

## MISSION OF THE MONTH-LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

Food Resources has been named the February Mission of the Month by the Serve Team. February, the Super Bowl and also Souper Bowl of Caring month. Several activities are planned to "tackle hunger" and food insecurity in the Commerce area. There are three agencies in Commerce that offer free food: **Bread of Life Church of the Nazarene**, the **Commerce Food Pantry**, and the **Lion Food Pantry**.

**Bread of Life**, located at 301 Hwy 224, distributes food baskets on the first Friday after the first Monday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and the third Wednesday from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Senior Commodity boxes, additional food for those over 60, may be picked up at the same time. Home deliveries are also possible; however, no new deliveries can be added due to a lack of volunteer drivers. Anyone who would like to volunteer may call Leslee Lay at 903 886-1515. It takes about one hour, one day a month. Blessing Boxes are also kept on hand for people experiencing unusual situations. To qualify, one must produce a photo ID and proof of residence. Some 3,185 boxes were distributed in 2023. The church acknowledges the support of the North Texas Food Bank, Wal-Mart, Brookshires, and the Hunt Memorial Hospital District. Because of a HMMD grant, Bread of Life purchases food and personal hygiene items.

The **Commerce Food Pantry**, located at The First Presbyterian Church on Monroe Street, is a second resource for food. According to Angela Roberts, volunteer manager, 573 households were served and 210 per month. Both statistics were up over 2022 levels by over 20 percent. People may come once a calendar month on Thursday from 2:00 to 4:00. Individuals stay in their car and fill out a form for their choice of frozen protein, beverages, and personal hygiene products. Their choices are added to a box of staples and bread delivered to the car. To qualify one must show proof of residence and complete a Household Application. The Commerce Food Pantry is grateful for the support of the North Texas Food Bank, Brookshires, area churches and HMMD.

A third source of food is the **Lion Food Pantry**, located on the first floor of the Halladay Student Services building. Any registered TAMU-C student may visit the Pantry on Wednesday. They must present their university-issued ID. Since statistics indicate 1 out of 3 college students are food insecure, the Pantry serves a vital function and is wholly dependent on contributions of food and/or money. To that end, they will hold a drive-by drop off of cans of soup and chili on Saturday, February 10th from 11:00 to 1:30 at in front of Mugs on the Square.

There is a fourth source of food, the **Blessings Table**. Members can place food --preferably cans with easy-open tops. With the cold weather in mind, gloves, caps, blankets and even old sleeping bags would be appreciated.

In addition to the collection of soup and chili, we will have a Souper Bowl of Caring soup lunch on February 11th after services.

There are several ways you can support this mission.

1. Drop dollar bills or a check with Food Resources on the memo line in the collection plate during February. If you give online, just click the Mission of the Month tab.
2. Place items on the **Blessings Table**.
3. Drop off cans of soup and chili at Mugs on the Square on Saturday, Feb. 10th and/or partner with university volunteers to accept the cans.
4. Bring a crock pot of soup to the Souper Bowl of Caring lunch on February 11th. You can also bring a dessert or a side dish.

**Let's team up to "Tackle Hunger" and food insecurity and sack it!**



## Notes From Pastor Cheryl



“Stay warm” is a familiar greeting on these cold winter days. We are looking into how we can help people in our community stay warm, especially those without housing or adequate heat. We are in touch with other churches and agencies in town that have plans in place to provide warm shelters as needed.

Lent is coming up starting on Valentine’s Day or as we are calling it this year: Valent-Ash Wednesday. Our anchor image for Lent this year is a hot air balloon because it is a great symbol of ascending to new heights and experiences, or being “lifted up” in spirit. It takes a warmth that is a higher temperature than the air around it to be lifted. “That will preach” for practices of bringing warmth to the world. And the ride is slow and peaceful, like small or “micro-practices” of doing good can be. Also sometimes a “bird’s-eye view” is important to restore the wonder of the whole, to get a wider perspective and marvel at our place in this world.

What are you “giving up” for Lent? What if we “get up to something” instead of giving something up? We forget that small things we can do are the only way some big things ever happen. Let’s affirm and encourage small ways of being in the world that make a difference, even if we can’t solve all the big stuff in the blink of an eye.



If we ask “what are you up to?” it can be a playful question as if we’re orchestrating a surprise or creating something wonderful without making it a big deal, like a project that only you know about. Lent is a little like that. We go inward to assess “what’s up” so that the outward-facing life we lead is fueled and supported by a deep inner spiritual well. Sometimes what we are up to out in the world has positive or negative effects on our inner world. Being up to assessing those dynamics is a key component to the Lenten journey.

What if we think about small things we can do to improve the quality of life? What would you prune in your life to spend more quantity and quality of time with the most important people and activities in your life?

A micro-practice could be a baby step in a direction you’ve needed to go for a while. What have you been dreaming of doing that always gets put on the back burner? Or maybe you are hard on yourself for things that never change because it feels too overwhelming?

Let’s rise up and do what we have the power to do, no matter how large or small. Up, up and away!

### Potluck Soup Luncheon

Sunday, February 11

11:am-2:00pm

Love offering donations will go to our local food pantries: Commerce Food Pantry and Bread of Life Food Pantry.



[tacklehunger.org](http://tacklehunger.org)

### YOUTH NEWS

The youth had a blast at Shenanigans in Rockwall. One group escaped and one group didn't make it out in time. The escape rooms were a lot of fun, and we hope to go again in the future.



This month, we will be helping with the Souper Bowl of Caring. We will also have a pancake dinner fundraiser starting at 5pm on Ash Wednesday. If anyone would like to donate syrup or pancake mix, please drop it off at the church office marked “Youth”.

The youth will be selling flower seeds and bulbs this spring so keep an eye out for more information coming soon. Thank you for your continuing support of our youth.



February 14, 2024

### Valent-Ash Wednesday Activities

- ◆ Youth-sponsored Pancake Supper Fundraiser at 5pm
- ◆ Ash Wednesday worship at 6pm



**Prayer List 1-29-24**

**Recent Concerns:**

- ◆ All who are affected by the war in Israel
- ◆ Dave Giles
- ◆ Richard Young
- ◆ Nell Brown
- ◆ Shealee Morgan
- ◆ Betty Martin
- ◆ Carlos Rickman
- ◆ Jack McDaniel
- ◆ Mike Smith
- ◆ Bob Clark
- ◆ Kerry Clark
- ◆ Jack Kelly, Jill Grove's father
- ◆ Vance Underhill
- ◆ Glenda Helton
- ◆ Rob Lee
- ◆ Rita Thompson
- ◆ Suzanne Kizer Carter

**Continued Prayers (long term):**

- ◆ Priscilla McFarland
- ◆ Michael Vickers, Ginny Haight's father
- ◆ Jack Gray
- ◆ Richard Stapleton, Al Stapleton's brother
- ◆ Tom Bailey
- ◆ Pete and Ann Chamberlain
- ◆ Rev. Dennis Wilkinson
- ◆ Bill Heitholt
- ◆ Janet & Jim Payne, Becky Coker's sister
- ◆ Georgia Gholston
- ◆ Manuel Harrison
- ◆ Melanie Cortea
- ◆ Judy Cortea
- ◆ Harold & Becky Coker
- ◆ Mabel and Carl Little
- ◆ Robert Seay
- ◆ Dudley Shaw (Robyn Elwell's brother-in-law)

**Austin:**

- ◆ Ruby Vander Velde

**Ft. Worth:**

- ◆ Mary Louise McMahan

**Legacy Oaks (Midlothian):**

- ◆ Jerry Hutton

**Those serving in our military:**

- ◆ Sgt. Kyle Ray Capps
- ◆ Celeste Young, Chandler Teague, and Brayden Young, great-grandchildren of Lee Riddle
- ◆ 1st Lieutenant Cameron Lehr
- ◆ Lt. Dan Barton
- ◆ Daniel Chamberlain
- ◆ Sgt. Stephen Smith & Denise Smith

**UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES**

- February 1-Serve team** meets at 10:30am
- February 1-First Thursday Luncheon** at noon
- February 4-Laity Training Sunday** from 3-5pm at First UMC Sulphur Springs
- February 6-Women's Study Group** meets at 5:15pm
- February 11-Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon** after worship
- February 12-Prayer Shawl** meets at 9:30am
- February 13-Trustees** meet at 6:30pm
- February 14-Valent-Ash Wednesday!** (see article)
- February 19-Finance** meets at 6pm
- February 20-Women's Study Group** meets at 5:15pm
- February 22-Prayer Shawl crafting** meets at 9:30am
- February 29-Prayer Shawl crafting** meets at 9:30am

**ONGOING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

- Tuesdays-Men's Breakfast Group** meets at Texas Café Diner at 8am
- Wednesdays-Little Ark Chapel** at 11am
- Wednesdays-Country Home Estates worship** at 2pm
- Wednesdays-Choir Rehearsals** at 7pm.
- Thursdays-M&M After School Choir** from 3:45-5:30pm

**BI-WEEKLY EVENTS**

- Thursdays-Youth (1st, 29th)** meets from 6-7pm

***FUMC-Commerce welcomes the Harrell family-Marcus & Ashley, and children Kayden, Jalen and Adelyn.***



If you are interested in giving flowers for the altar, please visit with Luann Huffman before worship on Sunday or contact her at 903-366-2899 or [lhuffman01@cumbytel.com](mailto:lhuffman01@cumbytel.com).

# SO MANY WAYS TO LEARN AT LITTLE ARK!

L to R: One of the many faces of Cainey! Toddler 1; Preschool Tea Party; Pre-K birthday!



Prayer Shawl is making Christmas ornaments for Christmas 2024. Please join us on Feb. 12, and crafting days on the 22nd and 29th. All meetings start at 9:30am. Everyone is welcome!

In case of emergency pastoral care need,  
please call or text Pastor Cheryl at 940-613-5375.

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