

Summary of Contributions in 2023 to Columbia Community Care Jan 5, 2024

Greetings!

We have tallied contributions of non-perishable items and personal hygiene items for **calendar year 2023** from the WLIFC congregations through the office totes and WLIFC lobby. **An estimated total of 13,728 items were contributed to Columbia Community Care (CCC). This compares to 17,927 items in CY 2022 and 34,306 items in CY 2021.** These contributions are greatly appreciated as they are further distributed to three CCC pantries and through a home delivery system operated by CCC. It is worth noting that since 2017 the WLIFC congregations have collected over 93,500 items (estimated at 93,500 pounds) for distribution to various local food pantries!

The season of need will continue long after the Christmas and New Year celebrations have ended. CCC and other groups find that in the months after the holiday season there is an increasing need for basic groceries and personal care items.

The CCC pop-up pantries serve an average of 300 families during their two-hour operation on Saturday mornings. The contributions from the WLIFC congregations represent 40% to 60% of the materials distributed by Columbia Community Care. We hope the members of the WLIFC will make a special appeal to congregants to increase their contributions to the WLIFC totes. Many of the recipients of these non-perishable items are individuals who are employed but are unable to purchase sufficient food to support their families. They turn to CCC and other pantries to support their families with adequate food.

These **non-perishable** food items are essential for the hundreds of families who have come to rely on the CCC pantries for weekly support. The contributions of non-perishable items from Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church and St John United Church congregations at the WLIFC are greatly appreciated! The season of need is always with us!

CCC also continues to make home deliveries to families who do not have a vehicle. This service is funded directly by financial contributions. This service also depends on the availability of individuals who are willing to make a home delivery. Translators are also needed to coordinate home deliveries. Last year CCC made 16,000 deliveries to families at their residences.

SPECIAL NOTE:

It is requested that donors consider the following items which are in high demand:

- personal care items such as:
 - toothpaste
 - shampoo
 - bars of bath soap
 - baby diapers
 - baby wipes
 - sanitary napkins (rather than tampons)
- canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste (rather than jars and cans of spaghetti sauce)
- pasta, spaghetti (rather than macaroni and cheese products)
- canned meats including tuna, chicken, corned beef, ham, Spam, Vienna Sausages, canned salmon
- sugar, flour, maseca, rice, cooking oil, and
- household items such as paper towels and toilet paper.

Financial contributions are also welcomed by CCC and may be made directly through the CCC Facebook site or at <https://columbiacommunitycare.org/> Columbia Community Care always needs volunteers to assist in sorting and distributing materials for the three local pantries. Volunteers can assist in setting up the pop-up pantries, sorting and working at distribution tables, or breaking down the site.

Please Note:

In addition to the above information please share the below information with the members of the SJERC and SJU congregations.

At the WLIFC we are **only collecting non-perishable food items and personal hygiene items. We are not collecting clothing, bedding, books, or other printed materials (cards and stationery). We also cannot collect food items that require refrigeration as these items may remain outside for a day or more without proper refrigeration. Please do not leave home-made food items in the collection totes. Food items that are not properly packaged and placed in the closed totes may be consumed by animals.**

For current information on Columbia Community Care go to: Columbia Community Care on Facebook or <https://columbiacommunitycare.org/>

Thanks to all for their generosity and a special thank you for again hosting the pantry at the WLIFC!

Regards, *Bud and Margaret Hunt*