

Hairnets and gloves are required when working with open food.

May 2021



AROUND THE TABLE

Safe environments for MFB volunteers and partners

"I appreciate all the safety measures MFB enforces. It is important to me and the other volunteers here."

- Jim Ommen, MFB volunteer

Sharing the love of Christ by alleviating hunger is core to the mission of Midwest Food Bank. "Serving Those in Need" is the first of our values. Care for our food recipients is at the core of everything we do.

This same loving care extends to our volunteers, our nonprofit partners, and our staff. Providing a safe environment is one of the ways Midwest Food Bank demonstrates our regard for all. In 2021, we are focusing on evaluating and strengthening our current safety measures.

"At MFB, we maintain a safety culture daily," says Monica Scheuer, Executive Director of Midwest Food Bank Peoria. "Safety protects our volunteers - our precious work force."

We are thankful to have safe practices in place. Some of this year's target will be recalling and supporting those disciplines. Visitors can still expect to:

- Wear gloves, hairnets, and other PPE when repackaging open food.
- Be reminded to be alert to their surroundings in the warehouse.
- Be required to wear closed-toe shoes in the warehouse.

- Hear safety reminders from lead volunteers and staff for projects and distribution.
- At all MFB locations, several enhancements to our safety culture are being added. Some of these include:

- A safety champion at each location
- Updated and stocked first aid stations.
- AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators).
- CPR/AED training for volunteers and staff.
- Fork-lift training and annual certification.

Overseeing this effort is Mike Hoffman, Safety Champion for all of MFB.

"Intentional safety procedures perfectly dovetail all MFB values," says Mike.

Forklift safety includes annual certification, dock traffic lighting, and floor decals.



Jim Ommen and his wife, Christine, have served at MFB Peoria for years. They are regularly in the warehouse to help with distribution, but are willing to help in any way.



MFB East Africa

Schools and orphanages are the main agency partners of Midwest Food Bank East Africa (Kapu Africa).

Britons Som Community School is located in the slums of Kenya and is the only hope for the community of over 350 children who depend on the school for free education and food.



Nairobi Christian Academy has a strong pastoral focus, while helping children develop to their highest potential.

Bondeni Children's Rescue Centre targets children who have dropped out of school due to various issues: poverty, death of parents, parental negligence, abuse, and mistreatment.



Please pray for our East African partners. Thank you for your financial support.

UPDATES FROM MFB LOCATIONS

ARIZONA

John Gast is the new warehouse manager at Midwest Food Bank Arizona. With years of warehouse experience, military experience, and an engaging personality, John has a lot to bring to the table. We have also welcomed four new board members: Debra Willis, Chris Eaton, Marcos Morales, and Christine T.D. Ellis. MFB Arizona is blessed to have their professional backgrounds, diversity, and hearts to serve.

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL, IL

MFB Bloomington-Normal had over 5,400 volunteers help in 2020, spending over 77,000 hours of their time collectively. We are grateful for those who were able to help in 2020!

38 disaster relief loads have been packed and shipped from this location in 2021: Covid-19 relief, continuing support for Oregon's wildfire recovery, tornado in Alabama, severe winter storm in TX and surrounding states, and flood relief in KY.

FLORIDA

This spring, MFB Florida is focusing on the development of our new food distribution site in Lake Wales. This new facility will allow us to expand our program into much-needed food gap areas of Polk County.

As a recent recipient of the Lee County Bar Association Foundation grant, we continue to be thankful for community support of our mission.

GEORGIA

We are "Celebrating 10 Years of Sharing God's Blessings." We've grown from nine food pantries in October 2011, to over 275 regional partner agencies from 56 counties in 6 states. We will have a 10th anniversary celebration on Saturday, June 5. It kicks off with a 5K run followed by games, live music, and "The Varsity" food truck.

INDIANA

Midwest Food Bank Indiana has expanded its distribution to include full-pallet distribution weekly at the recently opened satellite facility. On our first day of distribution, 84 pallets of food went out in less than three hours.

Semi-loads of food have left the MFB Indiana warehouse at the request of The Salvation Army, our Disaster Relief partner. Family food boxes were assembled, filled, and shipped to Newnan, GA, to assist victims of an EF-4 tornado.

MORTON, IL

We are grateful for our office remodel completed by volunteers. MFB Morton has more space for volunteers and staff to serve all MFB locations. We're also glad to have more volunteers coming in. School and youth groups are enjoying the opportunity to volunteer together again. 873,000 Tender Mercies meals have been produced in 2021.

NEW ENGLAND

Since our beginning in December 2020, we are off to a strong start. Jan Young, MFB New England's Executive Director, started in late January. A warehouse location in the Greater Hartford area is in the final stages of procurement. Three MFB New England board members have been added to the four already in place.

PENNSYLVANIA

Midwest Food Bank Pennsylvania division held a ribbon cutting on March 12, sponsored by the Harrisburg Regional Chamber. Present were Congressman Scott Perry and Representative Andrew Lewis, our board of directors, agency partners, and volunteers. In the first quarter of 2021, MFB Pennsylvania served 85 feeding agencies and distributed 44,390 cases of food, equaling almost \$1.2 million in food.

PEORIA, IL

We're thankful to welcome a new Agency Coordinator to MFB Peoria. Michelle Hatfield began in March.

We have a morning volunteer need at MFB Peoria. On weekdays, locals grocery stores make daily morning donations. We're looking for route drivers to collect the food.

Mark your calendars for these two events:

- May 27 - Collingsworth Family Concert
- June 12 - Clayshoot for Hunger

TEXAS

Midwest Food Bank Texas was blessed with new pallet jacks. Three manual jacks and two electric jacks were purchased, and a third electric unit was donated by Briggs Equipment in nearby Arlington, TX. The electric models are our first, and they make it easier to move heavier pallets.

We are seeking two new employees at MFB Texas: a Warehouse Manager and a Community Development Manager. The former will oversee warehouse operations, and the latter will help with volunteer engagement and fundraising.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

MFB volunteers often become like family

Many Midwest Food Bank volunteers become like family to the locations they serve. Kelly Rutledge is an example of that special relationship.

Kelly is a job coach for students from the Vocational Transition Assistance Program (VTAP) for the Unit 5 school district. VTAP is an evaluation, training, and employment program that prepares students with disabilities for transition to employment and optimum community participation during and after high school.

Kelly spent the 2019-2020 school year volunteering each weekday at MFB Bloomington-Normal with the students she coached. She guided her students in custodial work: cleaning, sweeping, and disposing of trash. When schools shut down due to COVID-19 in March 2019, Kelly realized we still needed custodial help. She came in as a full-time volunteer all spring and summer as she waited for the school program to start up again. Having some flexibility without her students, Kelly would often join the staff for lunch.

“When people think of volunteering, custodial tasks are not often on the preferred list,”

says Tara Ingham, Executive Director of MFB Bloomington-Normal. “Kelly has helped keep our facility properly sanitized during the pandemic, lightening the load of our small staff. She’s a tremendous blessing!”

With in-person school attendance resumed, Kelly is back to working with her students. In her spare time, she likes to read and loves spoiling her cat.

“At MFB, I have met so many God-loving people who love to help others,” says Kelly. “Being here helps me feel closer to God.”

The service of dedicated volunteers like Kelly are vital to the Midwest Food Bank mission. We’re glad she’s part of the family.



Kelly gives one of her students a celebratory high-five.

NON-PROFIT AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

God uses a family’s hard time to bless others

When going through hard times, it’s important to look for how God is working. Difficulties often lead to brighter days and great ministries.

Such is the case of the family of Emma Finger, Executive Director of Warehouse of Hope. Their struggles began in 1994. Medical issues were causing repeated doctor visits. Their finances began to suffer, and something as simple as buying groceries became a burden to the budget.

“God used that time to open our eyes,” says Emma. “We saw that there were many families in our community who were also struggling.”

There weren’t many places for Emma and her family to turn to for help. That discovery led Emily and her family to start Warehouse of Hope.

Much like Midwest Food Bank, Warehouse of Hope has humble beginnings. The family opened the charity in a small, 200 sq.ft. building.

“We felt God turning



our family’s hard time into a living testimony of helping those who need a little hand up,” says Emma. “With a lot of love, support, and prayers from our community, we are now able to serve over 500 families a week with food.”

Emily and her family have a heart to serve their community,” says Will Garner, Executive Director of Midwest Food Bank Georgia. “We are blessed to have them as a nonprofit partner in the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition.”

Emily’s time of hardship led her to bring hope to others. Thank you to the donors who make it possible for MFB to support her mission.

To receive email updates, please visit our website and go to the “News” button. Select “Newsletter” and then choose “eNewsletter.”
MidwestFoodBank.org

MFB Haiti

Midwest Food Bank Haiti is blessed to support nonprofits like Haitian Christian Ministries (HCM). They are driven by three core values:

Preaching God’s Word

Planting churches

Meeting the physical need of the people

One of the ways HCM lives out their values is by providing meals for the children who attend their schools and food for those in need in the communities they serve.

“A hungry stomach has no ears.”

- Bobanoit Luceus, HCM’s Executive Field Director and Senior Pastor



Thank you for your prayers and financial support.





Midwest Food Bank

700 Erie Avenue
Morton, IL 61550

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“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” -Aesop

CONNECT



ENGAGE

Contact your local Midwest Food Bank to learn more about our volunteer opportunities.

SUPPORT

We are thankful for your support in prayer. If you are led to contribute financially, we have enclosed an envelope for your convenience. On behalf of those we serve, thank you.

Produced by Midwest Food Bank
2031 Warehouse Road, Normal, IL 61761

More nutritious food

There is an ongoing effort at Midwest Food Bank to procure and distribute nutritious food to our nonprofit partners. Quality dairy, protein, and fresh produce items are sought-after to bless our food recipients.

With the help of the USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program, there was a dramatic jump in the percentage of nutritious food distributed from MFB. Nutritious food offerings jumped from 20% in 2019 to 29% in 2020.

We aim to sustain the increase and continue growing our nutritional percentages. MFB is actively seeking food donors for dairy, protein, and produce. We will also continue producing and distributing nutritious Tender Mercies meals.



Tender Mercies is packaged at MFB Morton.

Charity Navigator rating

Midwest Food Bank has received Charity Navigator's 4-Star Rating (their highest rating) every year since 2011. In April, we were notified that the honor had been bestowed on us again. Only 4% of charities have received this rating for nine consecutive years.



Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator, bases its rating on MFB's robust financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency. This award would not be possible without Midwest Food Bank's generous donors and dedicated volunteers.

MFB Facebook changes

Midwest Food Bank has made changes to our Facebook presence. While we still have a main MFB Facebook page, the pages of individual locations have been migrated to group pages. To follow a specific MFB division, a simple search will lead you to the correct group. We invite you to join the group for the latest news, happenings, and volunteer opportunities at that MFB location.