

Grace Episcopal Church Responds to COVID-19

A small parish in White Plains, NY takes on COVID-19 and develops a new ministry to feed thousands. A God Vision within the local community.

WHITE PLAINS, NY, UNITED STATES, October 20, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- COVID-19 has turned our world upside down. However, there is hope exemplified through one small parish in White Plains, NY. Grace la Gracia Episcopal Church responded quickly in response to the devastating effects of COVID-19 as many of its church members became sick, lost jobs, and entered heaven prematurely. [Grace Episcopal Church](#) realized that over 70% of its Latino members lost jobs resulting from the Pandemic and needed to respond. But how? They immediately formed a new ministry, 'God in Action - Food Alliance,' to provide everyday necessities in food, clothing, school supplies, household items, and counseling to those without food and essentials.

Over the past 6 months, church members and other volunteers have handed out food bags, allowing families of four to eat for up to one week. To accomplish this feat, Grace Church receives over 12,000 lbs. of food donated from the local food pantry, [Feeding Westchester](#), led by C.E.O. Karen Erren. More than 6,000 people have received food supplies, enabling local families to survive COVID-19. Grace Church has worked



Food Alliance Ministry shares much needed food with those families affected by COVID-19



Food Alliance feeding thousands to help families cope with COVID-19

closely with the City of White Plains and its mayor, Tom Roach, consolidating efforts to feed the city's impoverished. This program began on a shoestring and now accommodates over 300 families each week.

The Food Alliance food distribution supports anyone in need to include undocumented workers, senior citizens, displaced workers, children, and people from all backgrounds - Hispanic, African American, Anglo American, and Asian. Everyone and anyone is invited to receive it. The Food Alliance has brought a new ministry to Grace Episcopal Church. Physically able parishioners were called into action to respond to our neighbors' needs by donating food, volunteering time, spreading the word, and participating every week. Those who could not physically help have written checks. Perhaps this is a wonderful vision of God in action.



The Episcopal Diocese of New York is heavily involved in helping those with great needs

This ministry has become a source of pride for the church as it has been recognized throughout New York. Bishop Allen Shin of the [Episcopal Diocese of New York](#) was so inspired to hear about this ministry that he recently volunteered, along with several other local partners, to see first-hand the great need and the great response. One of the most inspiring ripple effects is that so many outside the church have joined the effort to support this wonderful ministry – churches, civic leaders, other nonprofits, other individuals just passing by. This outreach has become a village, a God village beyond going well beyond a Sunday worship service, and literally becoming the hands and feet of God supporting those in great need.

The Food Alliance has been managed by the parish's senior warden, Michael Heffner, a longtime member and former Wall Street trader with Merrill Lynch. Furthermore, Fr. Adolfo Moranta, the bilingual associate priest from the Dominican Republic, has overseen this ministry's tremendous growth, managing essential volunteers assisting with food distribution, packing, displaying, and the logistical handing out of food to those in great need. Grace Church has utilized the Pandemic quarantine period to warehouse and store the food and other supplies, recognizing the need to store products offsite and forming new partnerships for the future. The Food Alliance objective is to eventually incorporate as a 501(c) 3 in the first quarter of 2021, allowing them structure for this new mission and give them the capacity to sustain the ministry for as long as the need exists.

The Food Alliance is fortunate to have local and far partnerships from across the United States,

wanting to support this vital ministry. The Rev. Dr. Chip Graves, the rector of Grace Church, hopes that other parishes across the United States will support and engage similar ministries in their communities. For more information on how you can make a difference and get involved, contact Grace Episcopal Church, White Plains.

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