



Food Pantry News

Volume 3, Issue 3—October 2021

Star Fish, Inc. is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Donations are tax deductible as permitted by law.



50th Anniversary Celebration

For the past fifty years, volunteers from Plainfield and the surrounding area have worked in our Star Fish Food Pantry to help assure the hungry in Plainfield receive food.

.From humble beginnings in the Cunniff family basement and at Covenant United Methodist Church, we continue to grow and thrive through the support of many friends.

Both financial and food contributions have increased with the Covid-19 pandemic as our many friends, old and new, step up to care for their neighbors in need. We are so grateful.



Kathleen Cunniff Nitzsche, Pat Bixel
and Michael Townley

Our volunteers, long-serving or just recently signed up, are the people who keep us moving forward every week. Preparing fifty bags of food for the Plainfield Food Security Project, or family food orders from Plainfield Action Services, HomeFirst, or other Partners, these volunteers work tirelessly week after week.

Just a few weeks ago we took time out of our busy schedules to gather together and celebrate our fifty year history. We were fortunate to have members of the Cunniff family attend and speak about what it was like to grow up with a food pantry for the poor in their basement. As Matt Cunniff said, he thought everyone had one of those!

Speakers lauded the continuing dedication and spirit of all those who have served in the past and those who now serve. Several attendees have been a part of Star Fish from the beginning, and they were recognized.

We were also honored to have Plainfield Councilwoman Joylette Mills-Ransome present a resolution from the Plainfield Council, and Assemblywoman Linda Carter present a joint resolution from the New Jersey Assembly and Senate.

We hope you enjoy seeing some photos from the celebration.

Board of Directors

Pat Bixel, Executive Director

Michael Townley, Secretary

Kathleen Nitzsche, Treasurer

Sarah Mazzarese, Statistician

Catherine Renga, Chair Holiday Meals

Joseph Stowasky, Chair Food Procurement

Marie Pase, Board Advisor

Newsletter

We welcome any comments or suggestions.

Send an email to
Secretary@
starfishplainfield.org



50th Anniversary Celebration



More from the 50th...



Columbia Bank Supports Star Fish

We were very happy to receive a generous donation of food from employees of Columbia Bank.

Local branch manager Shannon Jefferys promoted giving to Star Fish in the company's newsletter.

Not only did we benefit from this food deliver, we also received donations through our PayPal account.

Thanks, Columbia!



Wilson Memorial Church: A Partnership in Giving

By Nancy Scott of Wilson Church & Michael Townley of Star Fish Inc.

Moments after entering Wilson Memorial Church for the first time, I noticed a box filled with canned goods next to the podium holding the guest book. This was my introduction to Star Fish, Inc., just over three years ago. Since that day, I have heard many announcements celebrating a monetary donation or a successful toy drive. There have also been requests to help unload trucks or pack boxes.

Star Fish, a non-profit corporation run by volunteers from Plainfield and the surrounding area, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Wilson Memorial Church of Watchung, New Jersey has partnered with Star Fish for many of those years. Donations of food, diapers, school supplies and time, as well as monetary contributions, have been received from Wilson Memorial Church, The Outreach Committee, the Frippery Thrift Shop and individual church members.

Star Fish operates three mornings a week- collecting, preparing and delivering food to those in need. While its primary function is the collection and distribution of food, Star Fish also accepts toiletries, paper products, and other items families typically use.

During the Covid-19 crisis, Star Fish continued to operate on a limited basis. They were able

Wilson Church (cont'd)

to supplement weekly food packages provided by the Plainfield Food Security Project initiated by the YMCA. Star Fish also partnered with the Rotary Club of the Plainfields and the DuCret School of Art, providing food to the hungry throughout the pandemic. They are currently supplying 50 bags of food and 150 dozen eggs to Food Security Project.

If you are interested in volunteering, or making a monetary contribution, please visit www.starfishplainfield.org. Donations of food and other items can be dropped off at the blue bin in front of Wilson Memorial Church.

Please visit us at www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org.

Ed. Note: This article was submitted by Wilson Church to local newspapers as part of their effort to highlight the church's involvement in their own and surrounding communities.

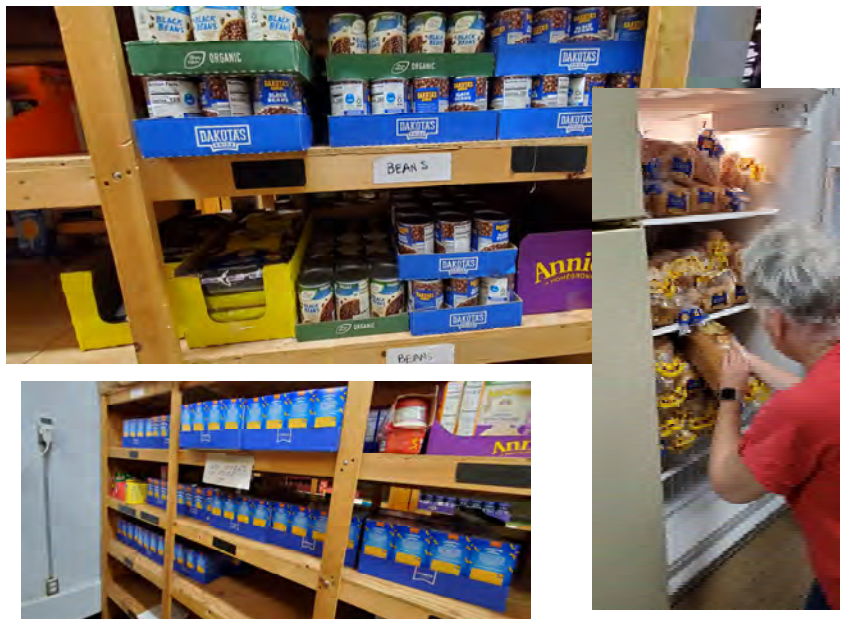
Our former treasurer and all-around helper, Hugh Woodruff, who now resides in Arizona, suggested the author feature the longstanding relationship we have enjoyed with Wilson Memorial Church.

Through the generosity of the Wilson Church Outreach Committee and the volunteers at The Frillery Thrift Shop, we have received very generous regular donations that help us meet the needs of the hungry in Plainfield.

ALDI Supermarket

This is a special shout out to our friend, Robert, the manager at the South Plainfield Aldi Supermarket.

When we get low on supplies, a quick text to Robert and within a few days we have a load of peanut butter, jelly, fresh bread, canned fruit, canned vegetables...just about anything we need to help fill our orders. We purchase what we need and Robert helps us get it on time. Thanks, Robert!





**BUY
A
BAG OF
FOOD!
DONATE**

**DONATE AT
WWW.STARFISHPLAINFIELD.ORG**

We prepare 40 to 50 bags of food every week for the Plainfield Food Security Project. You can help us with this needed food with a donation to our new “Buy a Bag” program. Simply go to our Donation page at www.starfishplainfield.org and make your donation in multiples of \$40. The more you donate, the more bags you will sponsor. And consider making it monthly?

SUMMER HELPERS APPRECIATED

Star Fish Food Pantry extends our thanks to Tiara Bryant, College of St. Elizabeth; Charlotte Gray, Mount St. Mary Academy; Alex and Bobby Canada, St. Joseph High School; Alex Gray, Oberlin College for volunteering their time, strength, and vitality in helping Star Fish faithfully throughout this past summer.

Whether it was a Tuesday or Thursday, this team of high school and college students worked enthusiastically to prepare at least 300 bags of food each month for those in need in Plainfield.

Not knowing that they lived in proximity of each other, Charlotte, Alex, Bobby, and Alex met in the food pantry and created a Netherwood neighborhood team. Tiara completed her project of Service Learning traveling from Arlington, NJ each week.

Stuffing bags of food, cutting ice cold packets of chicken, sorting and shelving food, breaking up boxes for recycling - no task was too difficult for them. Our regular volunteers enjoyed working with this group of young adults.

The food pantry was filled with multi-generational energy making communication quite interesting! The benefits were overwhelming for all those working together.

We wish these young volunteers a successful school year and express our sincere appreciation for their support in alleviating hunger in Plainfield.

We look forward to welcoming this dynamic group back in the future.

THANKSGIVING DINNER GIFT CARD DONATIONS ACCEPTED NOW

Once again we find ourselves operating under the restrictions of Covid-19 as we prepare to help families in need with their Thanksgiving dinners. We will not assemble food bags again this year, but rather distribute ShopRite gift cards in their place. This will give families the opportunity to purchase what they need to make their dinner special. This was a very successful program in 2020, very much appreciated by our clients.

Please consider a contribution to the cause. We are giving cards in \$50, \$75 and \$100 values to families. Go to our website <https://www.starfishplainfield.org/contact-us-or-donate.php> and use the PayPal donation button. Select the option for Thanksgiving Dinner Project. We thank you in advance for your donations!

Star Fish, Inc.

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E-mail:

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Donate at

www.starfishplainfield.org

Visit our website, click on the Contact or Donate link in the menu bar, and then click on the "Donate" button as shown below.



We are a group of volunteers from Plainfield and the surrounding area who belong to a tax exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation in existence since 1971. We operate three days each week throughout the year, preparing and distributing grocery food orders to an average of thirty to thirty-five families in need each week.

Our primary function is to maintain the food pantry. Our volunteers pack and deliver grocery food orders to clients who have been referred to us by local social service agencies. Most of these agencies are listed on our website [Partners page](#).

Using a referral system helps us better manage our resources. These agencies vet the client to help assure that our limited resources are given to those truly in need. We also prepare special food orders for 160 families at Easter, Thanksgiving, and at Christmas.

The generosity of our donors helps us prepare these holiday meals and bags of food each week for those in need of emergency food assistance. You are all "Stars for Star Fish!"

The Food We Provide To Those In Need—Amounts Vary Based on Family Size

- 1 Package of frozen meat
- 1 Loaf of bread
- 1 lb of Pasta
- 1 Pasta Sauce
- 4 Cans Soup
- 2 Macaroni and Cheese
- 1 Small bag of tea bags
- 1 Jar Peanut Butter
- 1 Jar Jelly
- 1 Can of Fruit or Jar of Applesauce
- 4 Cans Vegetables
- 2 Can of Tuna
- 4 Cans of Beans
- 1/2 Dozen Eggs
- 2 box of cereal (or 4 Instant Breakfast Cereal envelopes for single persons)
- 1 dry or shelf-stable milk
- 1 Paper goods, 1 cleaning product, and 1 personal care item



You can donate any of these items at any time. Contact us and we'll even arrange to pick it up!

Too busy to do extra shopping? Donate instead and we'll buy it. Just go to www.starfishplainfield.org and click on the "Donate" button.