



October 2012

Dear Friends,

Have you ever wondered where all the stuff in your food box comes from? It's actually pretty amazing to see the different ways God provides each month.

Many of you may remember that we used to get food boxes from Angel Food Ministries before they went out of business. That was a little over a year ago. We were a little worried as to how we could continue to provide healthy boxes of food for a low cost, but we knew without doubt that God wanted us to continue.

Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

We asked several churches to collect coupons for us and started using them to shop at the grocery store. The money to buy groceries (and previously the Angel Food boxes) has always come from generous individuals who give from their hearts in order to share with others. Many of these people sacrifice in order to give to Grace Klein Community. Knowing this, we have always tried to be very careful about how we spend the money and pray for ways to stretch it as much as possible. Coupons have helped a great deal with that. We have become like those crazy extreme shoppers you see on TV, going through the store with several carts filled... 50 boxes of cereal, 100 cans of soup, a cart of noodles. With donated coupons, we have been able to save around 60% to 70% off the regular price of groceries. In other words, we typically might spend \$150 and save \$350 on what would have been \$500 worth of groceries.

The store we go to most often has come to embrace our bulk shopping trips each week. The store employees don't cringe as much as they used to when they see us coming. They open up lane 10 just for us and know that it will take a while to check us out. They point out deals we might not have noticed or coupons that weren't advertised. The store manager recently arranged for us to get their clearance items that don't sell at the end of each month. That is a wonderful blessing of stuff like medicine, vitamins, baby items, etc., which we wouldn't be able to afford to buy otherwise.

We have also learned to wait on healthy foods to go on sale versus buying the cheapest things that are unhealthy. God has showed us that we can wait on Him and He will provide a way to get higher quality items than we would have thought possible.

After just a month or two of shopping in bulk, we got connected with a local food wholesaler who gave us a great discount on bulk fresh produce. We were thrilled to be able to give you food that is fresh and healthy each month.

Some other creative ways that God has provided items for the food boxes...

- Little league baseball players had a competition to see who could gather the most non-perishable food items by going door-to-door. Within 1 ½ hours, they collected 172 items.

- A friend donated hundreds of bags of coffee that had been given to her for a fundraiser.
- A partner ministry regularly shares with us some of the food that is donated to them.
- Several months ago, a local restaurant made a mistake and baked too much bread for the day and donated 80 loaves of gourmet fresh baked bread.
- Each month, a volunteer goes to pick up the near expired bread from a local baker.
- A friend makes homemade laundry detergent in her basement to share. A church group recently started doing the same.
- The Grace Klein Community garden is producing pretty well for its first year and we were able to share it with some of you.
- A partner church gives us boxes of perishable items each month such as meat and frozen veggies.
- Random people in the grocery store have given us cash to help pay for groceries when we tell them why we are buying it (we get lots of weird looks and questions).

In case you're curious, here are the things that have to happen to get these boxes delivered:

- Around 180-200 empty boxes must be collected each month – by the way, if you want to send your empty box back with the friend that delivers to you, that would be a big help!
- Food is bought, donated, collected and organized throughout the month and stored at our office.
- A volunteer writes this letter each month, praying about what God would have us share.
- Volunteers make a list of which delivery teams will be delivering this month and which ones won't, determine how many boxes will be needed, and make copies of the letter.
- Volunteers come the Thursday before delivery day and distribute the food amongst the 180-200 empty boxes; our little office is crammed full of boxes until the next day.
- On the Friday before delivery day, volunteers make several trips to drive the 180-200 food boxes about 15 miles across town to the church where people will pick up the next day.
- The produce wholesaler delivers produce to the church on Friday.
- Volunteers go to the church at 6:30 or 7 a.m. on delivery Saturday to help put the produce into all the boxes.
- Delivery teams pick up their boxes and take them to you.

The boxes we deliver each month are so much more than food to sustain you for a few meals. They are provision from the Father, love from friends, and a way to reach out to people who are hurting and lonely. The volunteers that do all this work, do it out of love from the Father.

John 6:57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

Think about the bread of life as you enjoy your box this month. Let's all thank the Lord for the friends we have made through this ministry. If you ever want to participate in this process and go deliver food boxes, let your delivery volunteer know. I'm sure they would love to take you along!

Love to you all,

Hebrews 13:16 "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."