

Donations of fresh produce truly appreciated at the Mission

Summer is a wonderful time. We seem to focus on our families a little more as we plan activities around children who are out of school. Swimming, trips to the park, visiting with grandchildren, perhaps even a special vacation. Summer also provides us with wonderful, fresh garden produce. You can't find a better tomato anywhere than one grown in Hoosier soil. Or corn. Best corn on the cob in the whole U.S.

Our refrigerator has a bowl of cucumber and onions in vinegar that just keeps getting replenished with produce from our garden. Tomatoes are coming on strong now, and our house will smell like bacon until the end of the season as my husband indulges in his favorite sandwich. What a blessing to have a patch of dirt in which to plant your favorite vegetables.

We are getting some donations from local gardeners now, and our families at the Mission really appreciate them. Currently feeding an average of 120 families a week, we welcome all the fresh produce you can share with us. In fact, if you have a favorite recipe you use with the vegetables you grow, our families would appreciate those too. Not all of us were fortunate enough to be raised with the blessing of a family gardener.

I could not mention fresh food if I did not give special thanks to Robert Gregory. He keeps us supplied with nice crisp apples almost year round. At the end of the growing season he stores what has not sold at his orchard and almost every Monday he shows up with two large bags of bright, shiny, apples. What a wonderful blessing that is!

My husband loves to garden. When our children were growing up we fed them with organically home grown vegetables. We canned and froze vegetables of nearly every variety. I drew the line at brussel sprouts. One year of trying to clean and preserve those was enough. Shelling peas was not one of my favorites either. It took a lot of pea pods to produce enough peas for a meal, let alone a winter's worth of freezing.

Our children benefited from the garden in more ways than just learning to work the soil and care for the crops. One year they loaded their wagon daily and walked door to door throughout Mooresville selling produce to raise enough money for us to go to the state fair. It was one event we looked forward to every summer, but that particular year it was just too much of an expense for us to manage. They asked permission to try to raise the money from the garden, and they really worked hard at it. The day we went to the fair they helped me make cool-aid and pack a lunch. It was probably our most memorable year.

I watch our children today with their ipods and gameboys, DS and Wii, and I wonder how many earned their own money to buy them? It's great to enjoy life, if that truly is enjoying life, but what kind of work ethic will these children have? We have ballgames and dance lessons, marital arts and paintball. Are we giving them enough responsibility? It's something to consider. I know some parents are as they ask to bring their children in to the Mission to volunteer and learn some of life's lessons. Proverbs 22:6 says "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

We love our children at the Mission, and we appreciate all that you do to make their life better. Thank you for all you do for Churches in Mission.

Alice Cordes