



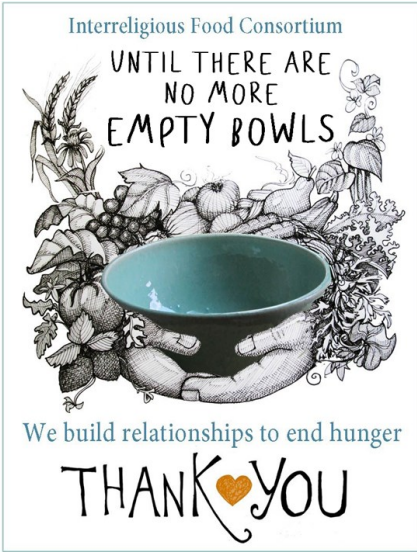
INTERRELIGIOUS FOOD CONSORTIUM

Building Relationships to End Hunger

FALL 2021/WINTER 2022

OUR MISSION: The IFC is a grassroots organization providing valuable resources to food pantries and other service providers, many of whom are very small and under-resourced, in the emergency food network of Syracuse and Onondaga County.

EMPTY BOWLS...OUR BIGGEST ANNUAL FUNDRAISER



We had a great **EMPTY BOWLS** event on Friday, September 24, 2021. We were **"under the BIG TOP"** in Armory Square with our bowls and enthusiastic crew of potters, folks from **S.U., Clayscapes, Cazenovia College and lots of volunteers**. We sold hundreds of bowls in the short time that we had...11-2. Since the event I have had many calls, emails etc. that folks were sorry they couldn't make it that day! We were able to make over \$10,000 in the short span of time. We all missed having the event indoors, with a nice bowl of soup and some camaraderie. Next year...**Friday, September 30th 2022 will be our next Empty Bowls**, hoping it returns to the warm and welcoming event that it has been for the last 18 years! A huge thank you goes out to **Don and Kim Seymour from Clayscapes** for generously providing the clay for the potters to create the bowls, to **Prof. Peter Beasecker from the SU Art Dept** for his tireless work on our behalf, his students who made the bowls, set up and cleaned up the area, to the **SU administration** for providing us the space, tent and the support of this event, to my friend **Kim Waale, Professor and Chair, Art and Design at Cazenovia College** and her students who made the



glass bowls and to **Shawn McGuire**, from Caz college and his students for the bowls they made. Also, the many volunteers who helped with publicity, handling the money, packing bowls, directing traffic etc., were invaluable.

So, I have a **surprise** for you! I now have bowls on display at our office --- **731 James St.** and am happy to have you call, 315 474-8855 or email me, ifcific@hotmail.com to come over and take a look. We are thinking that the holidays are coming and these bowls would make **"special gifts"** as they really are a **gift that keeps on giving**. There is a card that goes in them to let people know what the donation is benefiting. Besides being used for soup and serving bowls, some people are planting succulents in them. Great idea! (**Bowls available until December 21**)

Thank you "from the bottom of our bowls" for your continued support of IFC and its mission.

Blessings... Kate Artessa
Director Interreligious Food Consortium



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731 James Street • Syracuse, NY 13203 • 315-474-8855



Dear IFC Supporters and Friends,

Here I am just over a year later as Director of IFC. It has been an amazing year in many ways...lots of learning, lots of new friendships and partnerships, and of course Covid 2.1, aka Covid 2021.

What to say? What is living through a Pandemic? How are we doing? What have we been doing?

Seems like there are more questions than answers and that we have to often live with/in the **QUESTIONS.**

Covid has brought so many things to the forefront...some good, some not so good, and some quite enlightening...

We have been forced to take a look at ourselves, our lives, our goals, dreams etc. and decide what is important. The IFC has had to confront new challenges and meet new needs. Some longstanding pantries have closed due to lack of volunteers or volunteers not willing to risk their health and well-being,

Some pantries have drastically changed their hours to operating on a much smaller scale. **This has created a situation in which some neighborhoods are not well covered for those who need food. Food Stamp, Enhanced Unemployment Benefits and Child tax Credits have provided much needed supplemental supports for many households resulting in a decreased use of Food Pantries. But that government aid will not last forever.** So, we still need to keep our pantries active and ready for all needs. IFC has a great network of pantries that utilize our services. We have partnered recently with IFW (Interfaith Works) that has a network of Churches, Mosques and Temples that have started their own pantries that we now serve. We are trying to connect the dots and not leave food deserts in our community.

Currently we are gearing up along with IFW to be able to serve the New Americans arriving from Afghanistan. We will be the supplier of basic food needs for these families. As they resettle, IFW has always supported housing needs for the new immigrants but not the food items. We are now doing that in this great partnership. We live right down the street from one another so it makes it a great collaboration (see letter on next page).

Finally, our newest endeavor, has been putting together food boxes for Covid quarantined families referred to us by the County Health Dept and delivering them to those who cannot leave their homes. Since our last newsletter in the Spring the IFC has traveled all four directions within Onondaga County to respond to the basic need of food and nutrition, necessary for life itself. **During that span we have received and handled nearly 20,000 lbs and distributed over 25,000 lbs of donated and purchased food, with service to 150 households and 50 pantries.**



Hopefully, at some point, this need will no longer exist. For now, it has been humbling to be able to help, and many call us back expressing their deepest appreciation for us, and by extension all of you who support us.

Peace, Kate



Did you know?? These facts about IFC

IFC relies **solely** on donations of food and money from individual contributors, faith-based congregations and local organizations, foundations and businesses to continue our work. We often get confused with the Food Bank of Central NY. We are a separate grassroots 501c3 organization and **unlike the Food Bank we do not receive any Governmental Funds.**





NEW IFW—IFC PARTNERSHIP

(Submitted by Beth Broadway, Executive Director of Interfaith Works)

For many years, **InterFaith Works (IFW)** served as the fiscal sponsor for the **Interreligious Food Consortium (IFC)**. It was a logical partnership. Both agencies worked across the spectrum of faith communities and IFW could help IFC with the back-end administrative work of accounting and auditing, as well as advertising the events and food drives of IFC. IFC then received its own 501c3 and no longer needed our sponsorship. Our relationship dwindled over the last few years.

Of late, with the hiring of Kate Artessa as IFC's executive director, the relationship between our two organizations has not only rekindled, but is now on fire!

And the need is great. Inner city communities and pantries were hit hard during that first 6- month period of COVID with layoffs and no new jobs available. They continue to be under resourced and underserved.

As our agency grew to accommodate this cadre of pantries, we knew we needed help from the experts. Kate Artessa of IFC and Karen Belcher of The Food Bank filled this role for us. We began thinking of them as our "mothers" in all things having to do with food pantries. Kate and her husband Arnie have long been involved with the food pantry at St. Lucy's Church, and with Kate's administrative skills, the IFC office began to hum again. Since Kate and I attend St. Lucy's together, we started to talk about what she was doing and how we could work together. Now, just a year later, we work as a close team, and here are some of the things that have happened:

- IFW hosts a **monthly Pantry Partners Zoom meeting** to connect the food pantries volunteers and staff, and to determine how to strengthen the system so it can effectively serve more people. Kate has presented the IFC story and resources to this group and attends as a complementary partner each month.
- **IFC collects food and opens its shelves to IFW's food pantries** when there are excess items to share. IFW refers our pantries to IFC regularly for non-perishable items that keep food flowing through the city.
- **IFW has received grants** through the Emergency Food and Shelter Grants administered by the United Way of Central New York.
- **One of the EFSP grants is specifically for foods for Afghan refugees** that are served by both IFW and Catholic Charities refugee resettlement programs. We had to buy the food in bulk, again to maximize the funds, and needed to find someplace to store the food so that it would last through the winter. Once again, Kate stepped up and offered to house the food at her facility, keeping it separate so that we could account for its use to the funder.
- Whenever we are unsure about where to get a needed local resource, Kate is there with advice and the phone number to call, whether it is for low-cost/high quality food, or for the bags and boxes to pack it in.

We have come to depend on Kate and the IFC as we build a strong base under the new pantries, and we are gratified to be able to help IFC reinvigorate its relationships to the places where it is needed most.

Items for Food Drives

Thank you for any donations that you can make so that we can help serve those in need of food in our community. Items listed below are the most common items we need and provide. All of our food is non-perishable. We would greatly appreciate it if you would make sure that the food you donate is **NOT EXPIRED**. We always want our families to get the best food possible. Thank you from the bottom of our bowls! We also accept monetary donations to purchase food we do not receive.



**Canned Tuna/Chicken
Spaghetti Sauce
Mayo/Ketchup/Mustard
Cake Mix/Frosting**

**Peanut Butter/Jelly
Flour, Sugar, Oil
Canned Fruit/Vegetables
Pancake Mix/Syrup**

**Rice
Cereals/Oatmeal
Soups / Broths
Ensure/Boost**



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Interreligious Food Consortium
731 James St.
Syracuse, NY 13203

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There are so many Agencies and People to thank that continue to support us by organizing Food Drives, delivering food to us, providing us with opportunities to pick up food etc...

We will never be able to fully express to them our gratitude but hopefully they will know we are good stewards of their donations. We enjoy **"paying it forward"** to those in need in our community. Deep gratitude to: Marie Cullen of St. Charles/St. Ann's Food Pantry; St. Matthews Episcopal Church; May Memorial: Pitcher Hill; Assumption Church; Mary Sopchak; St. Lucy's Church; Drumlin's Tennis Club; Bishop Grimes; Liverpool Library; OCWA; Faith Lutheran Church; St. Alban's Church; Jamesville Community Church; Catholic Charities; Pope John 23rd Church; Mission Hope Community; Jamie Cook; Good Shepherd Lutheran; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church; United Church of Fayetteville; RISE; Holy Family Church; NYPIRG; Centro Bus; Donna Goyette, M&S Desktop Publishing for all my printed materials; Lorraine Boyer, my faithful IFC volunteer, who keeps everything sorted and up to date!

Of course, **WE NEED TO GIVE A BIG SHOUT OUT TO Operation Northern Comfort (www.operationnc.org)** who generously donated their time and expertise to build us some beautiful, sturdy and spacious shelving units to store our food. As I say...the building will fall down before these shelves do! (pic of shelves being built).

There is a huge list of **MONETARY DONORS** who I have personally thanked but also wanted to give a shout out to all of them...these donations help us to purchase food that we normally would not receive or if there is a particular need .

THANK YOU ALL FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR BOWLS!



Where's Aubrey

...this is like a Where's Waldo game but I have put my granddaughter Aubrey in the newsletter somewhere for you to find. She comes periodically to help me with food sorting...sort of...lol.

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