

Emmanuel feeds the hungry in many ways. I think I was supposed to just tell you about the boxes at the back of the church, but when I wondered why I agreed to do this, I remembered some stories....and I have to tell a couple of stories. Then I will tell you about the boxes.

Emmanuel has roots in the local Meals on Wheels program that go way back. One summer, not so long ago, my oldest son, Charlie, and I delivered meals a couple of times as substitutes for the regular volunteers. It is an experience I recommend if you have never done it.

Our youth have quite a history of being involved in feeding the hungry.... PAX participated in a Stop Hunger Now event at Convention, then wanted to host one. So, we hosted a Stop Hunger Now event and invited the rest of the Augusta Convocation to join us. PAX hosted several fundraising events to continue helping with hunger in our community.

That same year, they took a check for \$1,000 and went shopping to purchase food for a local food bank. Have you ever been shopping to buy a thousand dollars worth of groceries? The most chilling moment was when the last item was rung up, the total was EXACTLY \$1,000. Not a penny more, not a penny less!

Over the next couple of years, the entire parish joined together by helping at various times in Dave Rapp's Garden in Weyers Cave. Each week, we would bring food from the garden to the church, let parishioners take food and donate money for the produce. Leftover food went to the food bank the next day. We donated almost 700 pounds of produce to the food bank, and collected over a thousand dollars from the donations, which also went to the food bank.

In more recent years, PAX has gone in person to the Verona food pantry at Thanksgiving to help.

Now, for those boxes....

Perhaps you have noticed the boxes at the back of the sanctuary where we collect food? I don't know how long we have been doing this, but Sharon and George Sproul make sure the donations arrive on a rotating schedule at the pantries of SACRA, Central United Methodist Church, and Allen Chapel. You can donate canned food,

personal hygiene items and diapers. We need your help to keep filling these boxes to help in our community.

Perhaps you have noticed the curbside pantry at the bottom of the steps by the main entrance? Once again, our youth, this time, Spencer White, saw a need and took action. He built the curbside pantry as his Eagle project for Scouts, and it has been used constantly since it was put up. We collect donations for the curbside pantry in the boxes that are in the Narthex .

The Vestry even decided to budget money each month to help keep the curbside pantry filled, but we still need donations for that and for the rotating pantry deliveries.

You can also leave your empty egg cartons in a box at the back of the sanctuary, and Ralph Steger gets them to the Verona food pantry to be used for eggs for patrons there.

If you want a more personal approach to helping with local hunger, volunteer for Meals on Wheels or help on the 4th Tuesday at the Noon Lunch Program at Trinity.

For more stories or to ask how you can help feed the hungry in our community, talk to me, Sue Buerkel, Sharon Sproul, Tidge Roller, or Ralph Steger.