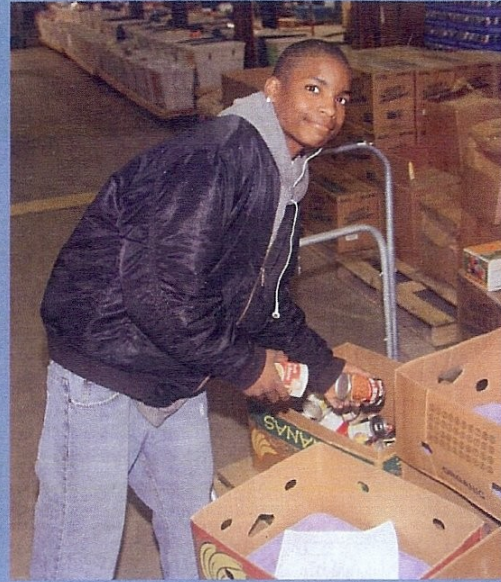


# Feeding ministry brings nourishment and new beginnings



**I**t's no coincidence that one of our partners who provides weekly food to neighbors along the Hull Street corridor has the words "New Beginning" in their name. At New Beginning Tabernacle, **the idea of feeding others goes hand-in-hand with the idea that nourishment can bring a new start for people in need.**

New Beginning got into the feeding business in an indirect way, but the reasons they started a pantry say a lot about their commitment to serving others. Originally, the church offered a daycare program to local families. In the course of feeding the children who came to them each day, they realized that many families needed help maintaining an adequate supply of healthy food at home. Over the last year, they provided more than 99,000 pounds of food to almost 400 individuals, and more than half of those were children.

The organization doesn't just feed people and provide daycare for children; their programs help turn negative circumstances into positive outcomes that spread to others. For example, last fall they welcomed a former client to their pantry team. By becoming a New Beginning volunteer after her family received food there, Michelle turned her own circumstances—and understanding about why people need food—into action for others. Now, Michelle puts her empathy to work month after month—and many other Chesterfield and South Richmond residents have benefited.

As one of the New Beginning food pantry helpers, Michelle has seen first-hand what it's like to need help finding a food source. When a layoff disrupted her family's already-tight budget, she was at a loss about where to turn. "I didn't know what to do," she recalls. Fortunately, she thought of calling the Foodbank to find the closest food source to her home. But the connection and help she found at New Beginning went beyond any of the fruits, vegetables, or canned goods she received. The concern and caring attitude of those like coordinator Harriet Hill brought Michelle comfort, too. "She turned my negative into a positive," she says.

Harriet, Michelle, and others (like retired Postal Service employee Herbert Anderson, pictured above at the Foodbank, loading food with his son Michael), spread that feeling throughout the feeding ministry. As a result, they provide nourishment for the soul just as their food provides nourishment for bodies young and old.

With concern about the factors that lead people to seek food and a keen awareness of hunger's consequences, New Beginning is a place that doesn't just feed people; it's a good neighbor that treats each member of the community with respect and care. **Kindness and healthy food bring relief from worries, but even more, the food and the services bring each individual or family the chance for a fresh start.**