# [**https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/swampscott-reporter/2020/11/23/swampscott-food-pantry-provides-thanksgiving-meals/6384682002/**](https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/swampscott-reporter/2020/11/23/swampscott-food-pantry-provides-thanksgiving-meals/6384682002/)

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# **The Anchor Food Pantry provides Thanksgiving meals**

## *Swmpscott-based nonprofit distributed food to over 100 families before holiday*

[**William J. Dowd**](https://www.wickedlocal.com/staff/5931274002/william-j-dowd/)Wicked Local

The Anchor Food Pantry packed vehicle after vehicle with Thanksgiving meals on Monday, Nov. 23, ensuring local families and individuals can put food on their table come Thursday.

Over the past eight months, the food pantry has been a welcome addition to Swampscott, filling a community need that has only grown with the mid-March arrival of COVID-19.

[During coronavirus crisis, revamped Swampscott food pantry anchors seniors, families](https://www.wickedlocal.com/news/20200407/during-coronavirus-crisis-revamped-swampscott-food-pantry-anchors-seniors-families)

The program on Monday was the busiest for the Swampscott-based nonprofit since its work began in earnest in April, serving area families and individuals unable to make ends meet, falling on hard times and/or needing help accessing food.

“It was busy but went great,” said The Anchor Food Pantry’s president, Laura Spathanas, when she “just got home” around 7:30 p.m. after helping run the food-distribution program “We served over 100 families, including 35-plus deliveries, totaling over 350 individuals.”

The distribution program saw volunteers transform space under a huge, white tent on the Swampscott Senior Center parking lot into an efficient assembly line. Volunteers packaged brown grocery bags set up in a row and resting atop tables with fresh produce, pies, bread rolls coffee, sweets among other wares.

Spathanas said over 65 turkeys and 25 Stop & Shop gift cards were handed out. Senior-delivery clients were offered an option of a turkey or gift card.

From 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. and then 4 to 6 p.m., vehicles rolled up to the tent, and volunteers neatly placed the Thanksgiving Day food in trunks and on seats.

 “We were able to make this happen thanks to so many community members,” said Spathanas. “Girls Scouts of Ocean Bay kicked off the season in October with a non-perishable food drive. Local residents have donated money for food and gift cards, additional non perishables, plus frozen turkeys and produce.”

Spathanas said The Anchor Food Pantry partnered with Swampscott Public Schools nurses to make sure they reached as many families as possible.

“We were able to coordinate with a local woman who has provided school families with turkey dinners for over a decade because of COVID-19 she worked with us,” said Spathanas. “Greater Boston Food Bank helped with additional food as well as Stop & Shop gift cards.”

She added Swampscott High School Cheer Team, meanwhile, staged a pie fundraiser and supplied pies for the food pantry’s families.

“Periwinkles donated a portion of all their Thanksgiving pie sales,” said Spathanas.

Lastly, she described the nonprofit’s volunteers as amazing for “working so hard to distribute the meals and food all during a pandemic, rain and in limited space.”

In many ways, The Anchor Food Pantry’s inaugural Thanksgiving meals program marked an important milestone for the food pantry. And Spathanas’ extensive list of communal help that they received proves no food pantry is an island.