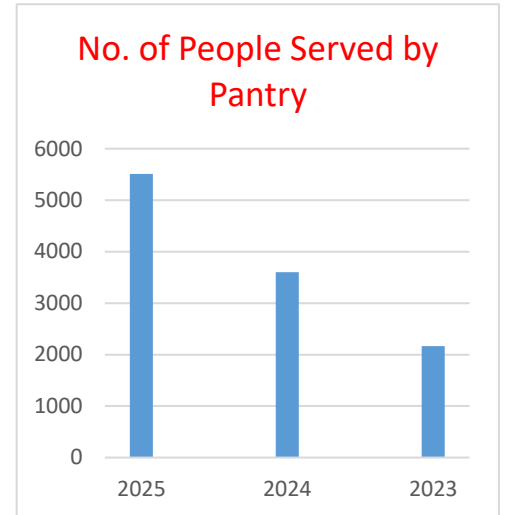
## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

\* Pantry staff, board members, and volunteers worked diligently to stock the pantry with a variety of healthy food, as the number of neighbors arriving for food assistance more than doubled in the last two years. The pantry's help desk provided information, referrals, and support for available programs and resources in the area.

\* A Pokagon Fund grant allowed Helping Hands to purchase food and protective clothing for 300+ seasonal workers arriving in the spring.

\* Funds from the Norma Frank Trust--dedicated to helping families and children--were used to meet basic needs by purchasing hygiene products, clothing, and other essential items for children in 22 schools in Cass County.

\* Helping Hands collaborated with bank representatives, the County Clerk, and other legal/financial experts to present four financial literacy sessions, covering topics like Budgeting and Credit, Homeowner/Buyer Information, Avoiding Senior Scams, and Who'll Get My Stuff?



## HELPING HANDS APPRECIATES THE SUPPORT OF churches, individuals, businesses, and other organizations that fund our services or donate food and other items.

### Churches

Calvin Community Chapel  
Christ Temple Church  
Cassopolis United Methodist Church  
Church of God (Cassopolis)  
Dowagiac First UMC  
Faith Bible Church of Jones  
Granger Community Church  
Our Father's Keeper Family Min.  
Penn Friends Community Church  
Pleasant View Church of Christ  
Relevant Church  
St. Ann Catholic Church  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
United Presbyterian Church  
Vandalia Church of God  
Wakelee Bible Church

### Food Partners

Aunt Millie's Baker  
Cassopolis Community Garden  
Cultivate!  
Dussel's Farm Market  
Feeding America  
Feed the Hungry (Lesea)  
Harding's Friendly Markets  
Milford Food Bank  
Nelson's Herbs and Farm Market  
SMCAA

Thank you St. Ann Catholic Church for providing utility funding for heat and to Cass County 100 Women Who Care who supported other utility needs.

### Funds

Benevity Causes  
The Blackburn Giving Fund  
Fidelity Charitable  
Anonymous Fund of the  
Comm. Foundation of St. Joseph Co.  
Gates Fund of the Community  
Foundation of St. Joseph Co.  
Philanthropic Trust for Denise &  
Adam Gutstein  
Michigan Gateway Community  
Foundation  
Youth Advisory Council  
The Edward Lowe Foundation  
The McLoughlin Family Foundation  
The Norma Frank Trust Fund for  
Children & Families  
The Pokagon Fund  
The Tuesley Family Foundation  
United Way of Southwest Michigan

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## Community Partners

ACTION Ministries  
American Legion Post 335  
Better World Books  
Brookside Learning Center  
Cass County Administrator  
Cass County Clerk  
Cass County Council on Aging  
Cass County Courts  
Cass County Medical Care Facility  
Cass County Parks & Recreation  
Cass County Road Commission  
Cass County Public Transit  
Cass County Sheriff  
Cassopolis/Vandalia Chamber of Commerce  
Cassopolis Village Hall  
Church World Service  
L.A.D.D.  
Diamond Lake Yacht Club  
Girl Scouts of Northern Ind.-Mich.  
Great Start/Head Start  
Michiana Family Center  
Michigan State Police, Niles  
Penn Township Fire Dept.  
Penn Township Pickleball Club  
Ross Beatty High School Senate  
Ross Beatty Middle School  
Sam Adams Elementary  
Southwestern Michigan College  
Special Olympics  
Vandalia Township  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Village of Cassopolis  
Wayfinders

## Businesses

1<sup>st</sup> Source Bank  
Alchemy Wellness  
Aunt Millie's Bakery  
The Baker's Rhapsody  
Beacon, Dowagiac  
Beef O' Brady's  
Bergman Veterinary Med. Center  
Berry Green Farms, LLC  
Boat Butler  
Bolt Laserworks  
Broadway Café  
Bullseye Marketplace  
Butler Tree Farm  
Cassopolis Brewing Company  
Cassopolis Family Clinic  
CHT U.S.A.  
Circle Federal Credit Union  
Costco, Kalamazoo  
Cracker Barrel  
D.E. Duck Heating & Cooling  
Diamond Lake Golf Course  
Divine Dough  
Drive 'N Shine, Dow.  
Dussel's Farm Market  
Everwise Federal Credit Union  
Fisher Printing  
Flat Rock Grill  
Gates Toyota  
Gary's Custom Meats  
Good Lyfe Farms  
G.W. Jones Bank  
Harding's Friendly Markets  
Healthy Cocoon  
The Holden Green Tavern  
Huntington Bank  
Hydro Aluminum

## Businesses

Imperial Furniture  
Invenergy Solar Development  
John & Curt's Brake & Alignment  
Kelsey Lake Market  
Krupp's Power Sports  
LaBre Law Office  
Lemoreaux Construction  
Leo's Bait Shop  
Lippert Components  
The Lodges of Stone Lake  
Martin's Super Market  
McKenzie Highlands, LLC  
Mennel Milling Company  
Midwest Energy & Communications  
Miss Michele & Co. Dance Squad  
Mosier Well Drilling  
Mossy Oak  
Mr. Wahoo's Eatery  
Nelson's Herbs & Farm Market  
North Star Landscaping  
P & S File Land Company  
Paddletek LLC  
PetSmart  
Porky's Party Place  
Ritter Insurance Agency  
The Rock at Big Fish Lake  
Rutherford Farms LLC  
Savage Bean  
The Secret Place Spa  
Simonton Lake Drive-In  
State Farm Ins., Lorie Bowers  
Stephenson Land Surveying  
St. Julian Winery  
Sunset Coast  
Swift Cycle  
The Taj Bar & Grill  
TCM Bank  
Technicos Appliance Repair  
Trader Joe's, Kalamazoo  
The Twirl  
United Healthcare  
Village Floral  
Wabigon Gardeners  
C. Wimberley Ford  
Wagner Family Funerals  
Warner Vineyards  
Women's Council of Realtors SB Network  
Stephen K. Woods P.C.



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and other organizations that fund our services or donate food and other items.**

**Individuals**

Sheree Adams  
Doug & Mary Allison  
Shirley Andrews  
Brooke Artley  
Tom Atkinson & Sue Dobrich  
*Via Fidelity Charitable*  
Jessica Ayers  
Carol & Dale Bealor  
Jim & Vicki Bebee  
Lori & Richard Behnke  
Patricia Bellaire  
Sharon Block  
David & Mary Bolen  
Roger & Susan Boyer  
Kevin & Denise Bradley  
Mary Brown  
Deborah Buckman  
Ashley Butler  
Joseph Caime  
Shanna Clark  
Wendy Coleman  
Nicole Cripe  
Karen Current  
Dawn Curtis  
Teresa & Adam Dahlgren  
Sheryl DeLuca  
Diana Nita & Don DeLong  
Doug & Jennifer Diltz  
John Dombroski  
Mary & Jeff Downing  
Francios Duchesneau  
Joseph Duffy  
Nancy Ehret  
Lori Eller  
Shirley Ellis  
Robin & Glen Emenaker  
Sara Essig  
Duane Felton  
Madelyn Anderson Ferris  
Bob & Vicki File  
Chris Fisher  
Kathy Flores  
Brian Flowers  
Lisa & Sprague Fitzsimons  
Jayne Fox  
Charles & Barbara Gallagher  
Bernard & Blair Garceau  
Jan & Larry Gates  
Ed Gogol & Brenda McArthur-Gogol  
Leigh Goyings & Dale Blunier  
Tania Grabowski

**Individuals**

Cynthia Gray  
Michelle Green  
Melody & James Grubbs  
Daniel & Jeannine Iott  
Clifton & Heather Hawkins  
Charlene Hiemstra  
Dennis & Della Holdread  
Dustin Holland  
Sandra Jean Hostetler  
Greg Howell – *through  
National Financial Solutions*  
Darryl & G L Johnson  
Vickie & Frank Kalina  
Kevin & Tamilyn Keigley  
Jeff Kish  
Jeremy Koch  
Fred & Christine Kucklick  
Cathy Kuminecz  
Jason Lippert  
Marilyn Lamar  
Stacy Lankford  
Roger & Tonya Leach  
Nicholas Lebbin  
John & Jannine Lee  
Nora & James Lee  
Kim MacGregor  
Mark & Mary Howie  
David & Monica Majewski  
Don Martin  
Casey May  
Charrise McCrorey  
Darren McKnight Jr.  
Dawn Melville  
Dave Michalak  
Deborah & David Miller  
Herb & Joyce Miller  
Lloyd Montgomery  
Dora Moore  
Valerie Morgado

**Individuals**

Jane & Carl Moraw  
Steve & Joan Murphy  
Andrew Murray  
Donald Ortegell  
Robert & Laura Overholser  
Mary Ownby  
Frank Palumbo  
Janet Parrish  
Brianna & Dan Pavlak  
Mary Jill & Dave Polomcak  
Valeria Pompa  
George & Bonnie Purlee  
William Rakoczy  
Virginia Rapp  
Doris Reynolds  
Jim Rockwell  
Kara Russell  
Art & Kathy Sartori  
Lynn & Rick Schantz  
James & Jodi Scheiber  
Mary Schoenborn  
Diane Seifert & Marty Eby  
Marty Sells  
Ilene & Richard Sheffer  
Paul & Karen Smiecinski  
John & Eileen Smith  
Nick & Sarah Stanager  
Ella Stern  
Dave & Tanda Stiffler  
David & Deborah Tuttle  
Mary Vanderbosch  
Jill Vihtelic  
Robert Waddle  
Laura & Col. Jay Walker USMC (Ret.)  
Pastor Jon Wallace  
Jack & Sandy Weiler  
Lauren Woodhouse  
Donna Warren  
Patrick & Susan Williams  
Bill & Amy Zimmer