



Santa Maria
URBAN MINISTRY

The Canticle

W I N T E R 2 0 2 2

Board Chairman's Corner

It has been a year of rising food insecurity for our clients. Santa Maria struggles to provide 90 food boxes daily—up over 50% from pre-Covid times! We now serve 1,000 families, 3,000+ individuals, every month.

Only the heart-felt support of our donor community has enabled us to keep up. We rely on the community, donors and volunteers for everything we do. **We thank you and ask that you please stay alongside us as we prepare for 2023!**

The initial surge of Covid-crisis funding for us has long passed. Food supplies from Second Harvest Food Bank peaked in late 2021, and have steadily declined. Santa Maria has been forced to purchase thousands of dollars worth of staples: eggs, beans, oil, cereal. **Can you/your friends/your church provide quantities of these staples, or help us fund their purchase? Or do a food drive?**

Individual, parish and congregational food donations are more important than ever to help us fund and provide balanced food boxes for our clients.

Our clients depend on us to feed their families. Can you please help? Contact me with any questions or ideas. **Thank you!**



Bruce Friesen,
Acting Executive
Director/Board Chair

New! Family Resource Room Provides A Saving Grace

At Santa Maria we cherish the children in our community. We are a regular neighborhood resource for many growing families whose needs are on the rise due to inflation and job losses. Many parents come to us needing diapers, wipes, car seats and other expensive baby items.



“Sometimes Moms wait in the food line and all they ask for when it’s their turn is diapers”, stated a regular volunteer. “It breaks my heart if we don’t have any!”

To support our young families, we have set up a new family resource room where we stock critical baby items: diapers, wipes, strollers, car seats, clothing and more. We give great thanks to volunteers from **Beautiful Day**, who helped us reconfigure and stock this new room.



Target Stores makes twice weekly donations to Santa

Maria to help keep these shelves well stocked. We are much better prepared now to help our young families. With help from our friends, we can now really help our young families!

Beautiful Day (and Mayor!) Freshen Up Santa Maria

Santa Maria Urban Ministry is surrounded by a warm and caring community. And they showed up to prove their support in October to give us a much-needed face-lift.

Founded in 2004 by a group of people from all walks of life, the **Beautiful Day** organization invests in communities with “simple, direct and unyielding kindness. Each project is a compassionate act of service to come alongside an individual or community to help them flourish.”

Beautiful Day took on our outward appearance and beautified our building and grounds. They started by adding weed block to and mulching our established rose beds in the front. True dirty work! San Jose mayor **Sam Liccardo** joined in on this effort too!



(photos, left). Next the mighty Beautiful Day team upgraded our faded facade and painted it bright Santa Maria green! What a difference!

Their final step was to donate and install a series of stainless steel tables. These easily sanitized tables

provide a perfect place for our “farmers market” area where clients can shop for extra fresh produce. We feel refreshed and ever so grateful to Beautiful Day and all the volunteers who showed up to help us put on a brighter face!



Thank you Beautiful Day!

Santa Maria Contact Info

Alfonso Mendez
alfonso.mendez@santamariasj.org

Ph: (408) 292-3314

Visit our website:
www.santamariasj.org
and “Like” us on Facebook!



New Murals Too!

The Beautiful Day team also took on our admired but much-faded murals on two prominent walls. In a combined effort with the **Leigh High School** art department, talented artists designed and installed a glorious new mural that enlivens our property. In a tribute to our beloved Operations Manager, Alfonso Mendez’s Colombian roots, the mural depicts Colombian scenes. They also updated the oldest mural in the neighborhood, in our parking lot. They did a spectacular job! *Thanks all!*

Here's How You Can Help Today!

Santa Maria relies solely on donations for the work we do in the community. We remain committed to helping improve and transform the lives of those in our neighborhood. Will you help us?

Donate your time:

- in the Food Pantry
- at the front desk
- in the Clothes Closet

Volunteers are always needed!



Donate money:

- \$1000 buys beans for 700 families
- \$800 buys fresh eggs for 160 families
- \$500 buys canned protein for 100 families
- \$300 covers gift cards for a family in need
- \$100 buys Cheerios for 40 families with young children

Donate clothing or food:

- Warm Heart Ministry (see below) provides for the unhoused
- We always need proteins: peanut butter, tuna, eggs

Warm Heart Ministry Heats Up



Is it time to clean out your coat closet? **Maybe your unused coats can find a new proud owner at Santa Maria!** Santa Maria's Warm Heart Ministry is ready this winter to help housed and unhoused neighbors deal with harsh, wet and cold conditions outside. We provide sleeping bags, coats, socks, hats, gloves and toiletries.

If you don't have a coat to donate, your financial support will enable us to purchase necessary cold weather items for our neighbors in need. We can always use new warm socks and underwear for our unhoused clients too. Our Clothes Closet is open and staffed with volunteers and offers our regular clients lightly used clothing for family members each time they pick up food boxes.

Thank you!

Family Fund Really Helps Neighbor Families

To ensure that local families who truly need help get that support, Santa Maria has engaged the help of school administrators at three of our local schools: Washington Elementary, Rocketship and Nativity School. Administrators have quietly identified families in critical need so that Santa Maria can provide extra financial support to get them through a tough time.



Fifty-one families were identified this fall. We provided each family with gift cards from Target valued from \$100 to \$300, depending on need. The families appreciated the ability to buy for themselves, just what they need.

Summer Camps Re-Boot!

Summer Camps, on hiatus since 2019, got a re-boot in 2022! A grant from **Silicon Valley**

Community Foundation, support from the **Washington School Neighborhood Association** and donations from our community funded a fun summer of arts, crafts, games and weekly field trips.



Student teachers from **Santa Clara University** made the camp a meaningful experience for all. Thanks to all that made these experiences possible for our students!

Good Karma Partnership

Santa Maria has partnered with Good Karma Bikes on Lincoln Ave. in San Jose to provide bikes for children in need in our neighborhood. We refer families to them, and we donate any bikes we receive to them. It's a partnership that works well for all!



Santa Maria Urban Ministry is supported by individual donors who make possible our work to help families with groceries from our food pantry, clothing, income tax filings, education and other services.

Please consider making a year-end gift to Santa Maria to help us lift up our clients during the holidays, and carry us into 2023 with our shelves full.