Hands On HARTFORD
Caring in Action

Founded in 1969 as Center City Churches

November 2017 News

Hands On Hartford, in partnership with others, strengthens community in Hartford by responding faithfully to people in need through programs that change lives and renew human possibility.

On Saturday December 9 visit the annual KNOW GOOD Holiday Bazaar! This event will take place from 11:00 am to 5:00pm, and is held inside 4 venues on one short block of Bartholomew Avenue in Hartford: Hog River Brewing Co., Hands On Hartford, The Dirt Salon and Hartford Denim Company—Hardenco. This is a great opportunity to get your holiday shopping done. **In addition, the Café at Fifty-Five will be open from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm during the Holiday Bazaar, with a full menu (including our new "breakfast all day" option) available.**

Thanksgiving Holiday Meal

Thanks to the efforts of many friends, we held our annual Thanksgiving meal for the community at Christ Church Cathedral. 178 guests enjoyed a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, served in style by a large group of volunteers, and each left with a gift bag, including warm socks donated by Eddie Martinez. We also welcomed Governor Malloy and Mayor Bronin to the meal, along with firemen from the Hartford fire department (who also brought t-shirts and socks for our guests). Special thanks to the Jewish Teen Learning Connection for delicious pie, and to the Goodman and Howe families for their contributions to the meal, and to Chef Kim Bunton with help from Peter Coletta for all the planning and preparations that went into creating a delicious meal.

Day of Sharing and Caring

On November 2, Hands On Hartford and Journey Home hosted the annual Day of Sharing and Caring at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church's Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry. Planning was headed up by Serika Walker, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader for the Hartford Thrive! Project, and members of the Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau were heavily involved in securing the resources, volunteers and donations including from Bear's BBQ and Salute, that made the event possible. It was wonderful to see the many resource tables, great entertainment and delicious food enjoyed by guests at this event, which was designed to honor our neighbors facing hunger and homelessness. (At right, a volunteer serves croissants to guests.)

Faith In Action

A spirited group from **Emanuel Lutheran Church** hosted a meal at Community Meals on Halloween. In addition to lending some fun to the event with great costumes, they baked casseroles, cupcakes and cookies, and helped serve 120 appreciative guests. The following week, Emanuel Lutheran Church worked with the Outreach Program to create a huge number of packaged meals that they donated to the MANNA Community Pantry. Altogether, they donated over 3,000 pounds of macaroni & cheese, and minestrone soup—enough for 24,408 meals! What a tremendous gift to the Hartford community.

City Church made a huge donation of 2,600 pounds of food for Thanksgiving, as a part of our effort to distribute turkeys and all the fixings to over 300 families for Thanksgiving. City Church in Hartford is led by Pastor Matt Deciccio, and is part of a group of churches located in Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Middletown and North Haven. More information is at www.ourcitychurch.org.

Service Learning Summit

On November 8, we hosted a Service Learning Summit at the Lyceum in Hartford. The event was sponsored by **Prudential** and presented in collaboration with **Corporation for National and Community Service, Keney Park Sustainability Project, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut**, and **UConn**. The event was well-attended by 22 different non-profits, schools and faith groups, and was a great opportunity to learn and share ideas about service learning and greater volunteer impact. For more information about service learning opportunities at Hands On Hartford, contact Wanda Guzman, Program Manager, Community Engagement, wguzman@handsonhartford.org.

Food Drive at Whole Foods Markets

On November 16, **Farmington Bank** teamed up with FM **102.9 The Whale** and **Whole Foods** to host an all-day food drive at three Whole Foods stores (West Hartford and Glastonbury). If you had your radio on that day, you would have heard the great folks at 102.9 talking about Hands On Hartford's MANNA Community Pantry, and if you were shopping that day and made a donation, THANK YOU! Altogether, 2,600 pounds of food were donated, along with nearly $1,000 in cash! We, and our pantry families, are incredibly grateful for this awesome support!

We all have our hands on Hartford!

TD Charitable Foundation Grant

We were honored to have a visit from TD Bank as they presented a $125,000 **Housing For Everyone award** from TD Charitable Foundation to support the development of the Powerhouse Apartments here at Hands On Hartford. When complete, we will have an additional 30 units of housing, 27 of them reserved as affordable. Altogether, TD Charitable Foundation made $3,125,000 in affordable housing grants in states from Maine to Florida in 2017.

Tiny Tim's Holiday Food Drive

Once again, the **Hartford Stage** is sponsoring a holiday food drive to benefit the MANNA Community Pantry. Patrons attending performances of "A Christmas Carol" this year are encouraged to donate non-perishable foods, and the first delivery of this collection was dropped off at Hands On Hartford on November 28. Last year, the Hartford Stage collected about 1,500 pounds of food during all of the performances of "A Christmas Carol." Many thanks to the Hartford Stage and to all of their patrons!

Thanksgiving Turkey Distribution

In the few days before Thanksgiving, we were able to provide 300 Hartford families with turkeys and ingredients for side dishes and dessert with the help and donations of many of our friends and partners. Thanks to Foodshare's "Turkey and 30" campaign, many of the turkeys came from **Foodshare**. In addition, thousands of pounds of food and turkeys were donated by groups from **Travelers Insurance, Virtus Investment Partners, Fiduciary Investment Advisors, ESPN**, and **Trinity College**, and members of **City Church Hartford**! The families were so grateful for this bountiful Thanksgiving gift. Earlier in the week, a large group from **ESPN** and a number of other volunteers made all of this possible by spending several days loading, unloading, sorting and organizing to help us get ready.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, we feel very thankful these days, seeing so many hands at work supporting our Hartford neighbors.

Celebrating our 1st year in business!

Great news! The Café at Fifty-Five has a **new menu**, including an expanded selection of breakfast items available all day.

Did you know we also have a **full catering menu**, which includes a broad selection of breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack items with an emphasis on our ability to customize our selections to fit groups from a handful to hundreds, and accommodate your budget. Catering is available on-site in our renovated historic space, or we can deliver anywhere in the greater Hartford area.

For more information about catering your event, contact Molly Reynolds, 860-706-1537, or mreynolds@handsonhartford.org.

Café at Fifty-Five Volunteer Opportunity: Seeking volunteers Tuesday through Friday, 11:30am—3:30pm, to help keep our kitchen and café sparkling clean and sanitized. For more information, contact Laura Suroviak, lsuroviak@handsonhartford.org or 860-706-1522.

Hands On Hartford Programs

- **MANNA Food Programs:** Community Meals, Community Pantry, and Backpack Nutrition Program
- **HOH Neighborhood Services:** homelessness prevention, Operation Fuel, economic stability and health & nutrition services
- **HOH Housing**: supportive housing services
- **Faces of Homelessness** Speakers' Bureau
- **Community Engagement:** volunteer placement, customized community service projects and immersions.

For information about volunteering and customized service projects, contact Wanda at wguzman@handsonhartford.org, 860-706-1507.

For more information about our programs, financial and in-kind support, contact Kate at kshafer@handsonhartford.org, 860-706-1505.

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55 Bartholomew Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-728-3201 - Fax: 860-549-8550
www.handsonhartford.org