

Northern Illinois Conference 2022 One Matters Award

Cedarville United Methodist Church

Prairie North



Cedarville and Red Oak United Methodist Churches are two small churches located in Stephenson County. The two churches work together on many outreach projects. Trying to get people excited about what God can do in their lives in sometimes quite difficult. By offering combined Bible studies and outreach projects we can involve more people in their walk with Christ.

Last year we had 12 people join the church. God has blessed us by giving us the vision to see the ministry needs in our community and the people to carry them out.



Prior to the pandemic the church had been providing a noon meal once a month to seniors in the community. It was attended by about 80 to 90 people. We had to stop that because of Covid 19 but the people involved wanted to continue sharing God's blessings. That was when we started the food pantry. So instead of providing one meal to 80 people once a month we now provide multiple meals to over 175 people every month

There are a variety of people who come to the food pantry. Some are elderly, some are single moms, and some are families who just need some additional help to feed the family. We serve about 70 families, about 180 people, per month. They come in the rain, the cold, and the snow to receive God's blessings that the church can provide. Not only those receiving the food see God's light but those doing the serving also see and feel the presence of God.

A recent new member to the church shared his feeling. After placing a box of food in a young mother's car, she turned and offered, "what a blessing this is. I was not sure what I was going to feed my kids tonight." The woman was appreciative of the food she received but the new member felt the presence of Jesus in his life.

It takes about 15 people to make this work. We make a total of 5 trips to the food bank – about 50 miles away. There is a crew of 4-5 people that fills the sack of non-perishable food, there is another crew of 4 that fills boxes with the fresh produce and meat; then another crew of 4-5 who gets the food to the car.

We also have Wanda's Circle. This group creates sewing and knitting projects for the community. Every Monday, 6-10 ladies show up to provide mittens, lap robes, quilts and other needs to the community or local schools.