

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

AUTUMN 2025

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT THIS GIVINGTUESDAY

GivingTuesday is a global day of generosity, and this year, your gift to The FOOD Pantry can go twice as far. Thanks to three generous donors, **every dollar you give will be matched, up to \$45,000!** That means **double the meals, double the support, and double the hope** for families in our community facing hunger. In 2024, your generosity helped us raise \$81,700 to support Pantry operations. **Let's make 2025 an even bigger success!**

How You Can Help:

- **Give Online:** Visit www.waukeshafoodpantry.org/tuesday on Tuesday, December 2 or scan the QR code to go directly to our GivingTuesday donation page to have your gift count towards the match.
- **Mail a Check:** Send your donation to The FOOD Pantry with "GivingTuesday" in the memo by December 2 to be matched.
- **Give Food:** Not able to give financially? You can still make a difference! Drop off non-perishable food items at Door #5, at The FOOD Pantry at 1301 Sentry Drive in Waukesha. We accept donations Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM or Saturday, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM. High-need items include: cereal, pasta, rice, peanut butter, canned fruits/vegetables, and canned proteins like tuna or chicken.
- **Host a Food Drive:** Rally your workplace, school, or faith community! Visit our website and find in the menu: 'Get Involved/Host a Food Drive' for resources to get started or email jeremy@waukeshafoodpantry.org.



Let's make this GivingTuesday count.


More Than A Meal
— Annual Fundraiser —

Save the Date!

April 18, 2026

Golden Mast Inn, Okauchee, WI

Join Us from 9:30 am to Noon in the
Fight Against Hunger in Waukesha County.
Be Part of "More than a Meal" – Our Annual Fundraiser.

**Breakfast Provided
Live Raffle & Silent Auction**

Learn more about
The FOOD Pantry's Fundraiser at
www.WaukeshaFoodPantry.org/More



Event page

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Pantry Supporters,

As 2025 draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the remarkable journey we've taken together this year. Thanks to you—our generous donors, passionate volunteers, and the entire Waukesha County community—we've continued to be a vital resource for thousands of our friends and neighbors facing food insecurity.

This year, one of our greatest areas of focus has been outreach. We've worked hard to raise awareness of the growing and pressing need around hunger in Waukesha County, and we hope you've seen us on social media, in your inbox, in print, and in the news. Every post, every article, and every story shared is more than just information—it's a call to action. We need to open hearts and minds to the reality of hunger in the Waukesha County community, and show people how they can help be part of the solution.

Why is this so important? Because the need is growing. This fiscal year (October 2024-September 2025), we've seen an **11% increase** in the number of unduplicated individuals seeking our help from 8,628 in 2023/24 to 9,565 people in 2024/25. We have also seen a **12% increase** in individual pantry visits from 101,718 in 2023/24 to 114,275 in 2024/25. These are increases above last year's record utilization levels, so it is clear that the need continues to grow in Waukesha County. These numbers are more than statistics—they represent families, seniors, children, and individuals who never imagined they'd need a food pantry.

At the same time, our resources are being stretched. Federal support through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and food donated from food banks and food recovery partners has **declined by 21%** or approximately 393,500 pounds of food this fiscal year, making our work even more challenging. That's why building strong partnerships and increasing local support is more critical than ever. We're working with our pantry supporters to fill the gap—and we're counting on the generosity of the Waukesha County community to help us do it.

We've also made strategic efforts to ensure our long-term sustainability. This year, we expanded our relationships with local foundations and community partners to strengthen our grant writing and management efforts to grow financial support to fund The Pantry.

None of this would be possible without you. Whether you donate, volunteer, attend events, or simply help spread the word—you are the reason we can continue to meet this growing need with compassion and dignity. Your support doesn't just fill shelves. It fills hearts. It changes lives.

As we look ahead to 2026, our mission remains clear: to serve the growing number of friends and neighbors in need with generosity, respect, and commitment. With your continued support, **I'm confident we'll rise to meet our mission, just as we always have—together.**

With heartfelt gratitude,
Lyndsay Johnson
Executive Director

The FOOD Pantry Staff

Pictured left to right (front row): Keith Rauguth, Wendy Jones, Annette De Jesus, Lyndsay Johnson (back row): Jeremy Otte, Zach Trafton, Robert Baranzyk-Kloskey, Michael Egly, Marina Rodriguez, and Jon Huckaba



GIVE SMART, GIVE BACK: MAXIMIZING YOUR CHARITABLE IMPACT UNDER NEW TAX RULES

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) introduces several modifications that affect how much and how you can deduct charitable donations, beginning in 2026, including:

- **Above-the-Line Deduction for Non-Itemizers:** Even if you take the standard deduction, you'll be able to deduct up to \$1,000 (single) or \$2,000 (married filing jointly) in cash gifts to qualifying public charities (excluding donor-advised funds).
- **0.5% Floor for Itemizers:** If you itemize, your total charitable deductions first must exceed 0.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) before any portion becomes deductible. For example, with \$200,000 AGI, only amounts above \$1,000 qualify.
 - If you itemize, consider accelerating large charitable gifts in 2025 before the new floor (0.5% of AGI) takes effect.
 - The state and local tax deduction (SALT) has also increased from \$10,000 to \$40,000 starting in 2025 (through 2029), subject to higher income phase-downs, increasing the opportunity for many tax filers to itemize their deductions and receive more tax benefit from their charitable donations in 2025.
- **Cap on Deduction Value (35%)** - Under the new law, even if your tax bracket would allow a higher effective rate, the tax benefit of itemized deductions, including charitable gifts, is capped so that each dollar of charitable deduction yields at most 35 cents in tax benefit (This impacts individuals in the 37% tax bracket).

What This Means for You

- If you **don't itemize**, the new above-the-line deduction makes charitable giving more beneficial than before.
- If you **do itemize**, you'll want to be sure your total giving exceeds the 0.5% floor, and the capped value means high-income donors lose some leverage.
- **Timing matters** – you might choose to bunch more giving into one year to cross thresholds or get maximum benefit.
- Tools like **QCDs, gifts of appreciated assets, Donor Advised Funds, and charitable bequests** retain strong value, though their relative benefit may shift under the new limits.
- Always keep detailed records and consult a tax advisor to ensure your giving strategy aligns with both OBBBA and your broader financial plan.

With awareness of these changes, you can continue to support your favorite local charities, such as The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County, in a tax-wise way—even as the rules evolve. With thoughtful planning, you can give in ways that create lasting value for your community and your financial well-being.

Brian Behl, CFP®, CRPC®
Behl Wealth Management

Phone: 262-275-4025
Email: brian@behlwealth.com

Web: www.behlwealth.com

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SMART WAYS TO GIVE NOW

- **Cash donations:** If you itemize, cash gifts to qualified public charities are deductible (subject to limits).
- **Donating appreciated assets:** Giving stocks or mutual funds that have grown in value helps you avoid capital gains tax and still deduct the full fair market value (if itemizing).
- **Bequests & beneficiary designations:** Leave assets or name a charity as beneficiary of retirement accounts.
- **Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs):** If you're age 70½ or older, you can send up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to a charity. That amount counts toward your required minimum distribution but isn't included in taxable income.
- **Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs):** Contribute now, get the deduction now, and recommend grants to charities over time. Useful for "bunching" strategies to maximize the tax benefits of your charitable giving.

MISSION: The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County provides food, hope and dignity to county residents in need, and advocates to increase awareness of hunger through community partnerships.

VISION: We envision a future without hunger in Waukesha County.

NON-PROFIT STATUS: The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County is a non-profit community organization, maintaining 501(c)3 status, and all donations are tax deductible where allowable by law.

The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In accordance with Federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

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SHOP, ROUND UP, AND GIVE BACK AT GOOD HARVEST

Good Harvest Market in Pewaukee is making it easier to give back this holiday season!

Purchase a \$25 donation food bundle, and Good Harvest will match it—that's \$50 worth of organic food staples donated to The Pantry. Plus, you can round up at the register all December long to support The FOOD Pantry and local families in need.



Thank you to all of our partners for helping us fight hunger in Waukesha County!

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE PANTRY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

SUBARU SHARE THE LOVE® CAMPAIGN

From **November 20 to January 2**, Subaru's annual Share the Love® Event returns—and once again, **Wilde Subaru in Waukesha** has selected **The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County** as their **Hometown Charity!**

When you **purchase or lease a new Subaru** from Wilde Subaru during the event and choose The Pantry as your charity of choice, **Subaru will donate \$250** to support our mission of feeding neighbors in need. Since 2015, the Share the Love® campaign has resulted in **\$408,800 in donations** to The FOOD Pantry!



MEIJER SIMPLY GIVE CAMPAIGN

Waukesha's Meijer store continues to share their generosity as a supporter by selecting The FOOD Pantry as a recipient of their **Simply Give** campaign. From now until the end of the year, Meijer customers can purchase Simply Give donation cards which are converted into Meijer food-only gift cards for The Pantry to use to fill donation gaps.

This year, Meijer is holding a double match day to benefit The FOOD Pantry on **Saturday, December 13**. That means for every \$10 card purchased, Meijer will donate \$30 to The Pantry. Since 2016, the **Meijer Simply Give** campaign has resulted in **\$300,400 in donations** to The FOOD Pantry!



SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – “CHECK OUT HUNGER” AT WOODMAN’S!

From November 1 through December 31, 2025, Woodman's will run its annual **Check Out Hunger** campaign. When you shop at the Waukesha Woodman's (1600 E. Main St.), you'll have the option to add \$1, \$3 or \$5 to your purchase at the checkout. All funds raised will be converted into gift cards and split between The FOOD Pantry and Feeding America of Eastern Wisconsin to help those in need.



EMPLOYEE OWNED

1301 Sentry Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186 | 262.542.5300

info@waukeshafoodpantry.org | www.waukeshafoodpantry.org

