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2021 Report of Mission and Outreach Committee  
Harnessing the Power of Love

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Love is a powerful word, and the Bible teaches us “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” Mathew 12:31. When we see our neighbors struggling--where to get food for their family, where to sleep, where to get a warm escape from the cold--that love compels us to reach out with a helping hand. The Mission and Outreach Committee prayerfully considered how the Flemington Presbyterian Church family could best help our neighbors. Like many of you, we see the statistics on the number of families experiencing food insecurity, especially now with the pandemic. For example, *Feeding America* projects that 42 million people (1 in 8), including 13 million children (1 in 6), may experience food insecurity in 2021. How can FPC address such a need? With God’s help and with the generosity of our member’s contributions, we made a difference in 2021.

When you love your neighbor, you do more than drop a donation in their outstretched hand. Our help was to be reflective of three principals at the foundation of FPC: we are sent by God; this is God’s love in action; our help is spiritual, hopeful and inclusive. With these principals, we focused on food insecurity in the local community and worked with community organizations to deliver help where most needed.

If you are a hungry family, you go to local food pantries or you may go to the Harvest Family Success Center. Our support to them included food donations from members as well as financial contributions. For example, we delivered more than 50 servings of chili to clients at the Harvest Family Success Center. The Flemington Food Pantry was the recipient of almost 6000 lbs. of food from our various efforts--Summer Food Drive, Grow-a-Row partnership, pet food for AniMeals. Also, FPC contributed several hundred dollars in cash donations, for

example in support of victims of Hurricane IDA. Other local food banks, such as North Hunterdon County Food Pantry, Village Food Pantry, Fisherman's Mark Food Pantry, United Way Helping Hands, and Somerset Food Bank also received our financial help. One other way we helped was to fund and help pack Thanksgiving Meals in partnership with Walkers & Associates. A record number of 1,500 meals were delivered to local organizations.

Although our focus was on food insecurity, help was also needed with housing insecurity. Right here in Flemington, if you have such needs, you turn to Family Promise (helping families and individuals experiencing homelessness), SAFE in Hunterdon (survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault), and to the Hunterdon Helpline (first assistance helpline). We supported all these organizations. The blanket you contributed in our Blanket Drive went to help; as did your contributions of toiletries and towels. You can easily imagine the pleasure, if you are homeless, of having a place to take a hot shower and receive shelter from the cold. That is the one mission of Family Promise, truly a loving benefit to our neighbors in need.

Of course, housing insecurity is a problem elsewhere, and Mission and Outreach provided significant funding to the VIM (Volunteers In Mission) trip, where 21 volunteers worked on five home sites in Maine for those in need. This included building a handicap ramp, replacing and installing shingle and metal roofing, repairing broken and rotted flooring, repairing steps, and more.

Mission and Outreach touched the lives of many people in our community. But it also touched the hearts of those that contributed. That is love in action. Guided by our three principals and with the FPC family behind us, we were able to harness the power of love.



### **Little Free Pantry Installation**

Girl Scout Troop 80531 did a wonderful job installing a Little Free Pantry this Sunday! The girls will be stocking it weekly. Thank you Troop 80531 for partnering with us to take yet another step to help the food insecure. ❤️

## FPC Helped Grow-A-Row Distribute 5,250 Pounds of Food

FPC partnered with Grow-A-Row and the Flemington Food Bank in their biggest fresh food distribution event of 2021. Thanks to Tim Hall and his trailer, Laura and Jack Flessner, and Tanya and Daniel Cleary, FPC delivered 175 30-pound boxes and bags of food to senior apartments and the Flemington Food Bank. Each box had zucchini, cucumbers, corn on the cob, apples, bell peppers, poblano peppers, eggplant, and peaches.





Contributions from Souper Bowl food drive packed and ready for delivery to Flemington Food Pantry



Our first annual blessing of the animals which generated nearly 300 lbs. of donation of pet food for AniMeals



FPC donated enough funds to provide 250 Thanksgiving meals through an effort led by Walkers & Associates, where they provided 1,500 Thanksgiving meals total. Volunteers from FPC helped pack meal bags (yams, green beans, pineapple, cranberry sauce, stuffing, gravy) on November 5. The meals were sent to the Flemington Area Food Pantry, Fisherman's Mark, and The Food Bank Network of Somerset County. Among the volunteers were Anita and son, Andrew.



VIM (Volunteers In Mission) working this summer in Maine to help those with housing needs. Pictured left to right: Tim, Heather, Connor, and Henry.