



In 1997 a team of 14 MPC members came together to plan and organize the MPC food pantry to help address hunger in our community. At that time the closest emergency food sources were the Elkton Area United Services pantry and a pantry in downtown Harrisonburg. The team's hard work over the course of many months led to the opening of the Massanutten Food Pantry in February of 1998.

When the food pantry began it was housed in a room off of the old sanctuary. The construction of the new sanctuary and associated renovations made it possible for the pantry to move to a larger space downstairs for storage of goods, which includes refrigerated and frozen items, along with back-to-school supplies. In addition, the loading of vehicles under the cover of the porte cochere has been a big plus during periods of inclement weather. The use of the church's van has proven to be quite useful in the restocking of supplies.

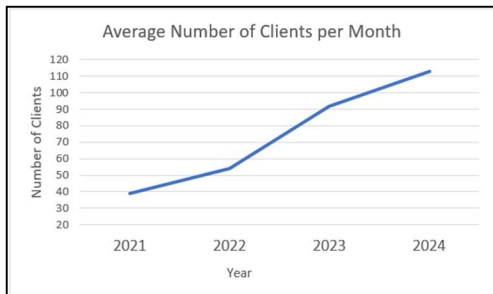


In spite of the changes over the years, a constant is that people are in need. Along with the familiar, we regularly help new clients, many with young children to feed. Over the years we have watched children grow up and graduate from high school. Parents have shared stories of their children attending college and getting jobs. We have clients who are caring for elderly parents and clients who are raising their grandchildren. Some of our clients are experiencing health challenges. Many of our clients are older and on a fixed income. Most of our working-age clients are working, but just don't make enough to purchase all the groceries they need. Non-food items such as shampoo, soap, and diapers are necessary, and our clients are relieved when we can supply them.



MPC is blessed with the leadership that our current Program Coordinator, Dorothy Dobroth, provides and is extremely fortunate for the many volunteers who make this outreach ministry possible. Along with the logistics and administrative tasks that help ensure the pantry operates smoothly, Dorothy creates an English/Spanish newsletter that includes recipes based on what is being distributed that month.

*Dorothy - "I've enjoyed my experience volunteering in the Food Pantry, getting to know members of the community. We get to know the clients and the concerns they have and new ways we can help them. It might be a little extra food one month; or, clothes for a new baby."*



Over the last 4 years the number of clients has increased by more than 50%. Our food pantry provides an important role in our community. This ministry is made possible through the generosity of MPC, and we are thankful to be able to help reduce the burden our neighbors face.

*Lord, guide me on my journey in this New Season of Generosity.*