

Food for Families

Wednesday Night Meal Guidelines

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**Who, What, & Why**

Park View Community Mission (PVCM) is located in mid-town Lynchburg in the building formerly occupied by Park View United Methodist Church. Parking is available in the lot across the Mission on Wadsworth Street. Food for Families, is one of more than a dozen partner programs housed at PVCM. Food for Families (FFF) is a client-choice food pantry that serves individuals and families on a monthly basis with supplemental groceries. FFF also provides a free meal every Wednesday evening along with a brief worship time prior to the meal. Individuals who come and receive this free meal are homeless, part or full-time working poor, disabled, or living on an otherwise constricted income. Anyone who expresses that they need our services is welcome, regardless of the details of their situation.

**What to Expect**

When you arrive, the Meal Facilitator will greet you and show you the Volunteer Sign-in Book where you and your volunteers will sign-in. Our Facilitator will then help you start setting up for the meal. The Facilitator will be with you for the entire meal and closing of the night.

**Devotional and Worship**

Your group will provide a short time of worship and a devotional for our neighbors. This time consists of music, a devotional and prayer (including a blessing before meal is served.) The music can begin no later than 5:00 and a devotional to follow (or in whatever order works best for you). The meal is served at 5:30.

**What does my group need to do?**

If you are reading this Handbook, you are the Contact Person for your group. Your first step was scheduling a meal, which you have probably done. Next, please review all information in this handbook to assist you to lead your group in preparing, serving, and cleaning up after the meal. We suggest planning the menu one or two months prior to serving, to ensure you have ample time to gather volunteers and food as needed, enabling you to enjoy your time at Park View without last-minute stress.

You may cook and prepare your meal in any food-safe kitchen, including ours. Please **do not** have each member of your group bring a dish from home. Due to safety concerns, please cook all foods in a location where proper food holding temperatures can be observed and cleanliness is enforced. Our kitchen is fully functional and is open to you all day Wednesday to prepare. If you have questions about food safety or cooking your meal, please contact our Meal Facilitator.

**What does FFF provide?**

We provide beverages. Our Meal Facilitator will prepare the drinks before you arrive. We make sweet tea and lemonade, and you are welcome to offer water and coffee. We have an ice machine and walk-in cooler near the kitchen. Gas stove is in the kitchen.

We understand that for some churches and groups, providing a whole meal for 125 people may be challenging. If you need help providing portions of the meal (i.e. bread, salad, dessert), please notify PVCM **at least 1 week prior to your meal** and we will try our best to accommodate. Lettuce and breads are often abundant in our pantry.

Here is a guide to provide you with some suggestions in planning a menu:

* 1 main dish- spaghetti, sandwiches, hot dogs, tacos, soup, etc.
* 2 sides- salad, beans, potatoes, greens, fruit, chips, etc.
* 1 bread- toast, corn muffins, rolls, buns, etc.
* Dessert- cookies, cupcakes, pies, brownies, etc.
* Condiments- sauces, ketchup, salad dressing, butter, etc.

*Paper products, beverages, and utensils are provided by Park View.*

We do not generally use tablecloths, due to the volume of washing. If you wish to use them, we have plain white cloths. Please check with our Facilitator before your date to be sure they are available. You are also welcome to bring your own colored or themed cloths.

**Volunteers**

You will probably need between 8 and 12 volunteers. The earlier you arrive, the more time you will have to set up, and the less help you will need. Most groups start to arrive around 4pm, but you may want to come earlier if you need time to cook. Volunteers are needed to set up tables and chairs, wipe off tables, cook your meal, plate desserts, serve drinks and the food. We serve cafeteria style, where tables are called one by one to come up to the serving line. Each person gets a plate and goes down the line receiving a portion of each dish. Frequently, the neighbors come back for seconds and for boxes to take home. Once every neighbor is served one plate (and if you have enough volunteers and food) you can rotate your group to allow time for volunteers to sit and eat a meal with our neighbors. We highly encourage this opportunity to make your neighbors feel welcome and loved by your group.

After the meal, volunteers will need to clean up fellowship hall, wash dishes, break down tables, take trash to the dumpster, and return the kitchen to the way you found it Cleaning instructions for both the kitchen and community room will be posted in each room.

**Schedule**

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| 3-4:00 pm | Group arrives to prepare |
| 4:30 pm | Doors open for neighbors |
| 5:00 pm | Worship Time |
| 5:30 pm | Meal is served |
| 6:30 pm | Start cleaning up |
| 7:00 pm | Lock up |

**Supplies Map**

Dish detergent & cleaning spray are under kitchen sink.

Trash bags are in back mop closet, inner closet.

Brooms, mops, paper towels, etc. are available for cleaning.

**Food for Families appreciates your support of our neighbors**

**and encourages your comments and suggestions to help us improve**

**and make the Wednesday Evening Experience at Park View even better.**