

How Do We Celebrate Thanksgiving?

Tualatin School House Pantry Provides Food to Needy as well as an Opportunity for You to Give Back and Give Thanks.

BY TRACY SMITH, PROGRAM COORDINATOR @ TU SCHOOL HOUSE PANTRY

How do you celebrate such a meaningful holiday like Thanksgiving? Do we rush thru our crazy family gathering without even remembering to say thanks for something? Anything? Maybe the host gives a short speech about what we are all thankful for as quickly as possible before the food gets cold. Do we take for granted all that we as Americans have and have the potential to gain so for granted that food losing a degree or two of temperature is more important than giving thanks? How many of you have ever done an act of thankfulness to celebrate the holiday? I mean, after all, most of us just by living in America, have an incredible life full of opportunity to prosper compared to most of the world. The blessings of living in such a place often times are things we take for granted and rarely realize or acknowledge.

Although most Americans find themselves at Thanksgiving in a place with much to give thanks for, not all do. Many in our own local community have found the spikes in rent these past 2 years to be crippling. Many have found that although they are working, their wages have not increased over the years to match the increased cost of living and are no longer able to afford even the basics of life due to rent. Many in the past year have been forced to move to find cheaper rent by either moving into more rural areas with cheaper rent, by finding roommates, moving in with family or into their vehicles. Unfortunately, many even have found themselves homeless with long waiting lists for shelters that can't take them. We at the Tualatin School House Pantry have had an incredibly high number of new clients sharing their reason for coming to us for assistance



is an increase in rent. Many of these families are ones who have never had to ask for help before because they are working and have been working. That paycheck, however, is no longer sufficient because rents have increased by such huge amounts. If you or anyone you know is finding yourself in the same situation please let them know that Tualatin School House Pantry is happy and eager

to help. Our pantry provides a one-week supply of food to anyone in our service area of Tualatin, Durham, West Linn & Lake Oswego who has the courage to ask for help. We do so in a warm and welcoming environment where clients actually get to go through our grocery store and pick their own food. This enables them to pick food that meets

their dietary requirements, allergy needs, ethnic preferences, limited food storage and more. In addition to that week supply, we are also eager and excited to be giving out our Thanksgiving kits. These kits are more than just food and needed protein for our clients. Our Thanksgiving kits also foster thankfulness and enable them to now celebrate a holiday with their own family & friends. We would hate to have someone not celebrate this wonderful holiday because they can't afford to purchase the items needed for their Thanksgiving meal. Our team of volunteers gets overwhelmed by the appreciation and gratitude our clients share with us during this time of year. You



can help provide a family in your area with a holiday by donating Turkeys, stuffing, pumpkin, cranberries, and gravy. Tualatin School House Pantry accepts donations Mon 8-8pm, Tues 8-1pm, Wed 8-4pm and Fri 8-3:30pm as well as any time online at www.schoolhousepantry.org. Maybe this Thanksgiving, instead of just talking about being thankful, we could act to show our thankfulness by giving to those who might have less to be thankful for this holiday season.

Tualatin School House Pantry is located at 3550 SW Borland Rd, Tualatin. We rent space from Rolling Hills Community Church and have our own entrance on the east side of the building. Serving Tualatin, Durham, West Linn & Lake Oswego with emergency food because no one should be hungry.

Tracy Smith is the program coordinator for Tualatin School House Pantry and mother of two young ones. She has been helping lead the team of volunteers to serve around 550 families each month with emergency food for six and half years. Nothing could be more rewarding than being a part of helping someone in their time of need.

