



Faith Sprouted a Leaf by Veronica Smoke



Photo by Faith Church Midfield

THE LEAF PANTRY AT FAITH CHURCH MIDFIELD — The Leaf is stocked with fresh produce, frozen meats, dairy, non-perishables, and various canned goods. Master gardener, James Tate, tends the garden. He is pictured above with an amazingly large cabbage from their garden. God is blessing the work of his hands!

While the world was fighting Covid, we were doing our part as a church by aiding our community with drive-by food boxes and spreading the Gospel. Then, after many bumps in the road, something interesting happened while our church searched for a permanent home. The Lord planted us in our new home in the Midfield community. Some would say, why Midfield? But that is a story for another time. We were overjoyed to have a new home, a permanent place, and something to call our own. So now what?

How could we serve God here? As a nurse, my first instinct is to assess what is needed. I looked at the community, schools, businesses, and other churches with many prayers, and one thing stuck out the most. This area is a food desert plagued by food insecurity! It's always our mission as a church to spread the Good

News and to be a beacon of light. However, the community can't hear us on an empty stomach.

Now that we have this beautiful building with so much room, we're not going to throw away an opportunity to make a difference in the name of Jesus. But, in everything we attempt, we must consider this simple rule my mom instilled in me: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

After researching food pantries all over the US and seeing how successful models worked, we created a model to emulate and keep God as the focus. A client-select pantry is very similar to shopping in your local Publix. However, we added a twist by pairing our shoppers with a Faith Church member to make the time spent with us more personable. The pairing is referred to as the "Faces of Faith." This pairing allows our mem-

bers to spend time with the shopper as we engage in conversation, answer questions, and point out product limits if needed. The client-select model facilitates an environment where our clients can maintain their dignity, minimize waste, and give them an awesome shopping buddy. While our clients are waiting to shop, our prayer team offers community and personal prayer while mingling and fellowshiping with one another. As a result, the sanctuary is filled with a spirit of fellowship and praise.

The Leaf is stocked with fresh produce, frozen meats, dairy, and several non-perishables. However, we realize several people in our community may not have running water, electricity, or even the ability to read. Our volunteers are sensitive to all these needs and help the clients make appropriate choices to maintain food safety.

The Leaf has grown tremendously from the first day we opened to the public, only having eleven clients showing up on a cold day in February 2022. It has now been a year of continued growth. In May, we served 170 families, representing over 700 individuals, who were all fed quality food and given healthy choices. We know their names, faces, and special needs, whether dietary or physical. They look forward to seeing us, and we look forward to seeing them! We have also been blessed with awesome partners. Our Mountain Brook Baptist Church brothers and sisters join us each pantry Saturday to share in this beautiful discipleship and service. We have never been without enough volunteers because of the infectious atmosphere. If you ever have the opportunity to visit our pantry or our pantry shoppers, you will leave with a warm feeling, great fellowship, and the goodness of God.

I truly believe the Lord has a beautiful plan for Faith Church in this Midfield community, and this is only the beginning. If you have time, you should see our garden, which is tended by our master gardener, James Tate, and our beautiful lake,

BMBA Calendar

Visit us online for more events at <http://www.facebook.com/Birmingham.Metro.Baptist.Association>

A Senior Adult Event

Oasis 2023

Join us on July 13, 2023, at 1:30 p.m., at FBC Trussville for OASIS BIRMINGHAM, an afternoon event for senior adults in the Birmingham Metro area.

Featured at OASIS BIRMINGHAM will be one of America's funniest Christian comedians, DENNIS SWANBERG. Senior adults love this guy! Also appearing will be ALLISON SPEER, a most gifted gospel singer and story teller. Her love for Jesus is so evident as she sings. FRANK JONES will be playing the piano and leading great hymns and gospel songs, as well as serving as Host for OASIS BIRMINGHAM.

If you need further information or have any questions, please call Frank Jones at 205-393-7020.

Tickets may be ordered online at <https://www.frankjonesministries.org/oasis-birmingham-2023/>.

where local anglers brag about their catches. You will understand our Lord is present once you have seen these wonderful sights. So stay tuned for more to come at The Leaf, Faith Church, and Midfield.

VISION

The Leaf Pantry is here to dispatch disciples of Christ. As disciples, we should always be shining God's light. His word says, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matt 5:16). We share the Lord's provisions with a community in the dark without prejudice to reveal the light of the Lord's Good News.