Know Someone Who Needs Help? Connecting People to Good Food

The Open Door Food Pantry is open Monday through Friday with a variety of daytime and evening hours to accommodate those who work during the day. The pantry provides clients with a choice of free canned goods, fresh produce, meats, bread, dairy products, and eggs. Clients may come for food once every seven days. Our full-service food pantry is open to residents of Gloucester, Rockport, Manchester, Essex, and Ipswich. The Open Door also sponsors a food distribution site available every Friday at the First Congregational Church of Essex from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The Open Door Community Meals are served Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 5 to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m. Guests who need a prepared meal and companionship are welcome. Each meal includes a salad bar with fresh produce and a protein offering to support those who are managing their weight, high blood pressure, diabetes or other health-related concerns. Door-to-door, handicapped-accessible ride service is offered for Gloucester guests who are unable to drive to our site. Harvest Meals are served at St. John’s on Tuesday evening and Trinity Congregational on Friday evening. The van ride is available seven nights a week by calling 978-283-6776 ext. 204 before 3 p.m. each day.

SNAP Outreach Coordinator (formerly Food Stamps) assists with applications for federal SNAP benefits and provides referrals for other services. Appointments are available on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Call 978-283-6776 ext. 201.

A Slim Winter: Feeding a Family

We recently found this blog describing a mother’s first visit to The Open Door Food Pantry...

“I got our first pickup at the food pantry and was just so overwhelmed with the help. Thirty-three pounds of food for my family! We got a chicken, some fresh pollack fillets, cans of tomatoes, dry beans, bags of rice, organic lentils, some fresh sourdough bread for the kids, sweet potatoes, apples, carrots, pears, beets, lettuce from local farms, milk and eggs. Amazing.”

She goes on to say:

“Please, if you need help feeding your family, head to your local food pantry. If you don’t have a hard time feeding your family then please consider donating to one. We all need help sometimes, and even those of us who struggle need healthy food.”

Reprinted by permission: aslimwinter.wordpress.com
Dear Friend,

I grew up on a communal farm named Goshen in the southeast corner of Lancaster County. On that farm, we planted acres of peas, tomatoes, and lima beans. Fields of wheat and corn grew straight and full. In the fall, the trees in our orchard would hang heavy with apples and ripe plums. The grapes, nearly bursting on the arbor, would send their sweet aroma through the autumn air. Each day, busier than the last, bustled with the activity of ingathering.

Men, women and children worked together to bring those crops in and put them away for the winter. When the long weeks of harvest were over, we would come together around the Thanksgiving table and break bread. We joined hands to give thanks. We gave thanks for the land. We gave thanks for our health, and we gave thanks for the community we found with each other.

Although I left the farm years ago, I feel that same sense of ingathering at The Open Door this time of year. Instead of crops, we harvest cans and boxes from food collection sites around Cape Ann. We gather up the goodwill and generosity of a caring community and bring it into our storehouse to help meet the needs of those who are struggling to put food on the table. Together we witness the power of community.

**The need is great. Together we are greater.**

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, advocate on behalf of those in need, and engage others in the work of building food security.

Last year The Open Door programs served more than 5,000 people. We have seen an astounding 28% increase in the number of requests for food assistance over the past two years and that number is still climbing.

We currently serve 14% of Gloucester’s population, which with a population count of 28,700, is more than 4,000 people. In Gloucester, 1 in 7 people rely on the services of The Open Door.

**The need is great. Together we are greater.**

This year as we give thanks for all the blessings in our lives, I invite you to make a financial donation to support our mission and to bear witness to the lives of those around us who need a little help.

You can double your impact this year. Every dollar that you contribute to The Open Door on or before December 31, will be matched by an anonymous donor up to $20,000. Will you please help us meet the goal?

With warmest regards,

Julie LaFontaine, Executive Director
The Open Door received a $25,000 State Giving Program grant through the Walmart Foundation to expand the Mobile Market program through the North Shore Hunger Network. The Walmart Foundation supports organizations with programs that align with their mission to create opportunities so people can live better.

This year, when we needed to retire our old truck, TDBank stepped up to help us with a down payment of $10,000 for a brand new 2011 Isuzu refrigerated box truck.

The truck operates seven days a week, on a route that zig-zags through cities and towns from Gloucester to Boston, and carries more than 600,000 pounds of food a year to serve low-income people living on Cape Ann and the North Shore.

**Connecting People to Good Food**

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The grant will support The Open Door’s eight Mobile Market sites and add two Mobile Market locations in Beverly and Peabody. The Open Door has partnered with Beverly Bootstraps Community Services and Haven from Hunger of Peabody to pilot the new Mobile Market sites.

The Mobile Market connects low-income people to good food right where they live and learn. This innovative food distribution model helps reduce barriers to food access including transportation, cost of food, nutrition education and social stigma.

The Mobile Market looks like any other out-of-doors farmers’ market with glowing fresh fruits and vegetables except the tents are pitched in public housing neighborhoods, often surrounded by chain link fences, and in schools where there are high numbers of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

The Open Door Mobile Market has grown from one site in 2005 to four public housing neighborhoods, two school-based sites and two senior center locations.
I would like to support families in our community with a **ONE-TIME** contribution:

☐ $35   ☐ $50   ☐ $75   ☐ $100   ☐ $150   ☐ OTHER: $ ____________

I would like to support families in our community with a **MONTHLY** contribution of $ ____________

(12 Months) Starting: ____________ Ending: ____________

☐ Please bill my credit card.  
Card # ____________________________________________  Exp. Date

Options for giving:

☐ Contribution. My address is listed below.

☐ In honor of person(s) listed below. Please notify them of my gift.

☐ In memory of: ____________________________________________
   Please notify person(s) listed below.

Name ______________________________________________________

Address ___________________________________________________

City __________________________  State ___________________________  Zip ____________

Your contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Federal Tax I.D. #22-2513482

Make your donation online at [www.foodpantry.org](http://www.foodpantry.org) or send check to The Open Door, 28 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA 01930

THANK YOU! If you have already sent a financial contribution to help meet the holiday need, please enjoy the newsletter, and keep us in mind for another time.