

Who and what is the IFC (Interreligious Food Consortium)?

- We are a **small not for profit** (EIN#16-1252466) formed in 1982 (interestingly prior to the Food Bank of CNY) by six small University Hill churches to address food insecurity of members of their congregations. It grew to a consortium of over 70 pantries at its height in the early 2000's. Since then, the numbers have diminished due to church closings, consolidations, or pantries having grown larger than we can support.
- Coming to the IFC brings with it a renewal of effort and relationships in addressing unmet needs in the emergency food network in our community, especially due to the pandemic and the disruption to services with many religious communities. Currently we serve approximately **30-40 very small and under-resourced pantries and senior housing, as well as crisis response providers such as case managers, social workers and educators. In addition, we are a referral service assisting individuals in locating the food pantry that serves their neighborhood.**
- Most recently we have had two significant issues arise that we are addressing:
 - We have partnered with **Interfaith Works** and the **Blessing Box** in addressing the unique needs of the refugee, immigrant and new American populations.
 - And the **IFC has become the #1 resource for Onondaga County's Contact Tracing Counselors** who regularly refer us to **families in quarantine** who are in desperate need of food support. We are collaborating with St. Lucy's pantry to augment that service with dairy, bread, fresh fruits and vegetables and frozen meats to such families and deliver directly to their homes. We are the only emergency responder to provide same day, 7-day a week, door to door service for our neighbors in need.

We are not the Food Bank. Someone recently illustrated the work we do and how we differentiate from the Food Bank by describing the Food Bank as a very large ship navigating the waters of need in 11 counties receiving Federal aid and food, and the IFC is a very small boat able to navigate into the smaller rivers and tributaries mostly in the neediest neighborhoods of the City of Syracuse providing more direct and personal service to those not registering on the Food Bank's radar, not receiving any State or Federal aid. We think that is an apt description. For more information, please see... www.ifccny.org

We receive **no government funding**, rather we rely on **individual donations** derived from:

- Our near **40-year history** and regular financial support from individuals and religious organizations...
 - Newsletters of which our Fall/Winter Newsletter was the first sent out in over a year prior to our arrival.
 - Our annual Fundraiser **"Empty Bowls"** that is held in association with Syracuse University Arts Department. Normally we have over 1600 beautiful bowls provided by students and staff of the university as well as **Clayscapes Pottery** on West Fayette St. **Clayscapes** has been a very faithful colleague in this effort in every sense of the word. They also have students working to make bowls, organize and staff volunteers, coordinate logistics of bowl delivery and other aspects of the event, as well as generously donating clay materials, etc. We're fortunate to have them as community partners sharing the load.
 - Food Drives of which our two largest and most consequential being the St. Patrick's Day Parade and the USPS Food Drive. **We welcome any group or agency willing to conduct a FOOD DRIVE for us!**
- Our **requests** arise out of the following:
 - The pandemic curtailed many food drives with schools, offices and churches closed.
 - With SU operating remotely and restrictions on public gatherings we were only able to hold our Empty Bowl event virtually which was very important to maintain our presence to previous partners and supporters but the results were a 75% reduction in normal proceeds.
 - The USPS is delaying their Food Drive until the Fall of 2021.
 - We are, at the moment, not sure how the Covid Pandemic will affect our upcoming needs. The pandemic will remain a major factor affecting service and donations for most of the remainder of the year and beyond.
- We field approximately **100-150** calls a month.
- We handle **two tons** of non-perishable food items and a small amount of household and personal hygiene products including diapers each month.
- Most of our food is donated and with additional funds we purchase those items most needed and in shortest supply.