

Thanksgiving 2024

# Hope in Action

Your compassion to help neighbors in need

An  
accident  
left Cheryl  
stranded...  
You were  
there



Helping Our Neighbors In Need  
Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison



# You Saved Lisa's Life



Above: Lisa, "The pharmacy has been incredible. These folks know my whole life, and every time I come in, it feels like I'm visiting with family."

Lisa's been coming to the St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy for several years. She says, "it's truly been a God-send."

She found out about the pharmacy after visiting the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry regularly. When she realized she couldn't afford her medications anymore, she wondered if she qualified for help. At the time, she barely had any income, and was struggling with serious health issues. Thankfully, Lisa qualified for service, and has been relying on the pharmacy for her medicine ever since.

"The pharmacy has been incredible," Lisa said. "I've been through a lot. A lot of bad health and almost dying. They seriously brought me back! Now, I'm working only two days a week and fighting to get disability benefits, which has been a rough road. I simply can't afford the medications I need, but the pharmacy always steps in. Whenever I have a question about my medicine, they're there to help. They know exactly what I'm going through."

Lisa's thankful for the pharmacy staff and volunteers because she says they treat her like family.

"The staff here is amazing," Lisa

said. "They're never rushed and they genuinely care about me and my story. I've been to other places where they rush you through without really talking. But here, it's different. These folks know my whole life, and every time I come in, it feels like I'm visiting with family. They stand and talk with me, and I never feel like I'm just a number."

Lisa's partner also relies on the pharmacy for his medications. Lisa says he wouldn't be alive without their help as some of his medicines costs \$500 a month. She simply cannot afford that.

"It's been a blessing beyond words," Lisa said. "This place is a gift to the community, and I wish there were more like it because too many people are dying just because they can't afford their medicine."

You saved Lisa's life. Because of you, she's maintaining her health through medicine and personal care.

If you have questions about the pharmacy, are interested in scheduling a tour, or want to donate, contact Eric Fleming, Director of Development, (608) 442-7200 x34 or [efleming@svdpmadison.org](mailto:efleming@svdpmadison.org).

## Provide Thanksgiving Dinner



The holiday season is the busiest time at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. Your compassion will provide Thanksgiving dinner to our neighbors in need and help them celebrate a joyful holiday. Donate at <https://svdpmadison.org/donate/>, scan the QR code at left or mail a check in the enclosed envelope.



**\$115/month**  
Provide two-weeks of groceries to **one family**



**\$230/month**  
Provide two-weeks of groceries to **two families**



**\$345/month**  
Provide two-weeks of groceries to **three families**

**Right:** Pantry use chart showing data from 2019 through 2024. This year, you've provided food to more people than ever before through the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. These numbers represent young families who've just moved to the area, homebound seniors, working parents needing extra food to feed their families and adults who are short on money this month. Thank you for your compassionate care for our neighbors!



Above: Julie in the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.

*Dear friends,*

Several weeks ago, I came across a quote that I continue to think about, "What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal."\*

What we do throughout our lives - our works - matters.

As we enter into the Thanksgiving season, **I give thanks for you.** Thank you for your generosity, your care, your thoughtfulness, and your faithfulness. What a comfort to know that what you've done and continue to do for our neighbors in need "remains and is immortal." What you do matters - a lot.

We live in a time where a growing number of families are struggling everyday to make ends meet. They must make hard choices between paying their rent or a car repair, utilities or food, gas or prescriptions.

This Thanksgiving season, 108 more hungry families visited the pantry in September compared with last year. A monthly total of nearly 3,038 families. Thanks to you, no one has been turned away.

Because of your support through food, neighbors can afford to pay their rent and utilities. Because of your support through medicine, neighbors can pay for needed car repairs. How? Your support of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison feeds people, provides medication, and provides low-interest loans preventing families from falling into homelessness.

With you, families have dignity to go about their day, peace of mind, and hope for a brighter tomorrow. What you do matters.

During this season of thanksgiving, will you provide help to our neighbors in need?

Blessings to you and yours,

**Julie Bennett**  
CEO & Executive Director

\* Albert Pine, writer

## Igniting Hope and Reimagining Service

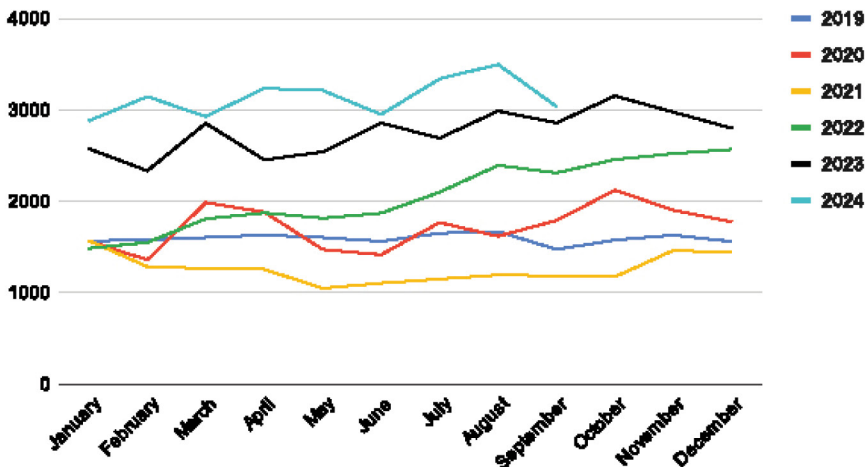
The first goal in St. Vincent de Paul — Madison's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is "to improve the delivery of service offerings through better communication, consistency, and accessibility."

Nearly 70% of all St. Vincent de Paul — Madison service expenses go to feeding hungry families. The food pantry team continues to modify how they deliver food to neighbors to make the process more efficient and attentive to each person's needs. With guidance from two pro bono consultants, staff redesigned the pantry flow, reducing the wait time for clients during peak periods by 35%. The change is appreciated by neighbors and has energized employees and volunteers.



Learn more about the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan here: <https://svdpmadison.org/strategic-plan/>.

### Total Number of Households Using the Food Pantry Each Month





# After an Accident, You Helped Cheryl Recover

Cheryl's life was upended in an instant. A car accident this spring left her with a broken kneecap, confined to a brace from hip to ankle. The injury meant she couldn't work and struggled to get basic essentials for herself and her son, Eli.

"I panicked," Cheryl said. "It was just so difficult to get around with my knee. I had no idea how we were going to make it."

She faced a scary reality. Without short-term disability insurance and having used up all of her paid time off, she was running out of options. The only silver lining was that her employer was holding her job until she could return—but the bills continued to pile up.

Without a steady income, Cheryl's biggest fear wasn't her physical pain but the possibility of losing her apartment. She hadn't been a tenant in the apartment complex long; only a few months after escaping an unsafe domestic abuse situation. The apartment was finally a stable place where she and Eli could live. When the accident forced her away from work, she was worried. She started researching for

local help online and left a voicemail at the St. Vincent de Paul Service Center and several other organizations. St. Vincent de Paul — Madison staff were the first to call her back. That's when you, through two St. Vincent de Paul members, stepped in to provide her a lifeline.

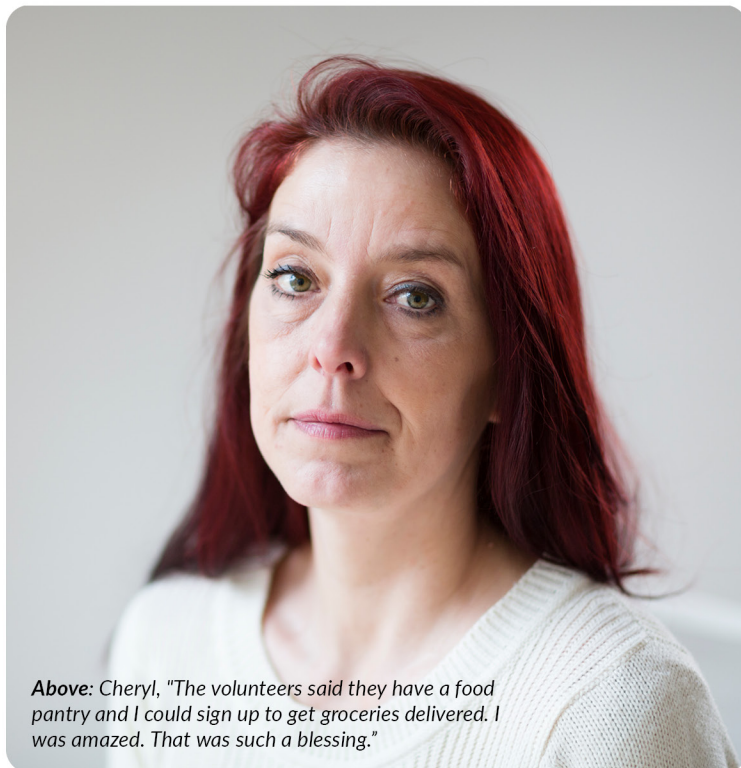
## You Gave Her Stability

Two conference members from a parish on Madison's south side visited Cheryl a few days after she contacted the St. Vincent de Paul Service Center. They saw her brace and her struggles firsthand, and after talking with her, asked how they could help. The conference worked together to help cover her rent, ensuring that Cheryl and her son wouldn't lose their home.

"At first, I didn't know where to turn," Cheryl said. "But the volunteers came at the perfect time. I don't know what we would have done without that help. The rent was the big thing worrying me. I was able to budget alright in the months before, but then I was out of work and it sent me back a lot."

Thanks to you, Cheryl not only kept her home but was also able to focus on her recovery. She even received food from the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.

"I didn't even think to ask for help with food," Cheryl said. "I just thought we would have to make it work. But then the volunteers said they have a food pantry and I could sign up



Above: Cheryl, "The volunteers said they have a food pantry and I could sign up to get groceries delivered. I was amazed. That was such a blessing."





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Today, Cheryl is back on her feet—literally—and back at work, reclaiming her sense of stability and security. She’s not just surviving; she’s rebuilding her life.

Your support through St. Vincent de Paul — Madison made all the difference in this unexpected chapter of Cheryl’s life. By helping to pay her rent and providing food, you gave her peace of mind and the breathing room to recover physically and emotionally.

## A Future of Hope

Cheryl’s story is just one of many stories of your kindness and your generosity in action. The support you provide through food, medicine, clothing and furniture impacts neighbors in need across Dane County. The support you provide through microloans and case management will impact neighbors in need for generations. When our neighbors face long term or one-time challenges, like Cheryl, you’re there to provide help without judgment.

Because of you, Cheryl can now focus on what truly matters: raising Eli and rebuilding her life with renewed strength and resiliency.

*Thank you for making this possible. Your support changes lives! Donate now to help people just like Cheryl: <https://svdpmadison.org/donate/>.*



## A Note from Chris...

Hello all,

I’m Chris Kane, Senior Director of Client Services. First, I want to add my thanks to you for your ongoing support of St. Vincent de Paul — Madison. As more families in need turn to our pantry for food, you make sure that we have the resources to stock our shelves and get food out to families.

Because of you, our pantry team of staff and dedicated volunteers can prepare for some of the busiest weeks of the year - Thanksgiving and Christmas.

I want to share how together, we’re adapting to help even more people in need...

- With the help of two pro bono consultants, we redesigned the way families get food from our pantry. We decreased the amount of time neighbors wait for food, while retaining personal service, dignity and care for each person. For families juggling multiple jobs, child and family responsibilities, accessing food quicker is a valued gift you give them.
- Your generosity allowed us to say “yes” to a third dialysis clinic caring for a number of patients struggling to feed themselves while living with the demands of dialysis. **Each month, volunteers now fill bags of healthy renal diet groceries for 160 people.**
- Your ongoing help is greatly needed. In 2025, St. Vincent de Paul — Madison and every other area pantry will experience a significant loss in food funding. For the past four years, Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin received \$5-6 million per year of federal COVID-19 pandemic-relief dollars through Dane County to purchase food, which was then distributed to local food pantries, including ours, at no cost. Last year, that saved \$500,000 in our food expenses. Advocacy efforts asking the Dane County Board to include funding in the next budget have not been successful. With your help, we will continue to adapt to ensure that no one asking for help is turned away.

Thanks again,

**Chris Kane**  
Senior Director of Client Services





## Volunteer Spotlight

In early October, St. Vincent de Paul — Madison honored the work of volunteers who play essential service roles in helping our neighbors in need. It was a wonderful night to celebrate the hard work, accomplishments and dedication of so many caring people. Whether volunteers sort and bag produce, direct traffic, fill prescriptions, load cars, visit people in their homes, operate Vinny's Lockers, or grow food at Lacy Garden, their time and talents give help and hope to thousands of neighbors each year.

Interested in providing your help to our neighbors in need and joining the volunteer team? Learn more at <https://svdpmadison.org/join-us/> or contact Zoe Lavender, Volunteer Coordinator, (608) 442-7200 x71 or [zlavender@svdpmadison.org](mailto:zlavender@svdpmadison.org).



**Above:** Ten volunteers received special awards of recognition this year: Marianne Adamczyk, Bank of Sun Prairie, Kevin Byrnes, Elizabeth Durack, Ann Holman, Mark Kraemer, Deacon Dick Martin, Jerry Norder, Lizzie Starbuck, and Annika Zakrzewski

## Save the Date

### Honoring 100 Years of Service to Our Neighbors In Need

Next year is **St. Vincent de Paul — Madison's Centennial**. It will be a year-long celebration to honor the caring people (past and present) who've provided help and hope and to recommit ourselves to serve in the next century. Save the dates:

- **April 23rd, 2025; 11am-1:30pm** — Centennial Mass & Launch Luncheon (Alliant Energy Center, Madison)
- **September 17th, 2025** — Your Hope in Action Gala
- **April 22nd, 2026** — Building the Next Century Celebration

Learn more at <https://svdpmadison.org/centennial/>.

### Mission

We are a Catholic lay organization in which members join together in friendship to grow spiritually by providing person-to-person services to our neighbors in need.

### Vincentian Values

Simplicity  
Humility  
Gentleness  
Selflessness  
Zeal

### Your Crucial Support

Your compassion and generosity changes the lives of thousands of people each year in Dane County. Donate online now by scanning the QR code below or call (608) 442-7200 x34.

Contact Eric Fleming at [efleming@svdpmadison.org](mailto:efleming@svdpmadison.org) or (608) 442-7200 x34 to leave a bequest in your will or estate to care for future needs of our community.



[svdpmadison.org/donate](https://svdpmadison.org/donate)

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