

# THE CONNECTION

FIGHTING HUNGER IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS

**I'm almost 80 years old...and I don't have a negative bone in my body. Don't you think that's how everyone should try to live?**

My name is Elizabeth, and you'll never see me without a smile on my face. I love people and I try to see the positive side of every situation, even when things are looking grim. And the folks here at our food pantry are a lot like me. They are pleasant and helpful. They never seem to rush us. They're patient and kind. I appreciate all they do for me.

**"You bless me with your donations. You are kind and thoughtful. Just the thought of you makes me smile."**

We don't have much in the fridge at home most days. Last night my daughter and her kids and I had spaghetti, along with sugar water with some ice. Actually, we wouldn't have eaten that well if it weren't for the Southeast Texas Food Bank and the volunteers here at the Central City Baptist Church who box the food and give it to us.

I'm getting close to 80 years old now, and I just do my best to help bring joy and laughter to people who feel sad. And may I also say a word of gratitude to you who donate money and food to help people like me? You bless me with your donations. You are kind and thoughtful. Just the thought of you makes me smile. How can I ever thank you enough for your support and compassion? I pray that God blesses you real good.

Sincerely, Elizabeth

*"You brighten my day with your donations of food. How can I thank you enough for your kindness?"*  
-Elizabeth



**I'm not rich...but I can lend a helping hand to people in need**

If I was a rich woman, I'd help everybody in sight. I don't have much money, but I can give people a helping hand when I'm able to do so. I've been blessed all my life, although I wasn't always so sure of the "blessing" when I was out there on the farm picking cotton. But that experience was good for me. It made me strong and gave me a good work ethic. I have no regrets.

INSIDE THE FOOD BANK CONNECTION



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Emelie Irving  
Executive Director

**“Now it’s almost Thanksgiving... and my heart is filled with thanks to you for your many acts of kindness.”**

## Encouraging Words from Emelie

The woman had come into one of our many food pantries with her children to pick up her box of food. She’d been there before, but no one knew her story. However, that changed quickly one day. After the family had received an especially nice box of food they’d chosen themselves, the pantry worker received a call from the husband. He said he was a paraplegic and unable to provide for his family. *He just called to say thank you.*

In this business, you just never know who is being served. And unless we are told, we often do not know the pain people are going through for lack of food.

*Food for today...and hope for a better tomorrow*

This is just one of many stories I could relay about how your compassion is providing food for today and even greater hope for tomorrow for people in need. These are tough times for everyone. But imagine being sick or having sick children, having no means of transportation, and being unemployed with no means to support yourself or your family. That’s sheer torture. Unfortunately, many people who need food in our area often don’t feel comfortable asking for help. But there’s no reason to be ashamed. *Many of us are only a couple paychecks away from standing in line for food ourselves.*

I want to thank you for your faithfulness in giving and volunteering your time and service to help those who are hungry. You don’t want your neighbors to go without, and you show your concern by *doing something about it.* Whether you’re 88 years old—like one of our most faithful volunteers—or a teenager willing to help pack boxes, we need everyone. After all, we’re in this together. Now it’s almost Thanksgiving...and my heart is filled with thanks to you for your many acts of kindness.

Sincerely,

*Emelie Irving*

Emelie Irving  
Executive Director

### GET CONNECTED

Visit us online at [setxfoodbank.org](http://setxfoodbank.org) for news, events information and a virtual tour of the Food Bank! And spread the word about Southeast Texas Food Bank on your Facebook page!



## FEEDING AMERICA MAP THE MEAL GAP 2011 STUDY

A comprehensive study was recently conducted to determine how many meals are missing from the tables of low-income Americans. In Southeast Texas, we have an average food insecurity rate of 21%, which means over 100,000 people in our service area are skipping meals to make ends meet. How many meals are missing in Southeast Texas? Approximately 17,000,000 annually.

**Help us as we work to close the gap on hunger!**

## Every day you make a difference by impacting lives

My name is Ed, and I don’t know what I would do without the generosity of donors to the Southeast Texas Food Bank and the kind people at our food pantry. I’m a tax preparer by trade. But when I was let go from my job, I was at a loss, not

**“Thank you for having a heart for people in need. You are a special friend, and I am truly grateful.”**

knowing where to turn. Where would I get food? How would I be able to eat? Those questions were quickly answered when I’d stop

by to receive my boxes of canned goods, dry foods, chicken and so much more. It’s not easy for me, but my heart really goes out to seniors and children who have it even tougher. Most of them would not make it were it not for the Southeast Texas Food Bank and the kind volunteers here at the Val Verde Baptist Church. Sometimes I ask myself why

people are so generous with their donations. The only reason I can come up with is they know people have needs greater than their own.

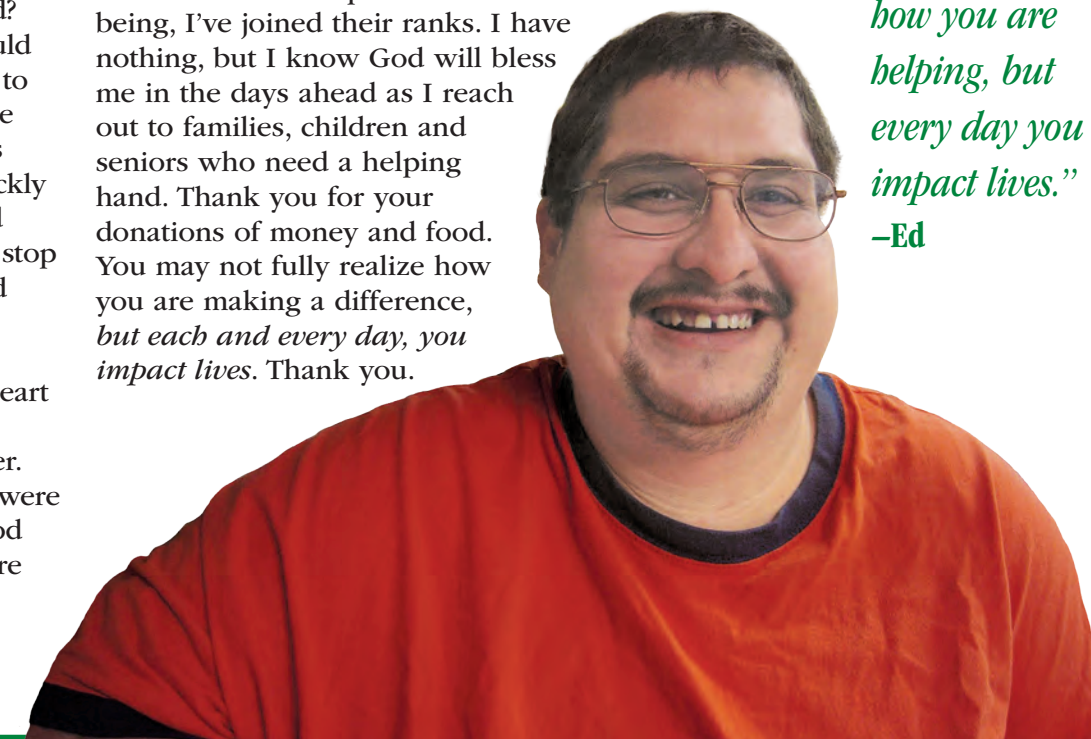
**I’m glad I have a heart for the poor**

We are a generous community. Kind hearts are everywhere, and I’m glad I’m one of those people who has a heart for the poor. For the time being, I’ve joined their ranks. I have nothing, but I know God will bless me in the days ahead as I reach out to families, children and seniors who need a helping hand. Thank you for your donations of money and food. You may not fully realize how you are making a difference, *but each and every day, you impact lives.* Thank you.

I will always remember your many acts of kindness.

A friend who is most grateful, Ed

*“You may not fully realize how you are helping, but every day you impact lives.”*  
—Ed



*You have responded so generously in the past...*

## And now we come to you again, on behalf of the hungry in Southeast Texas

It's been said what we never had we will never miss. But experience shows us this is not the case with those things basic to our life—like good, nutritious food. It's stating the obvious, but without food we would not survive...and unless our food needs are met on a regular basis, we are left with gaping holes in our bodies and our souls.

And that's why the Southeast Texas Food Bank exists. To provide food and a ray of hope to people who have little or nothing on their tables. As you read the stories of Elizabeth and Ed, you quickly realize how grateful they are to you for your ongoing support and encouragement.

These are true stories—just two of the many we hear day after day. Our mission at the Southeast Texas Food Bank is to *lead the fight against hunger in Southeast Texas*. We do this by serving the needs of the hungry in the counties of Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Jasper, Newton, Polk, Sabine and Tyler. Because of your generosity, we're able to distribute food to some 130 faithful nonprofit partner agencies within these eight counties.

Now it will soon be Thanksgiving, and our hearts are filled with gratitude to you for all you do to provide food to families, children and seniors who otherwise might go to bed hungry tonight. But everyone needs to eat more than once a day. So to give your donation of ongoing concern, please complete the enclosed

slip and mail it today. You may also call us anytime at (409) 839-8777. For your convenience, feel free to give your gift online at [www.setxfoodbank.org](http://www.setxfoodbank.org). Thank you for being a good neighbor to those in need of food in Southeast Texas during the fall season and throughout the year.



**Because of your generosity, we're able to distribute food to some 130 faithful nonprofit partner agencies within these eight counties.**

### MY FALL GIFT

YES, Emelie, you can continue to count on my support of the Food Bank's vital work throughout Southeast Texas.

Here is my gift of:  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$25  \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help as much as possible

I commit to a monthly gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_. My first gift is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**IT'S EASY! GIVE ONLINE AT [www.setxfoodbank.org](http://www.setxfoodbank.org)**

Your donation is tax-deductible as permitted by law. Southeast Texas Food Bank will send you a receipt in appreciation for your kindness to the individuals and families who rely on us for food.

**YOUR GIFTS CHANGE LIVES!**



Please make your check payable to:  
Southeast Texas Food Bank

PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP WITH YOUR GIFT TO:  
EMELIE IRVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SOUTHEAST TEXAS FOOD BANK  
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