

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

145 S. Prairie Street
Whitewater WI 53190
262.473.2131

March 15, 2020

To the Beloved FUMC Community:

First United Methodist Church is working in partnership with the Whitewater Unified School District (WUSD) and the Community Space, responding to the impact COVID-19 will have on families in the community.

The WI Department of Health Services has ordered all Wisconsin schools to close to combat the spread of the coronavirus. Whitewater schools will close on Wednesday, March 18 (if not sooner), with an anticipated reopening on Monday, April 6. Because of this, many children in the community might go without meals.

We are also aware of many UW-Whitewater students remaining in the community. Many of these students live off-campus and rely on the Tuesday Free Lunch as their one hot meal of the week.

How will the Church respond? We are unable to gather in large groups for any fellowship, but we are able to prepare meals for those who are hungry.

Prepared individual meals will be available for take-out Monday through Friday, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., starting on Wednesday, March 18 for community members and UW-Whitewater students. Meals will be picked up at the Prairie Street entrance of FUMC.

Starting on Monday, March 23, prepackaged, shelf-stable food items will also be available at FUMC for pickup, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Here's how you can help:

If you are making a grocery run, please consider picking up a few items.

- Individual oatmeal packets
- Small jars of peanut butter
- Small jars of jelly
- Cans of soup
- Cans of fruit
- Cans of vegetables
- Canned chicken
- Mac and Cheese
- Flavored rice/pasta packets
- Individual snack items (e.g. crackers, granola bars, fruit snacks, etc.)

Please drop off your donation in the church office.

We are, of course, encouraging the practice of 'social distancing,' so if you're unable to make it to the grocery store, please consider sending a financial gift. Checks may be made payable to FUMC and sent directly to the church. Please indicate *Whitewater Responds* on the memo line. If making a cash donation, clearly designate for *Whitewater Responds*. Funds provided will feed families during this crisis and beyond.

Other ways to help

Interested in helping in the kitchen? Because it is imperative that we limit the number of people in the church and in the kitchen, Terrie Parenteau will create a cooking schedule. (*However, many of the meals are already prepared, as Terrie planned for a semester's worth of food for University Free Lunch.*) Please reach out to Terrie personally if you can offer any assistance.

Interested in packing food bags? Again, we must limit the number of volunteers working with this program. John Frye will be coordinating a volunteer schedule, hopefully allowing some of our children and youth (supervised) the opportunity to serve in this way.

Please be patient and understanding as we work out the kinks. We've never worked through a global pandemic before, but we know people are going to be hungry. It's our responsibility to share and care.

The Community Space is also in need of food to fill their shelves. Items can be dropped off in the front vestibule at any time, 24/7. Refrigeration is available. TCS is located at 834 E. Milwaukee Street.

- Milk
- Cooking oil
- Potatoes
- Ketchup
- Carrots
- Pinto beans
- Juice
- Cereal
- Mac and Cheese
- Apples
- Spaghetti and spaghetti sauce

Donations for the Whitewater Food Pantry are also needed and can be dropped at FUMC or at the pantry directly, 146 W. North Street (Armory).

If you do not live in Whitewater, we encourage you to contact your area school district and/or your community's food pantry to find out their needs. Please consider donating in any way you can.