

Missions Update -- Wynnton Neighborhood Network

Wynnton Neighborhood Network is an entirely volunteer run organization, with the “Network” being a coalition of eight local churches and synagogues. Their mission is to compassionately provide food and utility assistance to needy families in our area through good stewardship, dedication, urgency and inclusiveness. The WNN volunteers keep inventory, order food and supplies, unload food delivery trucks, greet clients, assist them with paperwork, bag groceries, log and keep track of clients served and food dispensed, answer phones, and work with clients to give utility assistance.

In 2017, WNN served 4,322 families, consisting of 11,235 individuals, of which 4881 were children. Wynnton Neighborhood Network is the largest purchaser of food from “Feeding the Valley” which allows WNN to be one of the most active food banks in Muscogee County! In living into the mission of service and provision while being good stewards of their funding. For example, last month, WNN was able to purchase 80 pounds of Pepperidge Farm bread for only \$15.00, and most of the non-perishable food and frozen food items are purchased at an average price of \$0.19 per pound! Furthermore, Feeding the Valley oftentimes receives fresh produce from local suppliers to pass on to the local food banks, allowing them to give WNN a supply of items such as fresh peaches, potatoes, onions, and tomatoes for free, every other day, this past Summer. It is not unusual for WNN to receive up to 600 pounds at a time of this fresh produce! What a blessing!

The numbers of families served by St. Paul and the seven other congregations that are part of the “Network” might surprise you! For example, this past Summer, July was a record month for the food pantry. 1842 bags of food were given to 457 families, consisting of 1179 individuals, of which 541 children were a part of. That is **one hundred** more families than were served last July, and nearly sixty more families than the previous record setting month of July 2015. On the other hand, the utilities volunteers were not as busy as might be expected in the mid-Summer, Georgia Power, billing season. Through July, 38 families were assisted to help keep their power on, at a cost of \$2488.44. The Food Pantry is open Monday – Friday 10:00 -12:30 and is housed at St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

How does St. Paul help? St. Paul financially supports this mission through our local missions’ budget. We also have a core group of dedicated volunteers that are involved on a, if not daily, weekly basis in the running of the program. For two months out of each year, we host special “food drives” at St. Paul to help stock the Wynnton Neighborhood Network pantry with needed items. We also help WNN with their special Thanksgiving Food Basket ministry, and we serve as one of the host churches for the annual community unity worship service.

Want to know more? Email Tammy Reynolds at tjreynolds3@gmail.com, or call the church office.