

AROUND THE

Circle Newsletter

Circle of Concern
Food Pantry



Current Needs:

- Dinner Helpers
- Oatmeal
- Cereal
- Pasta Sauce
- Pasta
- Canned Soup
- Feminine Pads
- Tampons
- Incontinence Pads
- Size 6 Baby Diapers
- Pull Ups

The Power of Planning ~ and Giving!



Former volunteers, George and Carolyn Burr would be pleased with the way their charitable dollars have been used to support Circle's clients and volunteers; and the way their dollars are helping Circle to plan for the future.

Their charitable bequest, received in 2023, has enabled us to serve ten percent more

families this year. It enabled us to purchase an adjacent property (the lot formerly occupied by Meramec Jack's,) and to replace an aging delivery van in need of repair.

The new van allows our volunteers to stand upright while loading and unloading. It has a back-up camera, making it easier and safer to back in and out of loading docks. It enables us to retrieve larger donations from the Food Bank and others. With our bigger campus, we can explore improvements to our warehouse and pantry that streamline operations and allow us to serve even more families in the future.

"George was a volunteer driver; Carolyn was an accounting volunteer for 12 years, and she served on our board for a time. They both would agree with these practical and strategic decisions," says Glenn Koenen, former executive director of Circle, and friend to the Burrs.

OUR MISSION:

Circle of Concern feeds the hungry and provides assistance to low-income families living in our community.

OUR VISION:

Improving every life in our community by reducing hunger and poverty.



Circle of Concern
FOOD PANTRY

*Feeding Families is
Just the Beginning*

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A Note from Cyndi

Thank you so much for your kindness & generosity. We have had amazing snacks to munch on while doing school. Thank you so much!

We appreciate the help we receive from you so much.

Thank You! I am so grateful to have Circle of Concern in the community. You have helped me out not only with resources and healthy food but utilities as well. The staff leaves me with positive energy and a smile 😊
Thank You!

Recently, I spent time with a group of area students and youth group leaders who visited Circle of Concern to learn about community service, philanthropy, food insecurity and the circumstances that may bring a family to our doors.

When one of the young men bravely shared that his own family reached out to Circle for help after his parents' divorce, the students learned some other things too. They learned that sometimes the "neighbors in need" are indeed *our neighbors*. They learned that unexpected circumstances (like the break-up of a family) can wreak havoc on a family's financial wellbeing. I know these engaged and thoughtful students learned a lesson in empathy, too.

Whether a household is struggling due to a job loss, an illness or injury that disrupts employment, the loss of a loved one, crippling medical bills, or any number of factors that make it difficult to get by, we stand ready to help. Our generous donors, devoted volunteers, caring staff and community partners enable us to do so. We are grateful to each of you for your gifts of support, and our clients want you to know that they are grateful too.

From all of us to you and yours, may your holiday season be bright.

Hi, my name is [REDACTED]

Circle of Concern has been helping me over the past few months. I can't say enough wonderful things about this organization. Everybody I dealt with was so kind and so helpful. I couldn't have asked for better support.

I have been getting a decent amount of freelance work, which makes it hard for me to validate using and taking a spot that someone else may need. I believe my industry will be more viable in the coming months, which will allow me the financial independence I need to move forward in my life.

Thank you so much for everything you have done for me and others. Circle of Concern is truly a gift to the community. The staff is compassionate and caring. The organization is organized and so well run!

Again, thank you for everything. You assisted me during one of the lowest points in my life.

Sincerely Yours,

Cyndi

Cyndi Miller
Executive Director

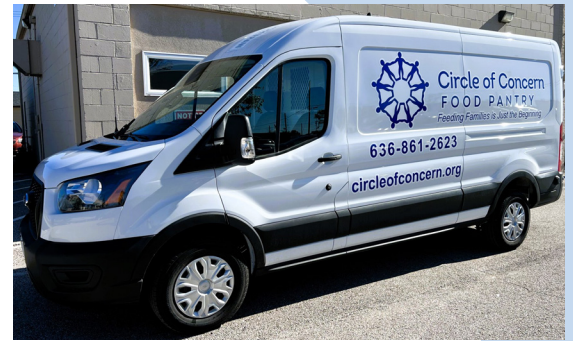


The Power of Giving *cont. from page 1*

We feel a new momentum growing at Circle. When we join hands in service to others, it can be transformative. We can collaborate in helping our neighbors right now while also planning for future needs.

If, like George and Carolyn, you wish to strategize your support of Circle through a bequest; a gift of stock, donor advised fund or qualified charitable distribution, we hope you'll reach out. These types of donations can be more "tax-smart" than giving cash. Learn more at: <https://www.circleofconcern.org/ways-to-help/planned-estate-giving/>.

Whether you make a gift today or later, we thank you for all the ways you make our work possible at Circle of Concern!



Here are just a few of the difference makers in the community that hosted food and personal care collections recently. These donations fast track their way to the kitchens of our clients, who are so grateful for the support.

- Eureka High School - 11,542 pounds
- Lafayette High School - 8,636 pounds
- The Crossing Church - 5,200 pounds
- Bristol Elementary, Webster Groves - 3,140 pounds
- Wheelhouse Advisory Group - 2,200 pounds
- Rotary Club Daily Essential Drive - 1,401 pounds
- Cushman and Wakefield - 1,158 pounds
- Megan Meier Foundation Gobble Bowl - 840 pounds
- Riverchase YMCA - 837 pounds
- Edward Jones - John Hoffstetter - 598 pounds
- Automatic Controls - 515 pounds
- Sacred Heart Valley Park - 302 pounds in October
- P.U.R.E. Youth - monthly personal care items



Holiday Appeal

YOU are the support that fills a shopping cart...when you support Circle's Holiday Program. We are busier than ever, providing food, comfort, and relief to our community's most vulnerable families. Your gift ensures every child, senior, single parent, veteran—every person—served by Circle will experience the joy of the holiday season. You can make a child's eyes light up with a gift under the tree, provide support to an aging neighbor, or offer relief to a single parent.

Just visit www.circleofconcern.org and click on Holiday Program on our homepage to make a donation, or scan the QR code in the photo. Your gift will ensure we can provide a \$50 gift card for every member of every client household. On behalf of all who come to us for assistance, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Your generosity brings peace to families!

In Honor and Memory

December 1, 2023 - October 31, 2024

When you give in Honor or in Memory of a loved one, you also honor Circle with your gift that ensures families in our area can eat nutritious food and access critical social service programs; and we thank you!

IN HONOR

AARP Tax Prep Volunteers
Kevin Abel
Adam for Christmas
Jill Albano's Birthday
Kimberly Albright
Bridget Albright's Family
All Those Who Serve
AmerCareRoyal Team Members
and Thanksgiving
Mary Lou Anderson
Avadel Pharmaceuticals
Charles Barnett
Valerie Behrens
Karen Bellville
Bob and Denise
Jack Boyle
Wayne and Bobbie Brent
Barbara Brown
The Butler Family for Christmas
Rev. Kevin Cameron's 20th
Anniversary at Parkway UCC
Christmas
Penny and Greg Christoffel
for Valentine's Day
Christy and Gary's Engagement
Circle of Concern Staff
Don and Billie Coon
Mary Ann Cutelli's Birthday
Karen Dunne
Easter
Sue Easterby
Betty Engen
Erica Eritreo
Connor and Bailey Fairfax
Fancy Lady Walkers
Fellow Friday Afternoon
Volunteers
Fifield Family for Christmas
The Goehler Family
Tim and Jackie Golby's
50th Anniversary
Jackie Golby's Books
and Babes Event
Carole Gwyn
Steve Hager's Birthday
Hankinson Family
Kina Heather
Jean Heinemann
Barbara "Jerry" Held
Dawn Held's Birthday
Lori Fisher and Jane Hencel

Gail Hintz
Jennifer Hoffman
Rose Hoffman
Juliet Holden
Joyce Inman
Boyd and Barbara Jones
Josie, Ruth Hughes' Hairdresser
Caro Kern's Birthday
Sharon King
Susan Krasniewski
R. Lages' Birthday
Cindy Launhardt
Lent
M. Ray Evans and David Liley
for Christmas
Ellen Livingston
Rich and Rita Lodholz's
60th Wedding Anniversary
Don Loso
Brent Lucas
Sharon Maddox's Birthday
March Birthdays - Shannon,
Daron, Dick and Grace
Alan McClendon
Alexis McQuitty's Birthday
Scotty Meyer
Jo Ellen Miller's Birthday
Cyndi Miller's Support of
Sacred Heart Valley Park
Lenten Speaker Series
Arnold Mueller's Birthday
Gerald and Karen Nash
National Night Out
New Outlook Pioneers
of Eastern Missouri
Amy and Nelson Nolte
Larry and Eileen O'Brien
Barb Odenwald's Birthday
Tina and Win Odo's
50th Wedding Anniversary
Nancy Parker
Bill Parker's Birthday
Mary Patton
Linda Patton's Birthday
Emma Jean Phillips' Birthday
Emma Jean Phillips' Christmas
Mike and Sally Pierle
Kim Poley
Carol Ponciroli
Becky Pool
Joan Prestien's Birthday
Edie Quick

Betty Quicksall
Madeline Raile
Sofia Reinken
Dwyer Brown and Nancy Reynolds
Ann Ross
W. E. Rowe
Rich and Barb Ruiz for Christmas
Penny Ryan's Birthday
Baker and Jackson Sharpe
Bobbie Siesennop
Sisters of Good Times
Lisa Smith
Staff at Lord of Life Lutheran
Church in Chesterfield
Jack and Becky Stephenson
Team DKM
Those Who Volunteer
Linda and Chris Thumm
The Thumm Family
Amy and Nelson Torbert
Chris Trimbur
Judy Underhill
Philip Waldman
Jane Walsma's Birthday
West County Democrats
The Westermann Family
for Christmas
Michael Whitaker
Chris Wiley's Birthday
Nancy Wilson
Barb Woehle
Janie Wolfangel
James D. Wolfe's Birthday

IN MEMORY

Marty Altman
Linda Gail Anderson
Harriet Antoine
Lisa Marie Anzalone
Ella M. Avery
Margaret Avery
Ray and Bobbie Baniak
Jerry Barnett
Sally Barnhart
Don and Elaine Baumbach
Sherry Behrman-Howell
Robert Berger
Laura Bickford
Jack Bodine
Lvira "Vi" Bogard
Margaret Mary "Peg" Bolen
Andrea Braun

Judith Brennan
Sean Phillip Bricker
Sean Brinker
Jerry G. Brown
Bill Browne
Shirley Browne
Leslie Burket
Anthony Busalaki
Dolly Busalaki
Janet Byington
Jerry Caesar
Vicki Challis
James Andrew Cheatham
Harriet Clark
Trevor Clark
Loude Coady
Mrs. Conley
John and Connie Conrad
Randolph Constantine
Lisa Copeland
Susan Cuddihee
Jamie Dam
Al and Dru DeLisle
A. Paul DeMargel
Pat Devoti
Pat Dietz
Louise DuMontier
Carol Ann Dunn
Russ Dunn
Dickson Dunsworth Sr.
Helen Earls
Gertrude Eaton
Sally Edmiston
Leta Edmonds
Gary Eller
Donald Franklin Emert
Perry Fairfax
Michael Fink
Dennis M. Flanagan
Kay Folsom
Tom Frichtel
Mary N. Ibarra Garcia
Jason Gilley
David Goalstone
Luke D. Grater
Sue C. Gresco
Tillie Gruen
Kenneth Guier
Bob and Ginny Guinther
Dorothy Gulley
Thomas M. Gunn
Mary Hanna's Brother
Carole Hansmann
Paul Hanson
Ronald Hanson
Evlwyt Groene Harman

Steven Hart
Marilyn Hay
Cathleen Heitmann
Joyce Henderson
Georgia Herpel
Vic Hezel
Herman Holtmeyer
Mark Howell
Earl and Mae Hudson
Mitchell Humphrey
Phelps Hurford
Robert Huskey
Jesus Christ
Chris Joyce
Mary Louise Junk
Virginia Kamm
Marge Nell Kennedy
Jane Kostelc
Haran Kumar
Margaret Kunst
Racheal L.
Troy and Mary Lane
Randy Leach
Esther and Andrew
Lehmann
Bill Lenox
Jean Lerner
Dick Levinson
Horty Levinson
Dot Link
Rose and Sylvester Liss
Andrew Livingston
Patrick Livingston
Grace Loeffelman
Richard Long
Fred Longshaw
Michael Lopez
Brian Loy
Jean Luedde
William Luedde
Hazel Mabrey
Pete Makulec
Charlene M. Malone
Mahendra Mandava
Eva Mae Marcum
Alice Marron
John V. Marron
Mary May
Connie McCauley
Daryl Metzener
Dominic Mikal
Mom
Patricia Mueller
Mugsey and Jen
Marlene Muir
Mark Gerald Naes

John Nettler
Oliver and Helen
Newberry
Ralph Newberry
Donald Nichoalds
LaVern Niere
Patrick Nolan
John and Joice O'Hare
Joan Oppliger
John Osborne
Flip and Arleen Pallozola
Clyde and Nadine
Patterson
Ashlyn Newell Pattison
Alberta "Bert" Patton
Don Peters
Herman Kenneth Peterson
Donald Piekarski
Aniella Prylinska
Harry Paul Purvis
Nancy Pyatek
Carl Quicksall
Betty Rakestraw
Mr. Ramakrishnan
Joe Reiner
Lois Harrawood Rickman
Ora Rozelle
Sylvia Schermesser
Mary and Herman Schmitz
Art Schnatterly
Rev. Richard Simonson
Diana Snow
Victoria Ann Snyder
Jerry Spector
Ann Studards
Carol Stukey
James Andrew Stulce
Bill and Shirley Swanson
Will Theerman
Patty Thompson
Raven and Dan Vail
Mary Vasterling
Linda Sue Vermette
Bob Vollmar
Craig Wear
Robert E. Weiler Jr.
Audrey Wempner
Harry and Jean West
Tom Whaley
Joyce Wilke
Jerry and Marj Withers
Timothy Wolf
Carolyn Wolff
Amy Woods
Mildred Zahner
Mary Jane Zinschlag

Fruitful Garden Seasons



The Restorative Justice team collects produce throughout the summer from the Eastern Missouri Correctional Facility, located in Pacific, MO. Through a unique partnership with the facility's Restorative Justice program, Circle benefits from a one-acre garden located at the facility. Each week during peak harvest season, this volunteer team heads to Pacific, picks up the produce and returns to Circle to wash and prep the produce so it's ready to be shared with clients as soon as possible. This year the team collected **3,731 pounds** of garden-fresh vegetables!

The Garden Greens team works miracles in our own onsite garden. Thanks to very thoughtful and intentional planning, these volunteers plant and harvest three times throughout the season, resulting in over **1,400 pounds** of wholesome vegetables shared with our clients. The volunteers on this team contribute their time and knowledge in so many ways. Whether it's lending their expertise in soil and composting, or planting, weeding and prepping produce to share with clients, they do it all!

Please join us in congratulating these volunteer teams for another productive harvest season. We appreciate their commitment immensely, and our clients love the abundance and variety of produce we share with them through these programs.

Tax Advantage

When you give to Circle of Concern, you improve the lives of families we serve, which can make a big impact for you – thanks to the popular Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit (FPTC).

This credit directly reduces the amount you pay in state income taxes. With a simple form verified by Circle, you can earn up to \$2,500 in tax credits when you give up to \$5,000. Couples filing jointly can earn up to \$5,000 in credits when they give up to \$10,000. **To simplify this process, we will proactively prepare, sign and send, by February 1, the verified form to every donor who gives monetary gifts totaling \$200 or more in 2024.** That way you'll have plenty of time to file your return by the April 15 deadline.

Please note, as we've seen in recent years, when claims for credits exceed the state's designated credits, the state will apportion the credits among tax payers that qualify. At Circle, we want to assure you that the tax credits are still valuable and your gifts, no matter the size, are always appreciated!

Please consider supporting Circle this holiday season. The good you give comes right back to you through the FPTC. Contact circle@circleofconcern.org.

Pickleball Social 2025

You're invited to the 3rd Annual Dink It! For Families in Need! Join fellow pickleball lovers on Saturday, February 1st for a fun, round-robin social that welcomes all skill levels, and benefits local families. During your "bye" you'll have time to chat with new and old friends, refuel, or hit the cash bar. Entry is \$50 for social and intermediate players and \$25 for those wanting to learn. So, pick up a paddle and let's make a difference! Register today at www.circleofconcern.org/events/pickleball-2025 or by scanning the QR code.





Rotary Essentials Drive

Each fall, the Rotary Club of West St. Louis County holds their Rotary Family Daily Essentials drive. This year, they collected 1,401 pounds of personal care items for Circle families. A huge thank you to the Rotary volunteers who distributed bags across the neighborhoods and then returned to collect them from generous residents.



Plus, we'd like to give a special shoutout to the students from Parkway Fern Ridge High School who prepared the donation bags for distribution. Their dedication in preparing all of the bags, filling them with informational materials, and getting them ready for the Rotary team plays a vital role in gathering these donations. Fern Ridge students help make this valuable collection possible!

The Fern Ridge and Rotary teams are both essential to serving our client families; we are grateful for you!



Farewell to Retiring Board Members

We want to wish the very best to Circle's retiring Board of Directors members—Aaron Froehlich, Dr. Allison Love, and Cindy Wolk. Each of these leaders took part in key discussions about Circle's strategic direction, mission and key policies. Aaron served three years and supported our Special Events, Finance and Building and Grounds Committees. Allison and Cindy each served six years, and were members of our Executive Committee. Allison led our Board Development and DEI Committees; Cindy led our Scholarship Committee and was a member of our Human Relations Committee. We will miss each of these leaders on our board, but they assure us they will remain active as volunteers; and for that, we are grateful!



*Dr. Allison Love,
President
of the Board*



*Cindy Wolk,
Vice President
of the Board*



*Aaron Froehlich,
Board Member*

Hams for the Holidays



Thank you to the Gleich family for donating 100 hams for the holidays! With support from the Dierberg family, they have been providing seasonal favorites for over 10 years. Our clients are always excited and grateful to receive this special addition to their family feast. This donation exemplifies the meaning of the holiday season – a time to give, share, and come together.



Circle of Concern FOOD PANTRY

112 St. Louis Ave.
Valley Park, MO 63088
Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO. 3252

Power of Giving December 2024

Board of Directors:

Allison Love
PRESIDENT

Cindy Wolk
VICE PRESIDENT

Mark Barbee
TREASURER

Bridget Guffey
SECRETARY

Brian Boeglin
Thomas Chibnall
Aaron Froehlich
John Heskett
Karen Korn
Edie Quick
Andrea Trapet

We share many donations with our clients:

- Food, Canned and Packaged
- Fresh Garden Produce
- Dry Pet Food, Litter
- Personal Care Items

Donations are accepted:

Mon, Tues, Fri 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Wed 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Thurs 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Sat 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Your monetary gift or food donation can qualify for MO Food Pantry Tax Credits. Contact Circle@circleofconcern.org to find out more.

Important Dates:



- December 24 & 25** Circle Closed
- December 26-28 & December 30-31** Circle Closes at Noon
- December 31** Last day to submit 2024 donations for tax advantages!
- January 1** Circle Closed
- February 1** **Dink It! Pickleball Social**
Register today at circleofconcern.org



"LIKE US" on Facebook and visit us online at www.circleofconcern.org.

STAFF DIRECTORY

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Nancy Bauer , Volunteer/Special Events Director	nancy@circleofconcern.org ext. 113
Jenny Lawrence , Program Director	jenny@circleofconcern.orgext. 108
Beth Niezing , Donor Relations Administrator	beth@circleofconcern.org ext. 112
Becky Pool , Pantry Coordinator	becky@circleofconcern.org ext. 120