

01/16/2008

Church finds better food to feed those in need

By Mary Ellen Godin, Record-Journal staff

WALLINGFORD

- For years, Joseph and Linda DeAngelo of Good News Christian Center have fed the poor through their Service Heart Ministry.

But the food was mainly boxed pasta and canned beans -- not necessarily the most nutritious. There was no fresh meat or produce. Delivery was limited to poorer families.

The DeAngelos, who run the nondenominational church at 46 John St., heard about Angel Food Ministries in Monroe, Ga., and went to see if there were better choices for their parishioners.



Dave Zajac / Record-Journal

What they learned is that for \$30, the general public, not just the poor, can buy a box containing four ribeye steaks, a two-pound lasagna dinner, a pound of roasted pork sausage, one pound of cooked meatballs, three pounds of fresh apples, mixed vegetables, waffles and more.

The DeAngelos liked what they saw.

Angel Food Ministries began with 34 families in Georgia in 1994, and now serves families across the country. There are no income restrictions and food stamps are welcome.

The food comes from name brands such as Tyson, Ore-Ida, Kraft, Ronzoni, Hormel and Hunt's. The program is one of several given millions of dollars through President Bush's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Angel Food Ministries donates \$1 from each box sold to the host church's benevolent fund. Since its inception, Angel Food Ministries has contributed more than \$12 million.

The Good News Christian Center was made the first host site in the state and started its first outreach in October, slowly building a customer base and adding nine churches to the network. Last month, the church moved 779 boxes

of food through nine churches.

"Our goal is to really get everyone with good food," said Onalee Hales, the Angel Food Ministries administrator. "We could only give out food that's not the healthy meals for our children. This year's menu will incorporate healthier food to everyone out there. This is an outreach to supplement everyone. Not just low income."

Hales' goal is to broaden the program to include more host churches throughout other parts of the state.

Host site director Mitch Gauthier runs the logistics of the operation. At 5:30 a.m. once a month, Gauthier and a band of 50 volunteers unload the freezer trucks in anticipation of the mass pickup from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Kathy Queen, the executive director of the Wallingford Community Daycare Center, is active on the town's anti-poverty food and housing programs. Last month, she introduced the program to many of the single mothers and poorer families that might be reluctant to visit the food pantry. Her staff even participated.

"We decided let's try it," Queen said. "We had 15 families that signed up. I think it was quite successful. It was good food and it works out."

Queen said one of the greatest benefits is that it's not a handout to the working families that just may need a helping hand. She heard employees say that if they bought the merchandise at Shaw's Supermarket it would have cost over \$60. Many of these families stay hidden because they don't like going to free pantries. She heard two minor complaints that the ribeyes weren't four inches thick, but overall, the customers seemed pleased.

For more information about the program, call (203) 284-8975 or visit www.angelfoodministries.com.

mgodin@record-journal.com
(203) 317-2255

**The Record-Journal
11 Crown Street,
Meriden, Connecticut 06450**

Main Phone: (203) 235-1661

Circulation Customer Service phone: (203) 634-3933

NEWSROOM — general contact: newsroom@record-journal.com

Cheap groceries for all



Photo by Jack Haley

Organizer Brenda Cunningham, left, and Vicki Martin sort out food delivered to St. John's Lutheran Church in Farmington before people who signed up can get their box of discounted groceries.

Photo tools: [Download Full Size](#)

Billie Owens

GateHouse News Service

Tue Jan 08, 2008, 11:35 AM EST

Story Tools: [Email This](#) | [Print This](#)

FARMINGTON, N.Y. -

Shirley Wentz lives in Palmyra and found out about Angel Food Ministries from her hairdresser. And what wasn't there to like about it?

People of all means — or lack of means — sign up to receive a box of “restaurant-grade” food and pay \$30 in advance for a month's supply. No seconds, no day-old stuff. All foods meet or exceed government standards. There's no application process, no qualifications. No kidding.

Wentz was so impressed, she decided to volunteer. The local Angel Food Ministries is hosted by St. John's Lutheran Church in Farmington, at 153 Church Ave.

St. John's is a newcomer to the nonprofit, nondenominational Christian program: January marks its fourth month of participation. The only other church host in Ontario County is New Hope Fellowship in Bloomfield, at 7466 Routes 5 and 20.

Angel Food Ministries started in a small church in Monroe, Ga., in 1994 and since has spread to 35 states and 3,200 communities to serve 500,000 families monthly.

There are no qualifications to receive food. Recipients can be wealthy or not; they can pay with food stamps, cash or check, according to Brenda Cunningham, who helps coordinate the program at St. John's, along with Debbie Torlish.

"If you eat, you qualify to buy the food," said Sue Habberfield, who is on the board of outreach and ministries at the church and is an Angel Food volunteer.

Habberfield, Wentz, Cunningham and Torlish like helping people and providing them with something beneficial.

"It is an ecumenical ministry, so they tie in the Christian aspect by including a newsletter in the basket that talks about the program and the message of the word of God," Habberfield said. "I think the goal is to be God's servants."

Orders are processed at the national headquarters in Georgia. On the appointed day, they arrive by truck to this area's distribution center, the Victory Baptist Church in Henrietta.

Volunteers at St. John's in Farmington pick up the food, then divvy it up for families. That always happens on a Saturday, usually from 9 to 10 a.m. The registration deadline is a few weeks in advance. (This month, the deadline was Thursday). The participants show up with their receipt and a large box and pick up their portion of goods.

The foods include flash-frozen fresh meats and vegetables, frozen dinners, fresh fruits and brand-name goods from the likes of Kraft, Jolly Green Giant and Banquet. There's also an unspecified dessert item.

The items in the baskets vary from month to month.

Here's January's lineup: 1.25 pounds of bacon-wrapped beef fillets; 4 pounds frozen chicken-leg quarters; 2 pounds lean hamburger; 1.5 pounds boneless pork; 20 ounces frozen pizza; 10 ounces deli-sliced turkey breast; 3 pounds fresh apples; 35 ounces crinkle-cut French fries; 16 ounces frozen green beans; 16 ounces frozen onion rings; 14 ounces ketchup; 26 ounces pasta sauce; 16 ounces pasta; 16 ounces pinto beans; 7.5 ounces macaroni and cheese mix; dessert item.

For \$20 more, three meat specials are offered: 5.5 pounds steak/other meat combo box; or 5 pounds steak combo box; or 10 pounds of chicken breasts.

The food is cheap, and for the most part, it's somewhat healthy.

Amanda Lynch, a former clinical dietitian at Strong Memorial Hospital who is pursuing doctorate studies at Cornell University, said the Angel Ministries menus offer a lot of protein-rich foods that have long shelf lives.

"Protein is essential in a diet, and most of the proteins are quality proteins," she said. However, pizza, macaroni and cheese, deli turkey and pasta sauce are high in sodium, which isn't good for people with high cholesterol, and most of the meats are high in saturated fats, which doesn't help people who are at risk for heart disease.

A little modification and some supplemental foods can make the menu more healthy, said Lynch. Try to add fruit and vegetables to every meal, drain off drippings when cooking hamburger and

trim off fat, and don't eat the skin on the chicken.

“The things that are missing can be easily supplemented,” she said. “The food, for the most part, is going to be helpful for these people.”

Between 40 and 50 people have been taking part in Farmington. January's \$30 price is a \$5 increase over previous months. Habberfield said the permanent increase stems from higher fuel costs to transport the food from Georgia to the distribution centers.

Angel Food Ministries works with various food makers and suppliers to negotiate favorable deals for the program.

Wentz said it helps out people in all kinds of situations — some who just can't get to the store, others who want to get more with their food stamps, and others who simply like to stretch their budget by getting all kinds of food for \$30.

“Most people are very happy” with the food, Wentz said. “I haven't heard any complaints.”

And when she goes to St. John's on distribution day, there's always a good crowd.

“I thoroughly enjoy it,” Wentz said. “It's a bargain. You can't go to the grocery store and get that kind of deal. That's for sure.”

Messenger Post reporter Stephanie Bergeron contributed to this report.

Billie Owens can be reached at (585) 394-0770, Ext. 320, or at bowens@mpnewspapers.com.



Original content available for non-commercial use under a [Creative Commons](#) license, [except where noted](#).

Copyright © 2006-2007 [GateHouse Media, Inc.](#) Some Rights Reserved. [XHTML](#) : [CSS](#) : [508](#)

About Us

The GateHouse National News Service offers a full range of content. From the best of news, opinion, lifestyle and sports, to political cartoons to photo galleries, our content lineup focuses on high readership-driver areas, with specific regional interest.

The GateHouse National News Service is based in Glen Ellyn, Ill.

The news service launched in June 2007.

If you have questions about the content on this site, please contact News Service Editor Jean Hodges at (630) 348-3350 or jhodges@gatehousemedia.com.

Mandeville Moments

Angel Food brings savings on groceries

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Andrew Canulette

Everywhere you go, people are talking about the economy. Or perhaps more precisely, just how expensive it is to make ends meet these days. I don't have to tell you that the cost of gas is \$4 a gallon and pundits are saying it could be \$6 a gallon or more by the end of summer. That drives up the cost of food and goods; just about everything, really.

That's bad news for just about all of us.

But I've got some good news for you. Sorry, I can't do anything about the price of gas, but I can refer you to a great program that can save you money on the price of groceries.

It's a collaborative effort between Angel Food Ministries of Good Hope, Ga., and the First Baptist Church of Mandeville. For the past 14 months, FBC Mandeville and Angel Food have teamed to offer a grocery relief program that is open to everyone, regardless of how much money they earn.

There are other churches in St. Tammany Parish that have an Angel Food program, but FBC Mandeville is a distribution site for several of those churches, which makes the church a hub of activity on days when the food is delivered.

Here's how Angel Food works. For \$30 cash or in food stamps, anyone can stop by the church on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to place an order. Then, on June 28, the food will be delivered to the church and distributed from 8:30 until 10:30 a.m.

Inside each box is 17 items including six kinds of frozen meats, pantry staples, frozen vegetables and pizza, fresh eggs and a dessert. For an additional \$16 to \$20, a box of specialty meat also may be ordered.

That's a real deal, if you ask me.

And according to Evelyn Scott, the host site director for FBC Mandeville's Angel Food program, plenty of people have been inquiring about it. Scott said that each month they hand out approximately 350 boxes of food to people in the community.

"The people we serve the most are the elderly who are on fixed incomes, and a lot of young families who are trying to stretch their food budget," Scott said. "It helps because there a lot of people who are struggling who don't necessarily qualify for food stamps or aid."

Angel Food is a nonprofit outfit. The food is purchased in bulk from wholesalers and restaurant suppliers, which allows for the reduced cost of resale. For each order FBC Mandeville places with Angel Food, the ministry returns \$1 to the church. That money goes to FBC Mandeville's benevolence fund and to rent a forklift, which is needed to unload the truck upon arrival in Mandeville. When the truck arrives, a team of volunteers goes to work unloading the material and distributing it to those who placed orders.

"It's all volunteers who give a lot of their time and energy," Scott said. "You should see them unload the truck. They've got it down to a science."

FBC Mandeville also purchases three additional boxes of food each month and Angel Food donates another to the church. That food is given to the needy or donated to Safe Harbor or the Samaritan Center, Scott said.

Scott said that while many people utilize the program for themselves, there are many others of greater means who purchase food to donate to the needy.

"That's the great thing about having no requirements about who can purchase the food," she said. "If you can save your money on groceries, than maybe you'll have it to help someone else."

If you're interested in the Angel Food program at First Baptist Church, you can see the full menu and future ordering and distribution dates by going online to www.fbcmanteville.org. Additional information on participating churches closest to you can be found at www.angelfoodministries.com.

Organization now offering holiday meal boxes for 4
Wednesday, November 26, 2008
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Angel Food Ministries, a national organization dedicated to providing affordable, high-quality food to anyone, has expanded its meal offerings to include Thanksgiving and Christmas boxes, which include all the items needed for a traditional holiday celebration -- even the stuffing.

Each holiday box contains enough food for four people and costs \$30. Angel Food is able to provide fresh, brand-name food for a fraction of the retail price by buying in bulk. There are no income limits or quantity limits .

Founded in 1994, Angel Food Ministries serves families in 38 states, including Pennsylvania. Host sites are taking orders now.

For more information, call 1-888-819-3745 or visit www.angelfoodministries.com.

December 1

[Program at churches offers price break on food](#)

Box of restaurant-quality food valued at \$65 can be purchased for \$30.

By [Sherry Long slong@timesleader.com](mailto:slong@timesleader.com)
Staff Writer

All churches offer prayers, encouragement and support.



Wendy Ferrara of Swoyersville helps Bruce Johnson of Avoca get food at the First Assembly of God Church's Angel Food Ministries program on Saturday.

Jonathan J. Juka/For Times Leader

On the web

- [Angel Food Ministries Web site](#)

Some churches also use food to minister to people in the community.

A few local churches, including the First Assembly of God in Wilkes-Barre, are host sites that sell restaurant-quality food to people at a reduced cost through the Angel Food Ministries, a national non-profit food distribution program.

People can purchase a medium-sized box with a variety of frozen vegetables, meat and canned food valued at \$65 for \$30 through the program -- regardless of economic background or financial need. Menus change monthly.

First Assembly host site director Joyce Costello said the church began offering the program in July, serving 65 families the first month; 94 families ordered boxes for November.

“Our church is really community-minded,” Costello said. “We just want to reach out to the people in the community to show them we love them,” Costello said.

For the first time since the ministry was founded in 1994, it offered Thanksgiving boxes. It also is making Christmas boxes available – complete with a 7-pound hen, smoked ham, dressing, gravy mix, corn, green beans, cranberry sauce, dinner rolls and dessert.

Angel Food Ministries co-founder Joe Wingo developed the idea to offer special holiday boxes because of the tough economic times.

“With the economy the way it is he just wanted everyone to have a good holiday meal,” said Michelle Lindsey, Wingo’s assistant.

The Thanksgiving boxes were distributed the weekend before Thanksgiving. Orders for Christmas boxes will be taken through the first week in December. People interested in purchasing the boxes may contact a host church for the exact deadline. Orders must be pre-paid. Participating churches accept cash, food stamps or money orders, but not personal checks.

Churches receive \$1 for each box sold and may use the money any way it wishes.

Country Alliance Church in Clarks Summit uses the money to help the church break even with its distribution expenses since it began offering the ministry 16 months ago.

To learn more about the program or to view the December menu, go to www.timesleader.com for a link to the Angel Food Ministry Web site

Save Money On Your Groceries Every Month With Angel Food Ministries!



Note: Thanks to the hundreds of visitors who've arrived here in the last 7 days. If you have a question please leave a comment. I'll update this page when I find your answer! Thanks for your patience.

Angel Food Ministries is a great way for families to save money every month on their grocery bill. You can get a variety of food that would cost \$50 to \$70 in most of the large grocery stores for as little as \$28 or \$30 per month. That's the basic box you get every month. Additional monthly specials vary for about \$20 each and represent excellent values.

Note: Like everything else these days, the price of fuel has driven up the price of Angel Food for us to the \$30 mentioned. That's still a great deal because the retail price of the groceries we'd otherwise buy have skyrocketed!

We order every the basic box and some specials every month ourselves, recommend it to all our friends, and now I'm recommending it to you too!

This lens has no official connection with Angel Food Ministries... it's just the enthusiastic jabbering of one of their "raving fans". Most of the time I'm writing [here](#) so I will update this as time allows. So let's start saving you money!

Here's a comment from a reader about Angel Food Ministries - "Chuck, Angel Food Ministries is a true Godsend. My parents who are on a fixed income would not be eating as well as they do without Angel Food Ministries' monthly food packages. They depend the services of Angel Food Ministries every month!"

Another reader contacted me today. He's a 30 year veteran of running a food pantry and social service agency in a northern city. He heard how Angel Food Ministries operates and he's going to check it out his local host site he's so impressed!

That's why I wanted to build this lens - to help others in the same situation get the help they need by connecting with Angel Food Ministries!

Keep reading to find out why I'm so enthusiastic about Angel Food Ministries and for links to their current menus, host sites, and how to become a host site!

Here's Why I Love Angel Food Ministries

And I hope you will too...

1. **Basically everybody qualifies!** There are no applications or forms. You just need to want to **save money!**
2. It helps me (and hopefully you) **save money** predictably every month.
3. The food is **excellent in quality**. Restaurant quality only. No "seconds".
4. There are **no monthly fees and no membership fees** - it's completely voluntary. Like what you see this month? Order it! Don't like it... well there's always next month's menu.
5. **No extra taxes...** they're included in the listed prices.
6. **No delivery costs.** They're included in the basic cost each month.
7. Angel Food Ministries is spreading quickly **all over the continental United States**
8. Unlike "shopping" **you never touch the food till you take it in your home.** Local Angel Food Ministries volunteers pack your products in "Assembly Line" fashion to get your order ready literally in minutes. Your only wait is if there happens to be a line ahead of you when you arrive. I normally take the food to my car myself, but at our local site, the volunteers normally take it **directly to your car!** This is very handy for the elderly or just folks who need some help lugging stuff around.
9. The **Friendly People at the Host Site!** These folks are volunteers serving their community once per month out of the goodness of their heart. They do a great job.
10. Another thing I like about Angel Food Ministries is that it lets people **help themselves.** Instead of a *hand out*, it's a way for people to begin the process of bargain hunting, budgeting, and planning. It's a *hand up!*

11. It Just Makes Me Happy To Tell Folks About How To Save Money! (It's the way network marketing *should be*, but there's not a company with price values this good and, no, it's not a network marketing company!)