



The Open Door
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The Open Door Holiday Baskets Program Tops More Than 1,000 Thanksgiving Baskets

The Open Door Thanksgiving Food Drive Nets 24,546 Pounds of Donated Food



The Open Door volunteer Sue Sudbay loads a turkey into a car during the drive-thru Thanksgiving Holiday Basket pick-up event on Emerson Avenue on Saturday, Nov. 20. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)

GLOUCESTER – No one's plate should be empty this Thanksgiving (or ever), thanks to profound community support for The Open Door Thanksgiving Food Drive and Thanksgiving Basket program.

“The Thanksgiving Food Drive and Thanksgiving Basket program provide meals for all who need a little help now and beyond the holiday season,” said President and CEO Julie LaFontaine. “Programs like this wouldn’t be possible without the power of a community that cares, and we offer our deepest gratitude to all those who helped make sure everyone had a place at the Thanksgiving table this year.”

The Open Door Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive collected **24,546** pounds of cereal and dry goods collectively, through donations made on Saturday, Nov. 20 at six participating area grocery stores as well as multiple food collections organized by local people and organizations throughout November. This year, an emphasis was placed on cereal donations as cereal is consistently in high demand at The Open Door food pantries.

Through The Open Door Thanksgiving Basket program, **more than 1,000** households were provided with all the food needed to prepare a holiday meal at home. Pick-up appointments for the Holiday Basket program began late last week and limited deliveries were also available. Thanksgiving Holiday Baskets included a turkey or a gift card to purchase one (people had the option to choose whichever they preferred), squash, muffin mix, apples, potatoes, yams, green beans, cranberry sauce, and gravy.

249 volunteers donated the collective muscle to make this project happen, donating a combined 581 hours of time.

The Open Door also offers Holiday Baskets for the December holidays, sign-ups will be posted early in December. Pick-ups will be scheduled the week of Dec. 20. More information will be announced as soon as it becomes available.

Monetary donations to support programs of The Open Door can be made or mailed to The Open Door at 28 Emerson Ave., Gloucester MA or made online at FOODPANTRY.org/donate.

About The Open Door

The mission of The Open Door is to alleviate the impact of hunger in our community. We use practical strategies to connect people to good food, to advocate on behalf of those in need, and to engage others in the work of building food security.

Founded in 1978, The Open Door is a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit and community food resource center for low-income residents of Gloucester, Rockport, Manchester, Essex, Ipswich, Hamilton, Boxford, Rowley, Topsfield, and Wenham. In 2020, The Open Door helped stabilize the lives and health of 9,681 unduplicated people from 4,703 households through the distribution of 2.46 million pounds of food, amounting to 2.05 million meals. Requests for food assistance during this pandemic year were up 27 percent.

For more information, visit FOODPANTRY.org.

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The Open Door volunteers load Holiday Baskets into cars during a drive-thru pick-up event on Emerson Avenue on Saturday. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Volunteers from Windhill Realty Jenn Meuse, left, and Toni Riddle check-in a client for a Holiday Basket pick-up at the Ipswich Community Food Pantry on Monday. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Ipswich Community Pantry Shift Leader Susan Otis picks up produce, dry goods and a turkey for someone picking up a Holiday Basket at the Ipswich Community Food Pantry on Monday. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



President and CEO Julie LaFontaine, left, and The Open Door Board Chair Kersten Lanes at Market Basket in Gloucester on Saturday. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Student volunteers from the Pingree School volunteered on Saturday at Market Basket in Gloucester during The Open Door's annual Thanksgiving Food Drive. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



Warehouse Coordinator Vito Aiello pulls cereal donations to be trucked back to The Open Door from Market Basket in Rowley. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)



More than five gaylords of cereal were donated to The Open Door at Market Basket in Gloucester alone during Saturday's Thanksgiving Food Drive. (Photo Courtesy of The Open Door)