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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** PLAINFIELD FEEDING GROUP SUMMIT  
**FROM:** MARY TESTORI  
**SUBJECT:** MINUTES FROM THE PLAINFIELD FEEDING GROUP SUMMIT MEETING HELD ON JULY 29, 2009 AT THE PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY  
**DATE:** 9/23/2009  
**CC:**

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**PLAINFIELD FEEDING GROUP SUMMIT MEETING ATTENDEES:**

The Lighthouse - Karen Côté, Susan DiGraitis  
The Covenant United Methodist Church - Kim Williams  
PCO - Carrie Hayes, Jane Wilson, Sherrie L. Russell-Brown  
First Unitarian Society - Joanne Macaluso, Heather Brown  
United Pres. - Barbara Snyder  
First Park Baptist Church - (Loaves & Fishes) Daisy Hill, LaWana Dar Dew  
PCO & Grace Church - Carolyn Eklund  
SHEELD - Shiloh Baptist Church-Flora J. Williams, Jacqueline Finney  
Plainfield Salvation Army - Donald Nichols  
Grace Church - Mary Testori

**GROUPS NOT IN ATTENDANCE BUT THAT WE KNOW SERVE MEALS AND/OR HAVE A FOOD PANTRY:**

The Mosque in Plainfield  
Crescent Ave. Church in Plainfield (a bag lunch to go)  
St Mary's Church in Plainfield (free dinner on last Sunday)  
St Joseph's church in North Plainfield (second sat. a free lunch)

Jane Wilson from PCO explained the purpose of the meeting. Summit attendees introduced themselves and talked briefly about the organizations they represent:

**LOAVES & FISHES**

They receive no federal monies. Daisy stated that they feed between 40 to 50 people, they preach the gospel, they give out clothes as well as food. They have no food pantry. They collect food and give to other pantries sometimes.

### **FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY**

They have a food pantry (last Sat. of the month). They feed about 20 to 30 people. Their supplies are donated by their congregation. They are not members of the food bank (don't have the number of volunteers needed to be members). They have holiday dinners, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. They feed about 100 to 150 people during those holidays. Joanne uses coupons to purchase their supplies for their food pantry.

### **UNITED PRES.**

They are just getting started, looking to start a small soup kitchen.

### **COVENANT UNITED METHODIST**

They have been established for about 19 years. They feed a hot meal to about 130 people every Monday with the help of 8 other churches. The program is funded through donations from individuals and local churches. The program receives bread from Panera Bread and My Town Bakery each week. They are looking for funding. They use regular plates, tableware, and tablecloths when they serve their guests.

### **PLAINFIELD SALVATION ARMY**

They serve a hot meal daily from 12:00 to 12:45 to around 100 to 150 people. They have a food pantry as well which is open once a month. They get donations from churches, Dunkin Doughnuts, KFC, community food bank, and they get some federal funding. They don't serve food in December.

### **SHEELD**

They have a food pantry which is open the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sat from 10am to 12pm, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed, from 4pm to 7pm. Supplies from the food bank, grants from Shop Rite, congregations give food, some sororities. They have a clothing closet as well. They get some emergency calls from City Hall to help folks. They help about 275 people a month.

### **LIGHT HOUSE MINISTRIES**

A food pantry – gets most of their funding through churches, some funding through grants. Solicits shoppers at Stop & Shop, A&P in Warren. They stand outside, give a list of items to people to purchase while shopping. Open 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month, gives food to about 130 to 175 people. Located on Somerset St. in North Plfd.

### **PCO**

Feeds about 100 to 170 people daily, over 9000 meals a year. Some federal funding, matching donations, fund drives through out the year. About 5 different churches send volunteers to cook, and serve a hot meal from 11am to 1pm, the last five days of the month.

At this point, attendees asked questions of each other, shared ideas, and expressed their concerns:

Donald likes the idea of meeting like this. He did not know that all of these organizations existed. During the month of December, it was suggested that the Salvation Army look into renting one of the empty buildings near City Hall for more space. Representatives from The Lighthouse ministries stated that the numbers of guests they serve are up as well as the food which is being donated. Representatives from the Unitarian church stated that they work with a group called Angels in Action (Spanish speaking group located on Front & Park Ave.). This has helped their outreach. There was no one there from the Mosque but they have a food pantry on Saturdays. There was discussion about being re-certified as members of the food bank. Representatives from SHEELD mentioned that the five year period which a person can receive welfare benefits will end this fall. There will be about 40,000 in desperate need. We discussed the funding the Governor just infused in the food bank coffers. Representatives from the Unitarian church want to meet with John Smith about getting certified with the food bank. Some churches want to help other churches feed folks like Fountain Baptist church. Daisy asked if the City Officials know the needs of the Community, and which groups are serving the needy. Is there a line item in the City Budget for outreach? The Unitarian church has energy saving light bulbs they will share with others.

Finally, we discussed the idea of a possible evening family meal. Sherrie expressed a concern about feeding children in need. She will explore a possible meeting with the Board of Ed. A source of funding is [foundationcenter.org](http://foundationcenter.org). Jane asked about 501(c)(3)'s doing a grant writing session to raise funds for a joint effort. Sherrie will look into setting up a face book page for this group. Our next meeting will be on September 28, 2009, 7:00 PM. Please remember to park in the lot on the 9<sup>th</sup> Street side of the Library. The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

M.T.