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HOT CENTERPIECE

Students help stock Millwood church's food pantry

By JOSH JANNEY The Winchester Star
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Powhatan School fifth-grader Robert Burns Beckett checks the expiration dates on cans of tuna fish donated by his before placing them on the shelves at the Christ Church food pantry in Millwood on Thursday.

Jeff Taylor/The Winchest

MILLWOOD — With a desire to make sure everyone has enough to eat this winter, 26 fifth-grade students from Powhatan School made a special delivery to the food pantry at Christ Church in Millwood on Thursday morning.

The fifth-grade class from the independent prekindergarten to eighth-grade school in Boyce has helped the pantry each year around Christmastime since 2010 — the year the pantry opened — to prepare for the January food distribution.

“We are really proud of them for spearheading this initiative and collecting so many goods to support families who live close to our school,” said Cassey Nichols, a fifth-grade teacher at Powhatan. “I think it’s really powerful and amazing.”

Nichols said the food the children unloaded from a school bus on Thursday morning and stocked the pantry with was almost entirely donated by the fifth-grade class and their families

Christ Church’s food pantry serves the community year-round. Local residents donate food on a weekly basis, and the pantry is open on the first Saturday of each month from 9 -11 a.m. for residents of the Boyce, Millwood, and White Post areas. It’s open the first Friday of the month from 1-3 p.m. for people 65 and older or those who have special needs. The Rev. Matt Rhodes of Christ Church says the pantry helps 118 people a month.

In addition to stocking the pantry each December, five to 10 students from Powhatan help with stocking and food distribution each month.

One of those students is fifth-grader Emmalene Morris, who has been volunteering at the pantry for four years because she enjoys “doing community service and helping people.” On food distribution day, she said people come to the pantry to pick up everything they need for the next month.

“You take food out of the fridges, put it on tables,” Emmalene said. “We put all of the bread that people donated to us on those shelves. When people come in, we offer them what they want and then we help them carry it out to their cars.”

Bob Mollohan, another regular Powhatan volunteer, said he most enjoys helping people carry bags to their cars.

“I just like to see the smile on their faces,” Mollohan said. “They are glad to have food.”

The next food distributions at the pantry are Jan. 4 and 5.

Christ Church is located at 809 Bishop Meade Road in Millwood. For more information about the pantry, call 540-837-1112.

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