

DMARC Food Pantry Network Offers 4-Day Supply of Food

– Boosts Distribution by 33%!

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Today, the DMARC Food Pantry Network offers four days of food for families once a month – up from the 3-day supply provided during most of 2012. This means about 340,000 more emergency meals annually, for a total DMARC capacity of over 1.5 million meals available in 2013.

One extra day of food is so much more than simply filling hungry tummies. More food nourishes bodies and minds, improves health, and helps families to stretch limited budgets.

In late 2011, use of DMARC pantries had escalated to a critical point. DMARC was providing five days of food for 11,000 different people each month. The need was unprecedented, as the Food Pantry Network worked to distribute the equivalent of 165,000 nutritious meals each 30 days.

At the same time, donations were stalled and DMARC constituents, congregations, and businesses were facing their own economic challenges made worse by a lingering recession.

Consequently, DMARC leaders made the difficult choice to reduce the amount of food distributed from five days to three. This decision, along with other changes, allowed all pantry sites to remain open, and ensured that no one was turned away without food.

By Kristine Frakes, DMARC development director



An extra day of food for a retiree can mean having the needed \$7 co-payment for a 30-day prescription. For a single mom of two, one more day of food stretches her budget so she can keep her toddler in fresh diapers for another week. For a couple with two teens, more food in the house means being able to repair the flat tire or buy most of a tank of gas – all at one time.

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Message from the President

DMARC Mission Statement:

"Religious Communities Working Together to Meet Basic Human Needs."

Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC



The past year has been one of opportunities and challenges for DMARC. With your support in 2012, our programs helped over 13,000 families with emergency food, child care subsidies and homelessness prevention assistance. We led community-wide faith discussions through the David Bear Memorial DMARC Interfaith Lecture Series and the August Thaw and January Thaw education and fellowship events; hosted an interfaith panel during the 2012 Spring Delegate Assembly; and reactivated the Community of Interfaith Youth (CIY).

DMARC partnered with organizations such as United Way of Central Iowa, Iowa Department of Human Services – Adult, Children & Families, Hormel Foods Corporation, Polk County Health Department, Healthy Polk 2020, Iowa State University Extension, Primary Health Care, Inc., United States Department of Agriculture – Food and Nutrition Service, and so many more, to systemically address other food access, health, and basic needs issues across the community.

In addition to the tireless efforts and contributions of countless congregations, volunteers, pantry partners, staff, and donors, this work continues to be guided by the steadfast and committed leadership of the DMARC Board of Directors. I am tremendously grateful to work with such talented, engaged, and generous individuals, who continue to provide unflagging leadership - both in personal giving and dedication to the DMARC mission. Thank you for your support!



DMARC president 2012-2013

Breaking news!

A new and improved DMARC Soup Supper!

DMARC will not be holding its 6th annual Soup Supper this winter, but will instead hold an expanded Super-Soup-Supper in the fall of 2013. The new event will continue our emphasis on great food and fantastic pottery, but we will be adding new learning opportunities, family events, and an expanded schedule. Watch for a new date and location coming soon!

Des Moines Area Religious Council Board of Directors 2012-2013

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Watch Our
"Be the Change"

Schedule of 2013 Events



4-Day Supply of Food

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DMARC never wavered from its commitment to provide food to everyone who asked for help and, over the next twelve months, the community responded with remarkable compassion and generosity.

On December 1, 2012, DMARC added a fourth day of supplies to its food boxes.

We celebrate and thank each and every one of you who helped make this a reality!

To learn more about DMARC's food access work, or to support the food pantry network, visit www.MovetheFood.org.



Photo: Kim Coulter/DMARC

Once a month, a family of four visiting one of the 13 DMARC-related food pantries, will now receive a 4-day food supply (49 items) compared to the 3-day food supply (31 items).

A Food Security Tutorial

Food “security” has at least three components, all necessary for health.

- Food availability— enough food in the surrounding environment to meet the needs of each individual
- Food access—each person has the financial and physical (e.g., car, nearby bus route) resources to acquire the food they need
- Food use—each person has the knowledge to prepare their food safely and nutritiously.

Food availability is not an issue for most of us in the United States, although it is the primary issue in many developing countries.

Food access, however, is a challenge in the United States, especially for those of us whose:

- Minimum wage is no longer a living wage
- Cars are not dependable
- Homes are far from the nearest grocery store
- Nearest retail food sources are liquor stores and convenience stores
- Housing isn't near bus routes
- SNAP benefits only last 2-3 weeks
- Nearest food pantry or community kitchen is distant, not open at convenient hours, can distribute only limited amounts of food, and/or provides food high in sugar, fat, and salt

Food use is a challenge, too, especially for those of us who:

- Don't have working stoves or refrigerators
- Don't have appropriate ways to store food
- Didn't grow up with good food role models
- Don't have time to cook and eat nutritiously



Calendar Proceeds to Benefit DMARC!

As outreach for the greater Des Moines community, this 2013 Calendar is a fundraiser for the Center for Social Ministry (CSM); an organization offering poverty awareness and justice education programming.

However, the calendar features CSM and 12 nonprofit organizations/groups in the Des Moines area – including DMARC!

In addition, the calendars include contact information for each featured organization, as well as many of the organization's significant 2013 event dates.

The calendars are professionally done and would make fabulous gift for friends/family!

DMARC WILL RECEIVE 20% OF THE PROCEEDS FOR ALL CALENDARS WE SELL.

Cost: \$10.00 each. If interested, contact the DMARC office at 515-277-6969 to pick up a copy today!

Beyond Empty Plates — The Impact of Hunger in Iowa

By Sarai Rice, DMARC executive director and Kristine Frakes, DMARC development director

It is near midnight on January 31st, and lines are forming at checkout counters in big box stores across the United States. On this brisk winter night, hardworking Iowa moms and dads navigate shopping carts filled with bleary-eyed toddlers through aisles stacked high with cardboard cases, as the night crew works methodically to restock shelves.

The lines lengthen, and the sense of anticipation grows. Yet, there is a calming rhythm to the background clang and whoosh of empty soda and beer cans that are being redeemed for a few dollars in change. The shoppers patiently watch for the clock to strike 12:00 a.m.

Unlike consumers who want to be the first to acquire the latest technology gadget or video game, many of these families are doing their monthly grocery shopping.



Effective at 12:01 a.m. on the first of the month, their electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card for food assistance will be reloaded. Which means these families can again buy items that many of us take for granted - a gallon of milk, canned meat, peanut butter, and hamburger on sale for \$1.99 per pound.

Grocery shopping in the wee hours of the morning is just one

of the symptomatic realities of being poor and food insecure in America.

Yet, the implications of hunger for Iowans, our communities, and our state as a whole are far-reaching and alarming.

While lack of proper nutrition negatively impacts all populations, by far the largest segment to be affected is children.

If you are a hungry child, you will be sick more often; more likely to be hospitalized; and more likely to suffer physical, emotional and developmental impairment. If you are a child who is under-nourished before age three, the neurological architecture of your brain and central nervous system will be fundamentally and negatively altered; and your ability to learn will be diminished. As you mature into adulthood, you will

When:

jobs are cut back, or

energy assistance benefits are used up, or

the availability of food commodities shrinks, or

prices at the gas pump increase, or

school is out of session,

the lines at food pantries grow.

not be well-prepared mentally, emotionally, physically or socially to perform in contemporary work environments.

The Des Moines Area Religious Council is one of many community-based and private agencies working to fill the nutrition gap and increase food access for low-income Iowa households.

Last year, the DMARC Food Pantry Network provided the food equivalent of more than 1.2 million emergency meals for about 33,000 different individuals. Of these pantry participants, about 12,300 were children under the age of 18 years, including nearly 2,200 children between six and eight years old. About 4,000 children assisted were five years or younger.

Tragically, the need for food assistance is relentless.

Even though federal food assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC, and school-based meals provide the majority of

emergency food funding dollars nationally, anyone who knows a low-income family knows that government assistance is not enough. There just simply isn't enough food. Not enough for growing bones. Not enough for focused attention. Not enough for clear thinking. Not enough to stay in school long enough to become productive adults.

Local emergency food efforts are a vital link in our country's efforts to address food insecurity and hunger. But we need more than food and dollars. Political will is required to drive systemic and long-term solutions to ensure a more promising foundation for our children and the future of Iowa.

Not only can we do better as a community. We simply must.

The original version of this essay first appeared in The Des Moines Register in October 2012. Dates and client statistics have been updated.

The DMARC Food Pantry Network is the largest networked food pantry system in Iowa. With 13 pantry sites in Des Moines, Ankeny, Johnston, Urbandale, and West Des Moines, Polk County residents may request a 4-day supply of nutritionally balanced food for all household members once each month. There is no cost to participate. For a full list of pantry sites or to provide a donation, visit www.MovetheFood.org or call 515-277-6969. Thank you for your support!

DMARC launches updated website this year

Top 10 website enhancements you'll experience:



10. Updated DMARC logo and look with our new mission tagline.
9. Learn about top news, view donation campaigns and participate in food drives all with the slideshow feature on our home page.
8. Grab archived news delivered in a chronological format and stored forever in the cloud.
7. Easy to navigate, our website buttons are streamlined and simplified for quick results.
6. Get DMARC's newsletter and Red Barrel newsletter electronically.
5. Make a difference and stay connected to DMARC with the simplified functionality of volunteer and newsletter signups.
4. Interactive donation pages show examples of how your donation dollars are put to good use.
3. Fast and informative, the searchability of our entire website delivers information you need.
2. Food pantry participants can easily find our network and access their neighborhood pantry.
1. Post news and events quickly with enhanced congregational calendar submission processes.

Gifts given in honor and in memory

DMARC regularly receives gifts in honor of and in memory of special people and occasions. View honors and memorials online at www.dmreligious.org. For a complete list of donors, look on our website under Support DMARC/Donors page.

DMARC/MovetheFood office and warehouse hours

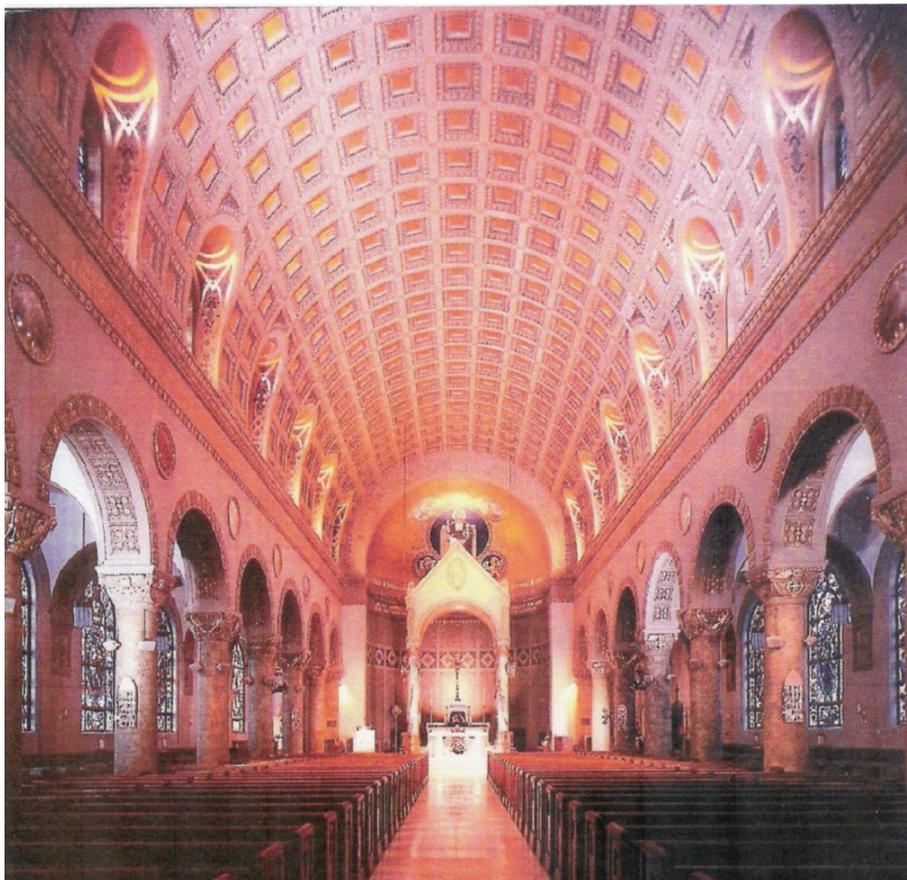
Main Office, 3816 36th Street, Suite 202, Des Moines, IA 50310
Office hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Main Warehouse, 3816 36th Street, Des Moines, IA 50310
(located directly behind the office building)

Warehouse hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Office and warehouse are closed Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Experience DMARC's Interfaith Tours



Inside the beautiful Basilica of St. John in Des Moines.

Are you tired of the winter doldrums? Well, grab your book club, faith small group, or coffee group, and join us for a DMARC interfaith tour. Experience different faith traditions and be inspired by unique architecture and history. Tours are forming now. To register, or learn more, contact Sonya Dettmann at 515-277-6969, ext. 16, or sdettmann@dmreligious.org.



Communion Table at Oreon E. Scott Chapel, Drake University in Des Moines.

A heartfelt “thank you” is extended to Virginia Varce for the many years she served as volunteer coordinator and guide for DMARC's interfaith tours, formerly known as Tour of Faiths.

January Thaw 2013 Reprise

January Thaw 2013 made it's comeback with over 100 people in attendance! This interfaith educational study program was held in mid-January at the Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive. Class sessions on interfaith topics included: Darwin, Human Evolution and Religion, Spirituality, Jewish Meditation, Buddhist Philosophy, Women in the Bible, Racial Reconciliation to Reparations, Islam in Current

Challenges in America and more. This event was sponsored by GuideOne Insurance, and presented by the Des Moines Area Religious Council, the Center for Social Ministry, the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines, and the Masjid An-Noor Muslim Community.

If you attended and like the concept of January Thaw, why not get involved? You can influence our next interfaith event. DMARC's

Community Engagement Committee meets monthly and welcomes all faiths and skill levels to get involved! If interested in joining our committee, contact Executive Director Sarai Rice at: sarai@dmreligious.org or 515-277-6969.





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Hold the Date

DMARC's Spring Delegate Assembly is Tuesday, March 19, 2013, at 7:00 p.m., location to be determined. All congregation delegates and clergy are invited to attend. Speaker for the evening is Dr. Trisha Wheelock, professor at Grandview University, Drake University, and Des Moines Area Community College. She'll speak on how the emerging Christian community's understanding of its texts emerged from the larger Jewish community's understanding of its sacred texts.

