

August 28, 2022

**Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost**

Luke 14:1, 7-14

Open Table

The Little Pantry Movement is based on the Little Library movement. Where the little libraries made books available to neighbors and passers-by, the little pantry makes available non-perishable food and hygiene items for anyone who might be in need. The motto of the loosely organized movement is “Take what you need, give what you can.” The mini pantry movement is a grassroots, crowdsourced solution to immediate and local need. Whether a need for food or a need to give, mini pantries help feed neighbors, nourishing neighborhoods.

Emmaus United Church in the Northern Virginia community of Vienna has a Little Free Food Pantry on their property. In September 2020 the Emmaus Youth Group received a \$500 service grant from a local organization to build a Little Free Pantry, a project that was chosen by the Emmaus Youth Group members. Over the course of 3 weekends, the Youth Group members gathered to construct and install the Pantry. The Youth Group checks and stocks the Pantry weekly, but anyone can check it throughout the week and restock it from a bin of donations left in a public place.

Suggested personal care donations to the Emmaus Little Food Pantry are items like hand sanitizer, face masks, individually wrapped toothbrushes, small size toothpaste, socks, first aid supplies, soap/shampoo, brushes and combs.

Of course, food donations are the mainstay of the pantry and include nonperishable food items with pull tabs or other easy-to-open and single serve containers. Suggested items are jerky, canned/packets of meat, canned ready meals (pasta, chili), nut and seed butter (single serve or small size preferred), canned fruit/fruit cups, peanut butter & other snack crackers, dried fruit, trail mix, nuts, granola/protein/breakfast bars, single serve cereal, single serve shelf stable milk, juice boxes, canned vegetables, canned soup, and water bottles.

Jesus welcomed all to an open table. A Little Free Pantry is one example of an open table that you and your community can co-create with Christ in your area. If you are curious about how you could create a Little Free Food Pantry on your church property, check out <https://emmausucc.org/> or <https://www.littlefreepantry.org/>.