

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Mission & Vision
- The HC Community Care Center & Food Pantry: Dream to Reality



COMMUNITY  
**CARE CENTER**  
& FOOD PANTRY

# OFFICIAL NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 2019 EDITION

## MISSION

Through the love of Jesus Christ, we will partner with local agencies and organizations to eliminate hunger and to provide resources to promote independent living and a sustainable lifestyle.

## VISION

To serve others with the love of Jesus Christ, offering those in need in the greater Grand Forks area opportunities to receive physical, emotional and spiritual support while empowering them to have a sustainable future.



*We know we will never be done feeding people, so we'll meet those needs always.*

- Jody Larson

THE HC COMMUNITY CARE CENTER  
& FOOD PANTRY:

*Dream to Reality*

## THE DREAM

The Care Center started as a dream that kept Jody Larson, the Director of Congregational Care at HOPE Church, up at night. "Day by day God was giving me different ideas." And over time, that dream transformed into a reality.

The Care Center opened in December of 2018, and since then has provided food for more than 800 households in Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, and Fisher. That's about 117,737 pounds of food! A year ago, the space was used for storage. Today, it bustles with volunteers rolling in crates of



food, stocking shelves, and serving patrons. Its transformation started with passion and a dream.

It all began with Jody and Pastor Paul Knight from HOPE Church envisioning a place where needs in the community could be met and where people could feel hope and love. They wanted to meet long-term needs by providing services such as budgeting classes or English language classes. Meeting immediate needs was also part of the plan and that door opened when a local church and its food pantry were closing and members approached Pastor Paul about HOPE Church taking the pantry on. At that time, Paul and Jody thought it was too much to handle. Then they were approached by the pantry a second time and this time members of the community also encouraged them to take it on.

What happened next was a lot of talking and a lot of praying. Pastor Paul and Jody decided that if they could come up with \$50,000 (a number they randomly chose), they would move forward with the project.

They came up with even more.



By August of 2018 a Board made up of HOPE Church attenders, community members, and business leaders was in place and by December of 2018 the Food Pantry portion of the Care Center was underway.

The Care Center is a HOPE Church ministry and its mission and vision align with the church. Jody explains that although it is part of HOPE, it's considered a community project because the need is greater than what a single church could or should be doing on their own.

The on-the-ground work is mostly run by volunteers from the community. On a weekly basis, volunteers pick up hundreds of pounds of fresh produce, bread, meat, and dairy products donated from Grand Forks businesses including Walmart, Sam's Club, Subway, Bimbo Bakeries, and Natural Grocers. The pantry also relies on food purchased from the Great Plains Food Bank and food and financial donations from organizations and individuals in the community.

Volunteers also assist clients on the days the Food Pantry is open for shopping. When clients arrive, they are given a specific number of points they can use to shop with. The number of points they receive is based on the number of people in their household. With a volunteer, clients walk through the food aisles and shop for food they need and want using their points. Not only do volunteers help with the shopping, but they also serve by walking alongside clients to listen to their stories, show them love, and encourage them.

## THE REALITY

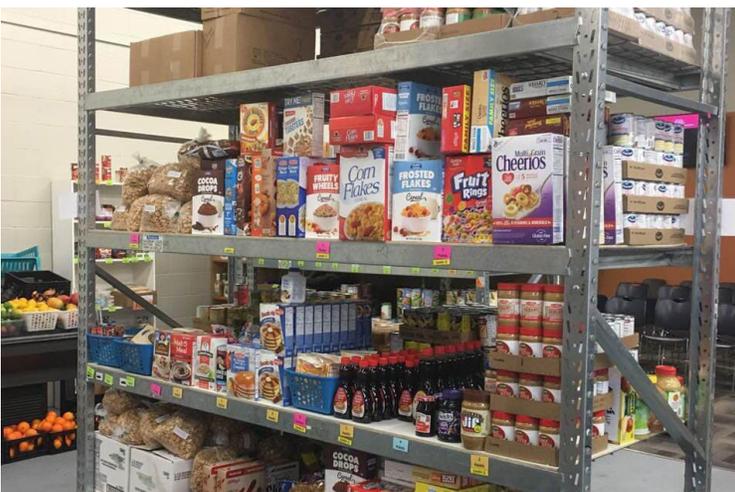
The church that was closing sold their facility and donated \$50,000 from the sale. Then, the Reimagine HOPE Campaign from HOPE Church donated \$10,000. More funding came from grants, local businesses, and individuals from the community.

In addition to financial donations, businesses and individuals began giving deals on or donating shelving, walk-in coolers, and equipment such as shopping carts and pallet jacks. People also donated their time and skills.

"We know we will never be done feeding people, so we'll meet those needs always," said Jody.

The ultimate goal is that the Care Center will one day provide tools to help people have an independent life style.

"To me this gives people hope, a chance to get people on their feet if they want that," said Jody. "I want people to find freedom in that and from all of the things that are holding them back. Jesus came to set people free and to me that is everything. Find freedom through Christ. It all falls into place, the food, the classes, the support groups."



## THE FUTURE

The dreams for the future are big. The Care Center is still new, still growing, and still evolving as the need continues to increase. Right now, the Center is focusing most of its energy and resources on meeting the immediate needs of feeding people.



The Food Pantry is open for food donation drop-offs Monday - Wednesday from 9:00am - 1:00pm.

Volunteers are needed continually throughout the month and can go to [www.gfhope.org/carecenter](http://www.gfhope.org/carecenter) to sign up or to get more information on the center.