

Grace for Dinner 2024 Highlights and 2025 Goals January 2025 Edition

Dear Grace Presbyterian Church Family and Friends,

As we move into the new year, we are filled with gratitude for all that we've accomplished together in 2024. Through your generosity and the dedication of our volunteers, Grace for Dinner monthly free meals and food pantry programs have continued to grow and serve the needs of our community. Here's a quick look at some of the highlights from the past year and what we have in store for 2025.

2024 Highlights: Making a Difference Together

Meals Served

- **2,572 meals** were served in 2024, helping to feed hundreds of individuals and families in our community.
- From **June 2020 to January 2025**, we've served a total of **9,482 meals**, a testament to the ongoing need for support.

Increased Meal Service

- In 2024, we saw a **15% increase** in meals served compared to the previous year, with an average of **214 meals per month**. This growth is a direct result of our dedicated volunteers, community partnerships working to alleviate food insecurity in our area.

New Restaurant Partners

- We are excited to have partnered with **four new restaurants** this year: **Panera, Pine Tavern, Beastro Cuisine**, and **Kumo 27**. These partnerships have allowed us to provide a wider variety of delicious and nutritious meals to our guests.

Program Sustaining Grants

- Thanks to your support, we received **two program-sustaining grants** in 2024, which will help us continue our work in the coming years.

Shifting to Client Choice Pantry

- In 2024, we shifted to a **client choice model** for our food pantry, allowing visitors to select the items they need most. This change empowers those we serve and helps us better meet their needs. We've been working closely with **Replenish** to pick up food supplies each month to ensure a well-stocked pantry.

Special Holiday Food Distributions

- During Easter/Passover and Thanksgiving, we provided **hams, chickens, and turkeys** to families for their holiday meals. It was a joy to share in these special moments with our community.

Educational Programs: Healthy Cooking Class

- We launched our **first Healthy Cooking on a Budget Class** in October, equipping participants with valuable skills to prepare nutritious meals at home without breaking the bank.

Winter Essentials for Guests

- In December, we collected and distributed **socks, hats, and gloves** to help our guests stay warm during the colder months. Your donations made a big difference in keeping everyone comfortable.

Improved Technology for a Better Experience

- We've introduced the **Plentiful reservation system** to streamline meal and pantry distributions, reduce wait times, and send text reminders to guests. This system also helps us gather important demographic data for reporting.

Strengthening Our Volunteer Network

- We are so grateful to the many **new volunteers** who joined us this year, including those from the congregation and local community. Your time and energy are essential to making these programs a success!

Policies & Procedures Update

- We've worked behind the scenes to strengthen our programs, developing new **policies and procedures**, an updated **funds management process**, and more. These improvements will help us serve our community with greater efficiency.

Looking Ahead to 2025

As we look forward to the year ahead, we're excited to continue expanding our reach and impact. Plans are already in motion to:

- Increase our food pantry supplies
- Offer more community meals and educational classes
- Expand our volunteer base

We invite you to get involved in any way you can—whether by donating, volunteering, or simply spreading the word about our services. Together, we can continue to meet the needs of our neighbors and make a positive difference in our community.

Get Involved!

- **Volunteer:** Join our dedicated team of volunteers! Contact us at [volunteer contact information] to learn how you can help.
- **Donate:** Donations of food, supplies, or funds are always welcome. Visit [donation link] to give today.
- **Spread the Word:** Know someone who could benefit from our pantry or meal services? Share our information with them!

Thank you again for your continued support in making 2024 a successful year for our meal and food pantry programs. We look forward to all the great things we will accomplish together in 2025!

Blessings,
Grace for Dinner and the Outreach Team

For more information or to get involved, visit [church website] or contact us at [contact information].

This newsletter format is designed to keep your congregation informed and engaged while celebrating the successes of the past year and encouraging continued participation in the church's programs. Let me know if you'd like any further adjustments!