

First Presbyterian Church

www.firstpresaurora.org

325 E. Downer Place
Aurora, IL 60505
(630) 844-0050

Contact:
John Ross
(630) 879-8828 (office)
(630) 879-2583 (home)

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For News and/or Community and/or Religion Editor(s)

Aurora Church Youth Help Food Pantry in Big Way

- First Presbyterian Church youth help distribute some 24 tons of food in five days

Aurora, Ill., July 28, 2014 (*The Religion Wire™*) — Go. Serve. Tell. That's what the congregation of First Presbyterian Church of Aurora was doing last week. During the week of **July 20-27**, the church hit the streets of Aurora with over 290 volunteers hoping to make a difference in the community. These volunteers served at various times and at varied venues from baseball fields with youth to the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry's mobile pantry.

The FPC "J-Walk" youth group composed of 25 Aurora area youth helped with the distribution of some 24 tons of food over five days at various city locations. The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry outreach food mobile served some 997 families during the week. The food was made available by a generous foundation gift.

The FPC food crew during the week-long event served some 3,100 meals from breakfast to dinner. And over 400 plus gathered Saturday for a finale picnic and worship service at Blackberry Farm.

FPC Senior Pastor Jeff Moore described this week of service, "***Mission Aurora,***" as the church's "re-toning its muscle." The church for many years has had a summer family camp in Wisconsin, but instead of camp this year, Pastor Jeff has worked with the church's camp leadership and others in developing a community outreach program with some 16 sites and opportunities of service. He feels the burden for the city of Aurora, and for his congregation to be the "hands and feet" of Jesus.

Add one - Aurora Church Youth Helps Food Pantry in Big Way

Pastor Moore earlier this year visited Ethiopia as part of a team with the ministry Joni and Friends. There he saw a poor Ethiopian church doing amazing ministry to hurting people. These Christians of Ethiopia challenged him to think differently about his own Aurora congregation. "Jesus is the missionary God who came from heaven to serve and save us in genuine love and grace. As followers of Jesus, who have been transformed by that grace, we pour out His love into our community. Jesus calls us to love. Its just that simple. That's what Mission Aurora is all about!"

During **Mission Aurora** week, the campus at 4th Street and Downer Place served as a base of operations while the congregation goes out each day into 16-plus venues to love and serve. Each evening the congregation will gather back at the church to eat together, to worship and celebrate what God has done, and to have a lot of fun. Tuesday through Friday evenings were lead in worship and teaching by the Rev. Tommy Moore, a pastor and Church Mobilizer for World Relief, Aurora/DuPage. On Monday evening, FPC volunteers visited the Paramount for a showing of "Chariots of Fire" on the big screen. On Wednesday the feature was the "hilarious humor" of comedian Daren Streblow (check out www.darenstreblow.com).

The areas of service included: mobile food pantries – Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, baseball camps, Hesed House, Triple Threat day camp, Triple Threat clean-up, nursing home and shut-in visits, landscaping and landscaping clean-up, Backyard Bible Clubs (in eight different locations in and around the city), Habitat for Humanity, encouragement team card ministry, Respect Life Ministries, Lifespring spa day, Wayside Cross Ministries, meal preparation and clean-up, and All God's Children Disability Ministry – day camp.

Add two - **Aurora Church Youth Helps Food Pantry in Big Way**

For more information about **Mission Aurora** and FPC call (630) 844-0050 or visit <http://www.firstpresaurora.org/MissionAurora.aspx>. **Mission Aurora** is also present on Facebook and at the Twitter hashtag #MissionAurora. YouTube videos of the week are available at <http://www.youtube.com/user/JWalkYouth>.

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Digital photos available:

photos.religionwire.com/mission_aurora_food_pantry_pavey_beniot.jpg

caption: First Presbyterian “J-Walk” youth, Hannah Pavey and Emilie Benoit help the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry with food distribution at East Aurora High School on Tuesday, July 22 for the church's Mission Aurora outreach.

photos.religionwire.com/mission_aurora_food_pantry_group_07-22.jpg

caption: Diane Renner, executive director of the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry, (left) joins the First Presbyterian “J-Walk” youth group in surrounding the Northern Illinois Food Bank driver, after the Tuesday, July 22 food distribution at East Aurora High School.