



# PEAS-Talks!

People Engaged in Acts of Service  
*PEASCorp's Outreach Newsletter*

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North Cascade Seventh Day Adventist Church

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800 Peacock Lane, Burlington, WA 98233, 360-757-7577

## Food Baskets

By Carol Atkins & Ira Bartolome

The Holiday Food Basket Ministry continues to be a staple in the outreach ministry of the North Cascade Church. There is a growing need to help families during the holidays with emergency food and a holiday meal. It is very difficult to turn down requests for help and thanks to our very caring and generous church family, we have not had to make that decision. We can only pray that we will be able to continue meeting those needs as they come to us.

Our church has given out approximately 30 food baskets to families for both Thanksgiving and Christmas each for the past

few years. These baskets have impacted families in positive ways by providing relief from hunger and a sense of hope for the holidays. We have served many families with a wide variety of difficult circumstances, some of which include single-parent families, families who have lost jobs and homes, and others who are struggling to help support and raise grandchildren.

Holiday Food Baskets have been a ministry of North Cascade for over 10 years. Originally, led by Debbie Fogelquist, the ministry started out in the fellowship hall with a few volunteers. The ministry in

recent years has moved to the Youth House and has involved more than 60 volunteers each year. These food baskets cover both the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays. Families in need of extra food assistance have contacted the church or have been referred to the church through organizations such as LOVE Inc and the Skagit Valley Herald.

The months of October through December have typically been a big push to bring in all of the needed food. Members of the church are asked to donate specific food to supplement what the community has contributed to our food drives. Over the years, the response from the community has been very encouraging. Groups like the Pathfinder Club, Youth and Skagit Adventist Academy go into the community collecting donations. They come back to the youth house with bags and bags of food.

The process of sorting the food is slow and tedious for the few volunteers. In the days leading up to the Sabbath of basket assembly and delivery, another set of volunteers go shopping to buy fresh produce and other items that are lacking. Donated money helps to cover the cost of the last minute purchase of fresh



produce and items that are still needed to complete the baskets.

Due to the short time period of this ministry, there is a lot of work to do in a very short amount of time. As a result, the process becomes stressful and chaotic at times. This year we are trying a few changes in hopes of achieving a smoother process. In an effort to start collecting food earlier in the year, we will be highlighting the **“Food of the Month.”** Each month our church family is encouraged to donate those specific items, thus making it easier to purchase the items on sale as you do your personal grocery shopping. Look for the food basket in the foyer.

**Adopting a food basket** is a new idea to the food basket ministry this year. A member suggested sponsoring a food basket for a specific family throughout the year rather than giving in bulk for the months of November and December. “It puts a strain on the budget at the end of the year,” was stated as the reason for trying to prepare for the holidays ahead of time.

Many members are willing to give, but they are just searching for creative and more affordable ways of giving.

Carol Atkins, Holiday Food Basket Coordinator, responds to the importance of this ministry, “It not only fulfills a physical need for the less fortunate people, but it also is an opportunity to plant a “seed” and open doors to let them know that there are people who care and want to share the Lord’s love with them. It also gives us as a church family an opportunity to count our own blessings and to discover the blessings of giving and sharing as well.”

Here are a few ways you and your family can participate with our Holiday Food Basket Ministry.

1. Adopt a food basket throughout the year. You can build the basket or give a monetary donation to cover the cost of a basket.
2. Food of the Month. Every month different foods are highlighted for donations.

Hopefully at the end of the year we will have a good inventory of staple foods.

3. Give food and money donations in November and December. Help reach the goals set for the holiday season.
4. Sharing Tree. In conjunction with Christmas Food Baskets a few families sponsored through Skagit Valley Herald also received Christmas gifts.
5. Referrals. If you know a family in need of emergency food, please contact any member of the Outreach Committee. We can help!
6. Volunteer. Help plan and organize different aspects of this ministry.

Need more information on food banks in our area? Call 211. For more information on the Holiday Food Basket Ministry contact Carol Atkins 202-1695 or Laneta Penninger 421-4685.

## GET INVOLVED!

**Blood Drives:** When, Twice a year, Contact: Vicki Jacobs, 707-2506

**Sharing Tree:** When, Christmas, Contact: Lanita Penninger, 428-8923 or Carol Atkins 757-0967

**Community Action Picnic:** When, August: Contact: Cindy Hartley 595-2947

**Family Development Center:** When, Ongoing, Contact: Cindy Hartley 595-2947

**Financial Peace University:** When: Fall: Contact: Sheri Price, 757-7577

**Food Baskets:** When, ongoing & Thanksgiving & Christmas: Contact: Laneta Penninger, 421-4685 or Carol Atkins, 202-1695

**Friendship House:** When, 1<sup>st</sup> Wed every month: Contact: Lydia Apt 630-9346

**Needy Family/General Fund:** When, ongoing: Contact, Sheri Price, 757-7577

**PEASTalks Newsletter:** When, ongoing: Contact: Kristie Lindell, 202-6057

**Skagit Adventist School & Academy:** When: ongoing: Contact: Doug White, 755-9261

**Spruced Up Thrift Shop:** When, Ongoing: Contact: 755-1141

**Sunshine Band:** When, To Be Announced: Contact: Dana Schafer, 854-7919

**Teddy Bear Packs/New Mom Packs:** When, ongoing: Contact: Lillian Stutz, 757-2616

**Teen Oasis Center:** When, ongoing: Contact: Joan Hilde, 856-6013

*Dear Children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:18*