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Table Grace Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to Table of Grace! We are grateful for your contribution of time and talent to help us fulfill our goal of building a stronger and healthier community by providing fresh, nutritious food to persons in need.

Table of Grace is a not-for-profit mission of Grace Presbyterian Church. It is the reinvention of the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry that began with one small cabinet in a kitchen in 1996. Our food distributions are staffed almost exclusively by volunteers. Although the membership of Grace Presbyterian Church fills some of our volunteer roles, volunteers from the community are not only welcome, they also play a vital role in helping ensure that we are fully staffed for each distribution. Congregational and community volunteers also provide valuable support by leading targeted food drives; picking up, unloading, sorting, and shelving donated food; packing bags with fresh produce; and even sometimes assisting with home deliveries. We are a choice pantry that offers customers a selection of non-perishable staples such as rice, beans, pasta and cereal, as well as milk, juice, eggs, and frozen meat, poultry, or fish. Along with canned fruit and vegetables we are pleased to provide fresh produce as often as we are able. Much of the pantry food is acquired through partnership with the West Alabama Food Bank. Additionally, we are grateful for generous donations of seasonal produce from local farms and individuals.

Thank you for volunteering!

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Table of Grace Hours

Tuesday	12:00-6:00 pm
Thursday	12:00- 2:00 pm
Friday	12:00-2:00 pm

Volunteers should arrive at 11:30 am for all 12:00 pm shifts and at 2:30 pm for all 3:00 pm shifts.

Volunteer Roles Overview

(* require training)

Greeter

Responsible for welcoming neighbors to the market, maintaining a steady flow of neighbors through the market during busy times, and directing neighbors to either registration or check in.

Bags & Carts

Responsible for welcoming neighbors, gathering and returning carts, and assisting neighbors in taking groceries to their cars.

Shopping Assistant

Assists neighbors one on one as they shop.

Stocking Assistant

Responsible for bringing stock from the back room to refill empty shelves and coolers as needed. Works directly with the Inventory Lead.

Check In*

Responsible for accurately and efficiently checking in neighbors when they come to shop and guiding them to their next step. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Check Out*

Responsible for accurately and efficiently weighing neighbors' food and checking out neighbors after they shop. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Registration*

Responsible for conducting new neighbor interviews or interviews for returning neighbors who are new to the software. Registration volunteers must verify the primary account information and accurately fill in the remainder of the household information. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Inventory Lead*

Responsible for maintaining inventory and stocking market shelves. Must be trained on USDA food management requirements, food safety, and inventory organization.

Volunteer Lead*

Responsible for welcoming, training, and troubleshooting for all volunteers for that day/shift.

Greeter

Responsible for welcoming neighbors to the market, maintaining a steady flow of neighbors through the market during busy times, and directing neighbors to either registration or check in.

Key Traits Needed: *Friendly; Willing to talk to neighbors*

- ❖ Actively seeks to welcome neighbors.
- ❖ Engage neighbors in friendly conversation.
- ❖ Manage the flow of neighbors into the market during busy times.
- ❖ Directs new neighbors to the office for an interview or the chairs outside of the office to wait for a volunteer to be ready for them.
- ❖ Directs returning neighbors to check in.
- ❖ Help neighbors get a cart, open a shopping bag and put a can flat in their cart.

Bags & Carts

Responsible for welcoming neighbors, gathering and returning carts, and assisting neighbors in taking groceries to their cars.

Key Traits Needed: *Friendly; Willing to talk to neighbors; Able to lift full grocery bags*

- ❖ Actively seeks to welcome neighbors.
- ❖ Engage neighbors in friendly conversation.
- ❖ Should remain near the door, inside or out of the building or at check out.
- ❖ Assist those needing help into the building as soon as they see them.
- ❖ Assist shoppers to their cars and return the carts to the building.

Shopping Assistant

Assists neighbors one on one as they shop.

Key Traits Needed: *Friendly; Willing to talk to neighbors; Able to lift full grocery bags*

- ❖ Assist neighbors with selecting items and utilizing their points.
- ❖ The point system explained:
 - Each neighbor shopping is assigned a number of points to shop with based on the number of people in their household. The neighbor's name and their number of points will be on a card handed to you or them by the check-in volunteer.
 - Each item in the market is assigned a number of points and there are signs on each self to show you and the neighbor how many points each item is worth.
 - As you and the neighbor shop, you keep track of the points spent by tallying the points on the card given. You will be given a clipboard and pen to help with this. Occasionally remind the neighbor how many points they have left to shop with. The volunteer coordinator will let the shopping assistants know of any items that are limited (Example: Each household can get 1 bread; Each household can get up to 10 points of frozen meat, etc.).
- ❖ Help reach and bag items as needed.
- ❖ Walk neighbor to the check-out process and make sure there is a Greeter/Packer to help them to their car. If there is not a Greeter/Packer offer to help them to their car.
- ❖ While shopping together, you are encouraged to share recipes and ways to use items that the neighbor may be less familiar with, as appropriate.

Stocking Assistant

Responsible for bringing stock from the back room to refill empty shelves and coolers as needed. Works directly with the Inventory Lead.

Key Traits Needed: *Willing to do manual labor, can bend and lift*

- ❖ Assist with unloading deliveries.
- ❖ Assist with weighing and processing inventory intake.
- ❖ Assist with restocking market shelves.
- ❖ Assist with cleaning, organizing, and maintenance of the market and back room.

Check In

Responsible for accurately and efficiently checking in neighbors when they come to shop and guiding them to their next step. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Key Traits Needed: *Quick on the computer, attention to detail*

- ❖ Greet the neighbor and ask for their name or ID.
- ❖ Search for their name in the search bar:
 - It is best to search starting with the most unusual part of their name:

Example: Opal Smith would best be searched by Opal, and John Jerico would best be searched by Jerico.
 - The system will search the full name, in any order. For more common names, the more of the name you type, the further it will narrow your search.
 - No capitalization or punctuation is needed in the search. You can search for john smith or smith john with the same results being returned.
- ❖ If they are in the system, they will come up as you type.
 - You may get more than 1 result.
 - The first listings will be for neighbors and will list under the client heading. The second section is for proxies and will list under that heading. Both sections will include the address of the neighbor. The proxy section will also list the neighbor's name. It is possible for someone to be in the proxy section but not yet a neighbor.
 - Be sure that you are in the correct neighbor before proceeding.
- ❖ If they are not in the system or come up as Registration Due, refer them to the registration volunteer.
- ❖ If they are in the system and registered, click on the **New Visit** button.
 - If you get an error message that this visit would violate the visit frequency rules, politely explain to the neighbor that they have already visited the pantry this month, and will not be able to shop again until next month, possibly pointing out to them when that is. They may receive an emergency food bag from the stock room if this is the case. Check with

your lead volunteer if you do not know where these are.

- ❖ At the top of the **Visit page**, find the number in the household. This determines the points they have available to shop with.
 - A household of 1 gets 15 points.
 - All other Households get 10 points per member. (Write down the household size and a 0 to the end.)
- ❖ Write the **Neighbor's name and number of points they get on a card**, and give it to the neighbor or their shopping partner.
- ❖ Select the item **"Visit"** and add it to their cart.
- ❖ Have them **sign in** the box at the bottom of the cart.
- ❖ Click the **Save and Exit** button.
- ❖ Click the **New Search** button to be ready for the next neighbor.

Check Out

Responsible for accurately and efficiently weighing neighbors' food and checking out neighbors after they shop. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Key Traits Needed: *Quick on the computer, attention to detail*

- ❖ Make sure the scale is turned on and zeroed out, and on lbs.
 - It will zero out automatically as long as nothing is on the scale.
- ❖ Greet the neighbor, and ask for their name or find it on their card.
- ❖ Search for their name in the search bar.
 - It is best to search starting with the most unusual part of their name:

Example: Opal Smith would best be searched by Opal, and John Jerico would best be searched by Jerico.
 - The system will search the full name, in any order. For more common names, the more of the name you type, the further it will narrow your search.
 - No capitalization or punctuation is needed in the search. You can search for john smith or smith john with the same results being returned.
- ❖ Select the **neighbor name**.
- ❖ Have the Shopping Assistant or Neighbor put the bag of **food on the scale**.
- ❖ Click on the **Edit Visit** button.
- ❖ Select **Pound of Food**, and in the **quantity section type in the weight** of their bag of food.
- ❖ Select **Add Item**.
- ❖ Repeat as needed.
- ❖ Scroll down to bottom, Click **Save and Exit**.

Registration

Responsible for conducting new neighbor interviews or interviews for returning neighbors who are new to the software. Registration volunteers must verify the primary account information and accurately fill in the remainder of the household information. Requires training on the PantrySoft browser-based software.

Key Traits Needed: *Quick on the computer, attention to detail, good with clients*

- ❖ If possible, registration interviews should take place at the table in the office.
- ❖ Greet the neighbor and ask for their name or ID
- ❖ FIRST: search for their name in the search bar, as some people forget that they are registered.
 - It is best to search starting with the most unusual part of their name:

Example: Opal Smith would best be searched by Opal, and John Jerico would best be searched by Jerico.
 - The system will search the full name, in any order. For more common names, the more of the name you type, the further it will narrow your search.
 - No capitalization or punctuation is needed in the search. You can search for john smith or smith john with the same results being returned.
- ❖ If they are in the system, they will come up as you type.
 - You may get more than 1 result.
 - The first listings will be for neighbors and will list under the client heading. The second section is for proxies and will list under that heading. Both sections will include the address of the neighbor. The proxy section will also list the neighbor name. It is possible for someone to be in the proxy section but not yet a neighbor.
 - Be sure that you are in the correct neighbor before proceeding.
- ❖ **OPTION 1:** If they are in the system and do not come up as Registration Due, skip to **Create a Visit**. You should check them in yourself instead of sending them to the Check-In volunteer.
- ❖ **OPTION 2:** If neighbor is in the system AND comes up as REGISTRATION DUE, then click

Edit Client.

- Confirm all neighbor and household information, making any changes needed.
- Skip to **TEFAP Registration** (see below)

❖ **OPTION 3: If the neighbor is **NOT** in the system, then:**

- Click NEW CLIENT
- Fill in boxes:
 - First, middle and last name (*ideally, get this information from a driver's license; however, this is not required*)
 - Date of birth
 - Check the box if they are/were in the military
 - Email, phone, home address
 - For the address, if you enter the zip code and then hit TAB, the software will fill in the city, state, and county
 - Check No Fixed Address for people who are unhoused
- Click Additional household members button, if applies
 - First Name and last name are required but this does not have to be their legal name
 - DOB (can estimate): If exact birthdate is not known for a household member, check the box 'need exact birthdate'
 - Checkbox for military as needed
- After filling this out, you can repeat this action for as many household members as they have
- Click ADD PROXY, if they want to enable someone to come pick up food for them. Not needed for household members who can already shop for the neighbor.
- NEXT: Complete the TEFAP Registration

❖ **TEFAP Registration**

- Qualify the neighbor - Neighbors MUST select **one** of the four criteria to qualify for the food (use dropdown menu)
 - Most neighbors will qualify with SNAP benefits (food stamps)
 - TANF or SSI also qualify them. SSI is NOT Social Security or SSDI. If the neighbor is not sure they get it, they don't. (If they get it they know what it is - if they say, "Yes, I get Social Security" - that is not an actual yes.)
 - If they do not participate in any of the programs, they need to qualify by income. The income chart is on the screen to reference. Use household size, and the monthly column for most neighbors.

- Check the FOOD PANTRY box under eligibility
 - Scroll down the bottom - Explain to neighbors that we are asking them to SIGN to verify the information we have entered is correct.
 - Neighbors MUST sign the form
 - SAVE and EXIT
- ❖ **CREATE A VISIT**, and get the neighbor's signature for the visit.
- Click on the **New Visit** button.
 - If you get an error message that this visit would violate the visit frequency rules, politely explain to the neighbor that they have already visited the pantry this month, and will not be able to shop again until next month, possibly pointing out to them when that is.
- ❖ At the top of the **Visit page**, find the number in the household. This determines the points they have available to shop with.
- A household of 1 gets 15 points.
 - All other Households get 10 points per member. (Write down the household size and a 0 to the end.)
- ❖ Write the **Neighbor's name and number of points they get on a card**, and give it to the neighbor or their shopping partner.
- ❖ Select the item **"Visit"** and add it to their cart.
- ❖ Have them **sign in** the box at the bottom of the cart.
- ❖ Click the **Save and Exit** button.
- ❖ Click the **New Search** button to be ready for the next neighbor.
- ❖ Provide the neighbor or shopping assistant with an index card with the number of points they are allotted.

** When no registrations are needed, assist with the check in or checkout process to help the process run as smoothly as possible.*

Inventory Lead

Responsible for maintaining inventory and stocking market shelves. Must be trained on USDA food management requirements, food safety, and inventory organization.

Key Traits Needed: *Must be detailed oriented and be trained on food safety, inventory details and USDA food needs*

- ❖ Accept deliveries and donations.
- ❖ Weigh and process inventory intake.
- ❖ Ensure market shelves remain stocked as necessary.
- ❖ Organize and maintain back room.
- ❖ Direct and oversee volunteer stocking assistants.
- ❖ Ensure all USDA and other food management requirements are met.

Volunteer Lead

Key Traits Needed: *Friendly; Able to delegate, think on feet, and troubleshoot*

- ❖ The Volunteer Coordinator should arrive 20 minutes early to help greet and orient the volunteers. Be very helpful and friendly to all volunteers to help make sure they feel supported and comfortable while volunteering their time. Thank them for coming, and spend some time getting to know them.
- ❖ Show the volunteers where to get their name tags, where to put their stuff, show them where they can get candy and water if they'd like.
- ❖ Have volunteers sign in next to their name. If they are not on the list, then have them add their FIRST and LAST name to the bottom, as well as their contact information. Make sure you can read their handwriting.
- ❖ Get volunteers together 10 minutes before the market opens (they usually have arrived by then) and, based on the number of volunteers and who is trained in specific roles already, assign roles and hand out role descriptions. You will need:
 - one person to check in, (if possible)
 - one to do new registration, (if there is not a check in person, this person will do both at the check in counter)
 - one to check out,
 - one to help with people coming into the market, (if possible)
 - one to help take food to cars and collect carts, (if possible)
 - and all other volunteers can be shopping assistants.
 - If shopping is slower, volunteers can help with stocking shelves and general indoor and outdoor maintenance under the supervision of the Inventory Lead.
- ❖ Train shopping assistants as needed. Explain the process, flow, and points system if the volunteers are new and show them around the market. Use the role sheets and clipboards for new volunteers.
- ❖ Time allowing, let people shadow more experienced volunteers, especially if those volunteers need to learn a skilled role like check in, check out, or new registration.
- ❖ Work at whatever role you are needed (check-in, check-out, new registration, shopping

assistant, greeter, packer, etc.) while answering the questions of any volunteers and clients.

- ❖ If we are slower, look around to see what maintenance jobs (bathroom check, dust mopping, spot swiffer mopping, etc.) and stocking jobs (breaking down boxes, shelving food, refilling freezer, etc.) need to be done and nicely assign volunteers to help with these jobs.
- ❖ Let inventory lead know if restocking is necessary.
- ❖ Try to say thank you to each volunteer as they leave from their shift and offer them candy to go.
- ❖ Make note on the sign-in sheet who signed up but did not show by crossing off their name. Take a picture of the sign-in sheet and text to the sign-up volunteer coordinator.
- ❖ Place sign-in sheets in specified location on desk in office

Volunteer Information

The Pantry's Commitment to Our Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in helping the Pantry fulfill its mission. You can expect a brief orientation at your first assignment. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status, family, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

Compensation

As a volunteer, it is understood that you will be providing services without monetary compensation.

Documenting Volunteer Time

We track and recognize the amount of time our volunteers donate. Please sign in and record the expected amount of time you will be volunteering on the clipboard on the desk in the office.

If requested, the Pantry can provide a document confirming volunteer hours as community service, verify hours online, or by email.

Guidance and Oversight

The pantry is overseen by a food pantry manager, members of the Table of Grace Committee, and lead volunteers. They will provide guidance and are available to address any questions or concerns you may have. Do not hesitate to ask them for assistance!

Age Requirements

Volunteers of all ages can participate at the Pantry, though we ask that volunteers interacting directly with customers at our distributions, cleaning pantry, and checking on fresh produce viability be 16 years of age or older. Younger volunteers may assist with other pantry activities such as packing, sorting donations, and stocking shelves as needed. Volunteers 13 years of age and under must have an accompanying adult.

Dress Code

Attire should be appropriate for volunteering. (*OPEN-TOED SHOES ARE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED FOR REASONS OF SAFETY.*)

Parking and Personal Property

Volunteers can park in the lot beside the pantry for all volunteer activities. If able, please park farther from the building when the pantry is open to save the spaces immediately near the building for customers.

Please do not bring valuables to the pantry, as we are unable to secure them for you. We do not assume responsibility for loss or damage to a volunteer's personal property resulting from theft, fire, automobile accidents, or any other condition, nor do we assume responsibility for theft of or from, or damage to, any vehicle while the volunteer is at the pantry or performing volunteer activities for the pantry.

Volunteers Who Are Also Customers of the Pantry

Please pick up your food at the beginning of your volunteer shift and store it in your vehicle or out of the way. Unfortunately, we can not give out extra food that is not part of that day's normal distribution.

Weather Policy

The Pantry follows the weather-related closings of the Tuscaloosa City School system. The Pantry is closed if they are closed.

Privacy

Customer information is confidential. No customer information or proprietary information may be shared outside of the Pantry. Our customers are often our neighbors; please respect their privacy. Do not post any photos of customers on social media sites, including but not limited to TikTok, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram. If a customer makes a special request, please refer it to our food pantry manager or volunteer lead..

Safety

Some volunteer jobs may include lifting and carrying heavy items; it is your responsibility to know your limitations. The Pantry strives to maintain a safe environment in compliance with federal, state, and local safety regulations. The Pantry does not undertake background checks on volunteers, staff or customers. Volunteers should report any unsafe conditions to the food pantry manager, volunteer lead, or a member of the Table of Grace Committee

Smoking and Drinking are not permitted in the Pantry or anywhere on church grounds

GUNS ARE NOT PERMITTED ANYWHERE IN THE PANTRY OR ON CHURCH GROUNDS.

Risk Management Procedure for Volunteers

In the unlikely event that you encounter a customer or other person who becomes disruptive, please notify the food pantry manager, a lead volunteer, or a member of the Table of Grace Committee immediately.

Dismissal

Volunteers who engage in unsafe or unseemly behavior are subject to dismissal. The pantry may request a volunteer to leave immediately if warranted by the circumstance.

Non-Discrimination

Table of Grace is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all staff, volunteers, and customers.

Table of Grace does not discriminate against any applicant, employee, or volunteer regarding any term, condition, or privilege of employment or volunteer engagement on the basis of race,

religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, or disability status, or any other classification protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance. Table of Grace does not deny service to any customer (defined as a resident of Tuscaloosa or one of its surrounding towns, or any west Alabama town not served by their own pantry) on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, or disability status, or any other classification protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance.

Harassment Prohibition

All forms of harassment are prohibited at the pantry. The pantry has a specific and detailed policy related to Sexual Harassment Prohibition. In addition, the Pantry recognizes that harassment can take other forms, such as any comment, conversation, joke, slur, or other similar verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct related to a person's age, race, religion, color, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, or veteran status that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment. Table of Grace strictly prohibits and does not tolerate harassment of any kind of an employee, volunteer, or customer by another employee, officer, director, volunteer, customer, or by a third party, to the extent controlled by Table of Grace.

Sexual Harassment Prohibition

Definitions

- A. "Sexual harassment" includes: engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact, unwelcomed sexual advances, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:
 - a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
 - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
 - c. Such conduct is severe or pervasive and has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment.
- B. Conduct which falls within the definition of sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Epithets or slurs, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, gestures, or pranks regarding an employee's pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, change of sex or transgender status, marital status, partnership status, familial status, caregiver status, domestic or dating violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or local law.
 - b. Displaying, printing, or transmitting offensive sexually suggestive pictures or materials in the workplace.

- C. This policy is not intended to create needless intrusions on the freedom of speech or expression of employees or volunteers nor to regulate their personal morality. It is intended to prevent any harassment in the workplace.
- D. This policy shall be conspicuously posted for viewing. Each volunteer shall read this policy and prior to volunteering shall sign an acknowledgment of having received, reviewed and understood this policy.
- E. It is not considered harassment for a supervisor or manager to require volunteers to meet conduct standards.

Complaint Procedure

- A. **REPORTING.** Table of Grace encourages any employee or volunteer who believes he or she is being harassed or has witnessed harassing conduct involving another employee, volunteer, neighbor, or person at the pantry, to immediately report such concerns or incidents to the food pantry manager and/or a lead volunteer.
- B. **NO RETALIATION.** Table of Grace will not retaliate in any way against an individual who makes a report of harassment or any individual who participates in a harassment investigation; nor will Table of Grace permit any employee, church member, or volunteer to do so. Anyone who feels that they have been subjected to any acts of retaliation should immediately report such conduct to the food pantry manager or a lead volunteer. Any person who retaliates against another individual for reporting any perceived acts of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.