

# Putting Families First: Food, Faith & a Future

*A Ministry of First Baptist Church of White Plains: Pilot Feeding and Community Building Program*

## VISION

A community in which families and individuals thrive, and hunger is non-existent.

## MISSION

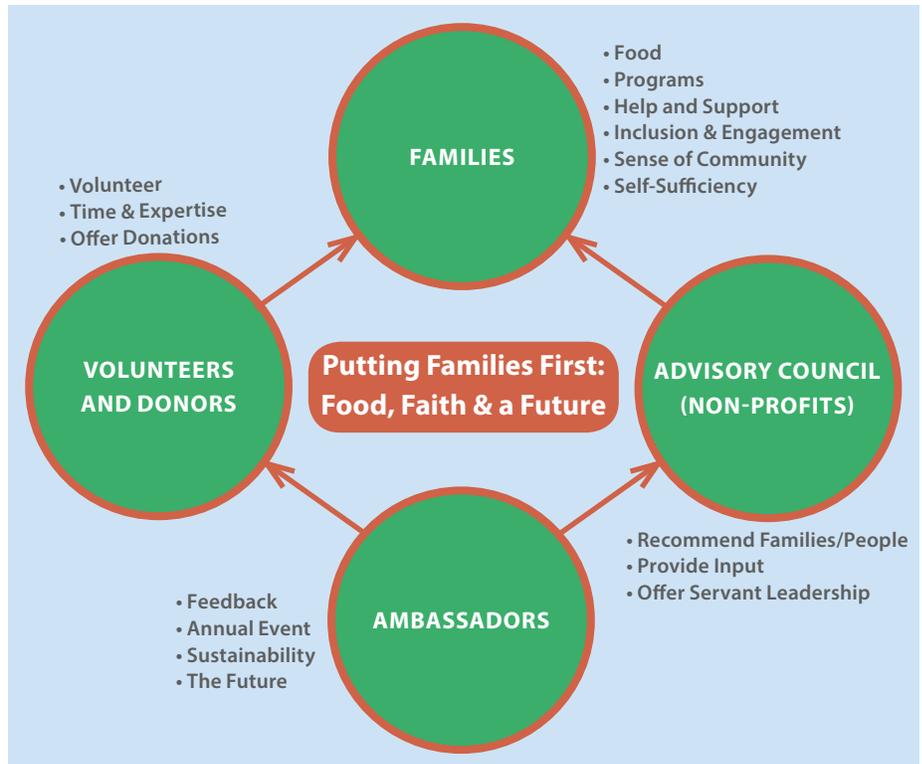
Improve conditions for families with food security concerns in White Plains and the surrounding area.

## STRATEGY

Establish a pilot community of 10-15 families and partner with them, non-profit stakeholders, and volunteer supporters in creating food security, building community, and providing a platform for personal development while affirming dignity.

## BENEFITS

Engagement, self-sufficiency, addresses hunger, eliminates isolation, builds community, is sustainable.



## HOW IT WORKS

► After obtaining contact information of appropriate applicants from our non-profit stakeholders, we will conduct informational sessions with these families to introduce them to the program. Putting Families First (PFF) will provide a unique alternative to many traditional food-centered ministries.

► Under our model, similar to a food co-op, each family we serve becomes a member of a community that meets every two weeks (26 times per year) at an agreed upon day and time in the church sanctuary. Eventually, the plan is that the meeting will be convened by the members themselves (although at the beginning, Pastor Tim and volunteers from our congregation will be more involved). Because of the consistency and sense of ownership the model offers, this will not only provide food security for those in need, but will be a place where relationships are formed, dignity is affirmed, and community is strengthened.

► Participants arrive at their appointed hour, check in, set up the room, pitch in to sort the food, or simply visit with others in the group. A meeting is then held which the members will eventually

control. The food will be distributed into one of three family sizes. Families (defined as living together in one household) of 1-2 people will get a certain amount, families of 3-5 will get a certain portion more, and families of 6 and above will get the largest portion.

► The meetings typically include a gathering time, community announcements, discussion of food preferences that are purchased, and at times, speakers or whatever the group decides that they need. *(continued on reverse)*

Jesus says, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." –Matthew 25:35, 40

## HOW IT WORKS *(continued from front)*

Examples of such needs could be things like cooking classes, light body movement or yoga instruction, financial literacy discussion, immigration rights discussion, tax help, etc. Then boxes are distributed and members leave until they gather again in two weeks. If someone from the group does not arrive, their food is not saved, but is simply redistributed among those who attended the meeting as the members see suitable.

► Food will be obtained through purchasing from local food banks, grocery stores, donations from stores, and congregation/

volunteers. The money for the food is paid as a budgetary priority of the congregation and grants.

► A cost of \$3.00 per meeting, per member family as a programming fee will be provided by donors, and non-profit stakeholders who commit to sponsoring a family for a year (cost \$78.00). These funds are never used for food. They may be used for programming needs or for a special need that the PFF members vote to determine. As the program grows, grants and additional funds from donors will be solicited in order to expand the programmatic side of PFF.

## STRUCTURE

We envision four important stakeholder groups to this unique model.

**1. Members.** Those individuals and families in need who can benefit from and commit to this program. Members will be asked to sign a non-binding letter of principled commitment to the program.

**2. Volunteers and Donors.** There are 6 people ready, willing, and able to volunteer now to support this pilot program. Their main role is to foster relationships with the PFF members, provide logistical support for transferring food, and as generous sponsors and advocates for the program in getting monetary and food donations.

**3. Advisory Council.** Each organization that partners with PFF by referring families in need will have a seat at our Advisory Council, which we foresee meeting 2-3 times a year to review the program and seek input for improvements. Council members can sponsor families by paying a program fee for their participation.

**4. Ambassadors.** A longer range goal is to include members who have gone through the program in an advisory and volunteer role as ambassadors. These are the “members” who

have “graduated” and provide support, encouragement, and a “testimony” as to how they got through their difficult time. This will be open to people who have needed assistance in the past from any food assistance programs. We will establish an annual breakfast with these folks to remain connected and engaged in the program.



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