



## VOLUNTEER MANUAL

### St. John’s Unitarian Universalist Church

320 Resor Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*This manual is adapted from materials shared by congregational coordinators at Christ Church Glendale, Knox Presbyterian, First Unitarian, and Hyde Park Community UMC.*

*Cots, bedding, and other supplies have been generously lent by College Hill UCC and First Unitarian.*

*SJUU’s Found House program would not have happened without the encouragement, mentorship, guidance, inspiration, and support of these individuals:*

*Stacy Burge, Josh Klosterman and Earra Nixon (Found House); Rev. Dan Weyand-Geise (CH UCC); Faith Maynard (First Unitarian); Denise Eck (CCG); Elizabeth Brown (Christ Church Cathedral); Judy Caldwell (Church of the Advent); Laura Warren (HPC UMC); Maggie Devlin (Our Lady of the Rosary); Rae Jane Araujo (Heritage Universalist Unitarian) and Rev. Mitra Jafarzadeh, Rev. Alice Diebel, Rev. Jenn Gracen, board presidents Mike Neugent and Melissa Rowland, the SJUU Board of Trustees, and members and friends of the SJUU community.*

## FOUND HOUSE OVERVIEW

The mission of Found House/Interfaith Housing Network's mission is "to provide homeless families emergency shelter and hospitality through interfaith communities and to work with families to find and retain stable housing" (foundhouse.org).

During the day, families go to the FH day center in Walnut Hills, where adults meet with their case managers while enrichment programs are provided for the children. The day center also has facilities for showers, laundry, and computer work.

In the evening, families travel on the FH van to a host congregation, where they have a meal and sleep in a private family bedroom. Volunteers from the host congregation provide meals and stay on-site to assure the families' safety.

The Found House program at St. John's depends on support and volunteers from Unitarian, Southern Baptist and Catholic congregations.

## OUR MISSION

Our Unitarian Universalist faith calls us to "teach the fragile art of hospitality . . . and to witness to all that we must hold the whole world in our hands."

In our Found House program, we strive to make our guests feel welcome by providing a secure, comfortable environment, nourishing meals and fellowship, and fun activities for children. We treat our guests with dignity and respect, using a trauma-informed care lens.

Interacting with families who are in very difficult situations, we may find our assumptions and expectations challenged. Hospitality is spiritual work. Let us approach this work with humility.

## FOUND HOUSE PROGRAM TEAM MEMBERS

Wanda Crawford, coordinator ([wanda@hgurbanfarm.com](mailto:wanda@hgurbanfarm.com), 513-373-8895)

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## CONGREGATIONS IN OUR HOST WEEK NETWORK

Heritage Universalist Unitarian (Rae Jane Araujo, [raeianearaujo@gmail.com](mailto:raeianearaujo@gmail.com))

Cincinnati Southern Baptist (Michael Davis, [davis\\_mw@hotmail.com](mailto:davis_mw@hotmail.com))

First Unitarian (Faith Maynard, [faithmaynard344@gmail.com](mailto:faithmaynard344@gmail.com))

Our Lady of the Rosary—Greenhills (Maggie Devlin, [maggiemmdevlin@gmail.com](mailto:maggiemmdevlin@gmail.com))

## GENERAL LOGISTICS

Upon arrival, park in the lot behind the church or on Resor Avenue. Enter the building through the main door, which is on the Entry driveway side of the building.

If you are delivering dinner, a cart for your use will be just inside the lobby door.

Please wear a nametag when you arrive.

There will be a copy of the daily FH census in the FH binder in the kitchen. **Please keep the binder closed when not in use to protect our guests' privacy.**

The van from the FH day center will drop off and pick up at the main entrance.

### Schedule

- Guests arrive about 5:00 pm.
- Supper at 6:00 pm or earlier. Wed & Thu suppers should be served at 5:30 pm.
- Activities before and after supper, if guests are interested.
- Everyone in their rooms by 10:00 pm. Quiet time 10:00 pm - 6:00 am.
- Bus arrives in morning about 6:45 (7:45 weekends).

### Technology

- **Wi-Fi password:** johnsguest
- **Netflix ID & password:** Will be posted on back of TV display in downstairs activity room.
- **Computer in fellowship hall:** Guests are welcome to use the computer for email, web searches, homework, etc.

## GUIDELINES FOR GUESTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Below is a list of the “Guest Rights and Responsibilities” that each guest signs when they enter the FH program. Guests should be gently reminded if they begin to cross the line. (If you see a concerning behavior, you may want to mention it to the evening coordinator and let them handle it.) Flagrant violations should be reported to the FH coordinator, who will in turn contact FH staff.

### **Everyone has the right to be and feel safe. I will help create a safe place by:**

- Not participating in any violence or making any threats of violence.
- Smoking and vaping only in designated outside areas.
  - After dark, please use the smoking area at the main entrance steps, not the one at the back of the building. Marijuana use is allowed only if user has a medical release.
- Keeping my children with me at all times.
- Not allowing other guests to watch my children.
- Not using physical punishment or spanking my children while I am a guest.

### **Everyone has the right to be in a place that is clean and healthy. I will do my part by:**

- Cleaning up after me and my children.
- Completing the daily chore given to me (if any).
- Keeping food in the designated eating areas only.

### **Everyone has the right to a respectful and peaceful environment. I will do my part by:**

- Talking with kindness and respect to fellow guests, volunteers and staff.
- Not yelling, screaming, cursing at or being disruptive to others.
- Not touching others’ belongings, whether guest, volunteer or staff.
- Keeping the Host Congregation property in good condition.

## INTERACTING WITH OUR FOUND HOUSE GUESTS

**It’s nice to hear your name.** Try to learn guests’ names and how to pronounce them.

**Labeling people creates invisible barriers.** Try to see each person as a beautiful and complex individual.

**Personal questions can be tough to answer,** so don’t put guests into awkward situations. If a guest wants to talk, give them the chance but don’t pry. Neutral topics such as weather, school, sports teams, children’s activities, etc. may make guests feel more at ease.

**Everyone needs privacy and personal space.** Always knock and ask permission before entering a guest’s sleeping room. Except in the event of an emergency, do not open a guest’s door without permission.

**Sometimes we need to spend time alone.** If individuals or families want to be alone, let them be.

**We all have bad days.** Depression, sadness, hopelessness and frustration are normal emotions in difficult situations. A guest may need personal space to deal with their emotions. Don't take behavior or speech personally, and be prepared to give grace.

**We care for our children. Allow guests to do the same.** Always ask parents' permission before giving treats to their children or taking them outside. Avoid undermining parents' instructions to their children. Only parents can administer medicine, including over-the-counter meds.

**Parents need a break.** Offer to play with interested children while their parents take a break.

**In accordance with St. John's Safe Congregations policy:**

- At least two volunteers on site at all times while guest families are present.
- If children go outside to play, they should be accompanied by two adults (volunteers and/or parents).
- A volunteer should not be alone in a room with a guest (whether child or adult) with the door closed. Stay in the doorway to talk to the guest.
- **Only family members can take a child to the bathroom.**

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

FH Evening on-call staff- 513-325-4547

FH Weekend/Holiday Daytime staff- 513-471-1100, ext 0

In case of an emergency:

- \*If you smell smoke or see flames: Call 911 and evacuate the building!
- \* If fire alarm sounds: Evacuate the building! The fire alarm will notify 911, but it is OK to call 911.
- \*If Carbon monoxide alarm sounds, evacuate the building and call 911!
- \*The Security alarm on exit doors will be disabled during host week. If it goes off for some reason, police and church security head are automatically notified.
- \* Guest emergency: If it is life-threatening or there is possibility of serious harm, call 911.
- \* Guest emergency: If guest is not in immediate danger, call FH contacts above for guidance in how to handle the situation.
- \*There is a defibrillator in the lobby, near door to dining hall.

See below for more detailed information on emergency procedures.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

**It's a good idea to call the FH On-Call number for any emergency: 513-325-4547. A professional staff person is available to discuss how to handle any situation.**

### MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- 1. If the guest's medical emergency is life-threatening, or there is a possibility of serious harm caused by a medical condition, call 911 immediately and get the victim to the hospital via ambulance. When in doubt, call 911. Then call the FH emergency contact number 513-325-4547 and coordinator Wanda Crawford 513-373-8895.**
- 2. There is a defibrillator in the lobby, near the door to dining hall. The defibrillator has visual and audio instructions for use.**
- 3. If the guest is NOT in immediate danger, but does need medical assistance:**



- a. Call the FH on-call staff member. They can then speak to the guest to determine the necessity of going to the hospital immediately versus waiting until the next morning. Ultimately, it is the guest's decision.
- b. If the guest decides to go to the hospital, the FH on-call staff person can arrange for a cab/Lyft. **Volunteers are NOT to provide rides to guests.**
- c. Discuss with FH on-call staff whether or not emergency contacts need to be called. Two examples would be: serious medical emergency or children are left at the congregation while single parent goes to hospital. (See Handling Childcare Issues below.)
- d. Call FH coordinator Wanda Crawford (513-373-8895) for additional support. She can come to the church if an additional volunteer is needed.

#### Handling childcare issues:

- a. If there are two parents in the family and one parent is going to the hospital, the second parent may be willing to stay behind with the children.
- b. If a single parent needs to go to hospital, call the guest's emergency contact to pick up the children. If the emergency contact is unreachable or unable to pick up the children, call FH on-call staff to discuss whether volunteers can supervise children or if Children's Services needs to be contacted (241-KIDS).
- c. While waiting for the emergency contact to pick up the children, volunteers should watch the children at the congregation. Call program coordinator Wanda Crawford (513-373-8895) for additional support. She can come to the church if an additional volunteer is needed.
- d. Before releasing a child to emergency contact, get the person's current address, phone, and driver's license number, as well as car make, model and license plate number. Record this info in the FH logbook.

#### Basic First Aid (e.g. scrape, cut, blister)

First aid kits are in the kitchen and host bedroom. There are also over-the-counter medical supplies in the FH med bag. The med bag is stored in the kitchen.

- a. Fire extinguishers are located in the kitchen and lower-level stairwells.
- b. Clean up materials for sickness, including disposable gloves, masks and disinfectant are kept in the kitchen and overnight host bedroom. Any blood should be cleaned using the Blood-borne Pathogen Kit (instructions are included in the kit).

#### FIRE or SHELTER-IN-PLACE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

##### 1. If you smell smoke or see flames:

- **Call 911 and evacuate the building!** Take the key fob and, if possible, FH notebook and the census (to make sure everyone has assembled outside the building)
- **If you get locked out and don't have a key fob, Wanda can be on site in 15 minutes to let you back in.**

## **2. If Fire Alarm is sounding**

- **Building must be evacuated**
- Take the key fob and, if possible, FH notebook and the guest list. The fire alarm company will automatically notify 911 and appropriate church staff.

## **3. Evacuating the Building**

- Assist the guests to find and use the emergency exits. Maps in all the rooms identify the emergency exit route. Volunteers may need to separate and exit with guests using both stairwells. Bedroom windows can be used as emergency exits.
- Everyone should gather at the safety collection point on the sidewalk in front of church (on Resor Avenue).
- Make sure all volunteers and guests are present—take the census with you (or download it on your phone). Also take church key fob with you so you can get back in when emergency personnel give permission. If you don't have the key fob, contact FH coordinator Wanda Crawford (513-373-8895). She lives a few minutes away and can come let you in.
- If necessary, move the group to a safer location. If possible, leave 1 person near the sidewalk to direct the emergency response team to the nearest entrance for the best access to the emergency.
- The fire department will silence the ringing alarm.
- Try to document any observations, including situation, witnesses, building condition, etc. relative to the emergency as soon as possible. On-the-scene documentation is more reliable and valuable than memory.

## **4. Shelter-in-Place Emergency (weather or other event)**

- If siren for severe weather sounds: Move everyone downstairs. Check weather on your phone from downstairs.
- Take the key fob, FH notebook and the guest list (.a copy of FH notebook is in overnight host room)
- All guests and volunteers should move to the bottom of either or both stairwells or to hallway outside classrooms or to Rosa Parks if more space is needed.
- Call 911 if necessary.

## **5. The security alarm for exit doors will be disabled during host week. If for some reason it goes off, police and church security head are automatically notified.**

## **OTHER SAFETY—KEEP EXTERIOR DOORS CLOSED**

- All exterior doors are locked from outside at all times.
- For everyone's safety: No one should go outside after 10 pm, including for smoking/vaping. There is pedestrian traffic along the driveways throughout the night.

- Even if an adult goes outside before 10 pm to smoke or get something from a vehicle, they should tell a volunteer, who should watch for them.

## TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS

All potential volunteers are encouraged to attend training at St. John's. Training will include a building tour, review of general policies, introduction to trauma-informed care and confidentiality, and time for questions about particular roles.

If unable to attend the training, volunteers can get a recording of it from St. John's coordinator, Wanda Crawford.

Certain volunteer roles require a background check. Background checks are for criminal convictions of relevant crimes such as sexual abuse and domestic abuse.

These roles require a background checks:

- Week Coordinators
- Overnight Hosts

These roles do not require a background check:

- Supper Host
- Activity Host
- Shoppers, Laundry and other roles which do not interact directly with guests

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Check what you signed up for here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040b49aaa62aa75-2023#/>

**Week Coordinator**—Week coordinators are the hosts for both guests and other volunteers, providing continuity from night to night. Each week has two week coordinators. One week coordinator will be on site each evening. Background check and previous experience with Found House required. See detailed job description on page 14.

**Supper Hosts**—Prepare a meal for 20+ people and deliver it to St. John’s. Socialize with guests over the meal. See detailed job description on page 15.

**Activity Hosts**—Play with children and socialize with adults. See detailed job description on page 16.

**Overnight Hosts**--Spend the night at the church to assure site is safe and secure. Overnight hosts have a sleeping room. Background check required. See detailed job description on page 17.

**Set Up**--Prepare the rooms for our guests. See detailed job description on page 18.

**Take Down**--Includes stripping and taking down beds, vacuuming, wiping down tables and counters-see detailed job description on page 18.

**Grocery Shoppers**—Get shopping list and St. John’s tax-exempt number from Coordinator. Save receipt for reimbursement. Bring groceries to the church kitchen the week before host week. See detailed job description on page 18.

**Laundry**--Pick up dirty linens and return clean linens to church. See detailed job description on page 18.

**Morning Walk-Through**—Arrive each morning before overnight hosts leave to assist with their and the families’ on-time departure. Get a verbal debrief from overnight hosts. Clean up kitchen, dining area, bathrooms. Notify the week coordinators of any issues or any supplies needed.

## FH COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

- Serve as the visible leader of Found House program at St. John's, actively recruit volunteers, and keep FH before the church community.
- Serve as the main contact with FH professional staff; attend coordinator meetings and/or encouraging other team members to attend.
- Act as the interface between St. John's staff and FH staff
- Determine the annual hosting schedule; set up a signup for each host week. Communicate as needed with St. John's staff, including minister, church secretary (calendar), communications team (update web page and individual rotation announcements) and custodial staff.
- Collaborate with SJUU's FH team and coordinators at network congregations about training, calendar, and logistics.
- Assure FH needs and activities are communicated to Social Justice co-chairs.
- Visit each FH rotation or volunteer during each rotation.
- Act as the emergency contact for all FH volunteers during each FH rotation to assist with problem solving.
- Annually review and update the FH manual.
- Maintain contact with the FH team on issues that might impact FH, as well as facilitating a recap following host week.
- RECRUIT, RECRUIT, RECRUIT!!!

(Some of the above tasks can be delegated to FH team members)

## WEEK COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Two week coordinators for each host week; one will be on site each evening. They are the go-to people for everyone during the hosting week.

Prior experience with Found House and background check required.

**Each week coordinator will have key fob**

Main duties:

- Supervise and coordinate all volunteers and tasks throughout the hosting week.
- Relay daily census to volunteers as needed.
- Write daily email to volunteers with previous night's news and thank you's.
- On first night, conduct guest orientation (building, rules, events during the week)
- Each night, arrive at 4:30 pm and depart around 8:00 pm, after the overnight hosts arrive and are oriented.
- Meet the FH van at the main entrance. Greet families, help with small children, and receive the medical bag from van driver and take it to kitchen.
- Inform guests if any other groups will be in the building that evening (e.g. men's chorus, adult choir).
- Check with each parent during the evening to see how they are doing and if they need anything.
- Take a kitchen cart to the main entrance for supper hosts' use while unloading their cars.
- After dinner, encourage guests to prepare lunches before they go to their rooms.
- Set aside dinner for any guests that will be arriving late due to work; mark plates with the guest's name.
- Be available throughout the evening to assist volunteers or guests as needed, problem solve as needed, or contact the FH coordinator if further assistance is needed.
- Brief the overnight hosts on guests' work schedules, which families will take the van in the morning, and any evening events at the church.
- Be available for emergency night calls.
- Text any pantry needs to the FH coordinator or shopper for midweek resupply.

## SUPPER HOST JOB DESCRIPTION

Arrive between 5:00 and 5:30 pm, serve meal at 6:00 and depart after kitchen cleanup. On Wed & Thu, supper should be served at 5:30.

No experience required. Week coordinators will provide direction/support.

- Bring supper for 20 people; there will be a cart just inside the main entrance for transporting food.
- It is helpful to all the cooks if you note in signup the meal you plan to provide; it can be added or changed later if you are unsure when you sign up; try to specify your menu at least 1 week before the host week begins
  - Week coordinators will contact all dinner hosts with the estimated census on the Thursday before the rotation, providing information on guest numbers and ages, as well as any allergies or special needs; in addition to FH guests, we often have four FH volunteers who will also be eating dinner.
- As you plan your meal, keep in mind that many FH guests do not eat pork.
- Basic cooking of familiar foods is always welcome. Meals can be home cooked, take out from a restaurant, heated frozen meals, or any combination of these.
- Assist parents of younger children as they fix plates by volunteering to get drinks for the children or entertaining little ones in highchairs.
- Prepare your own plate and join the families.
- Socialize with parents and play with the children before and/or after supper.
- Wash dishes, wipe down dining tables, and sweep floor if necessary.
- Plan to take leftovers home. Each night has a new supper team preparing a meal.
- Supper hosts are welcome to stay after the meal to continue socializing with the families.

## ACTIVITY HOST JOB DESCRIPTION

Although not required, arriving in time to eat supper with the families at 6:00 makes for a smoother transition to activity time. (Wed & Thu suppers are at 5:30). If you can't come for supper, try to arrive by 6:30. Stay till overnight hosts arrive at 7:30. Play with the children or lead activities for intergenerational fun.

Experience: None required

- FH coordinator will forward the census on the Friday before the rotation starts, allowing activity hosts to plan ahead based on ages of our guests.
- There are toys for younger children in the playroom downstairs.
- There are games, books, puzzles, and art supplies in the playroom downstairs.
- Weather permitting, children can be taken outside to play by at least 2 adults (one may be a guest parent). **Make sure kids ask their parents for permission to go outside.**
- Activity hosts are welcome to bring an age-appropriate activity or games, if they wish.
- If a child acts like they need to go to bathroom, tell their parent—**Volunteers absolutely cannot take any child to the bathroom!**



## OVERNIGHT HOST JOB DESCRIPTION

Arrive by 7:30 pm and leave the following morning after the van has picked up the FH guests, around 7:00 am weekdays and 8:00 am weekends. **Background check required.**

Experience: Not necessary but please watch the training video. A novice overnight host will be paired with a veteran.

- Please bring your own pillow, sheet, slippers, and phone charger. You may want to bring clothes for layering, as heat in the building may be uneven.
- When you arrive, check with the evening's coordinator for an update of the evening's events, as well as any guest-specific information, special needs, and parents' work schedules.
- Take a picture of that night's census so you have complete family and emergency information on you. **To protect guest's privacy, be sure to delete this picture the next day!**
- Introduce yourself to each family and find out when they might like a wake up knock on the door.
- If a guest has not arrived as scheduled, use the FH phone in med bag to contact the guest. If no reply, contact the FH on-call number.
- Offer dinner to guests who arrive late.
- Bedtimes are flexible for the children but are usually dictated by the parents; all families should be in their own rooms by 10:00 pm. Quiet time/lights out in hallway by 10:00 pm.
- Check that all exterior doors are locked before you go to bed—especially the doors to the smoking areas. Also check the emergency exit doors in the sanctuary.
- No guests smoking or going outside after 10:00 pm. This is for everyone's safety.
- Do not let anyone into the church after the evening coordinator leaves at 8:00 pm. Church members either have their own key fob or will have to wait for a member of their group who has a key fob.
- When you go to bed:
  - Bring the med bag downstairs to the Overnight Host room.
  - **Keep the church key fob within reach or, better yet, wear it on your wrist.**
  - Make sure you have the census at hand—either paper or picture on your phone.
  - Keep your phone's ringer on, and also keep the FH phone on your bedside table during the night. This phone is stored in the med bag's outer pocket. Be sure to check this phone's volume, ringtone, vibrate, and phone charge before you go to bed. If a parent works late, they will call or text the FH phone. You will need to meet them at the main entrance to let them in.
- In the morning:
  - **Keep the church key fob with you at all times**—on your wrist.
  - Return the FH phone to the med bag and carry it upstairs to the dining hall.
  - Make coffee and heat water for tea.
  - Set out refrigerated breakfast foods.

- When families start coming upstairs, move packed lunches from the frig to the designated table in the dining hall.
- 45 minutes before the van arrives, turn on hallway lights downstairs.
- Knock on bedroom doors 30 minutes before the van is expected to arrive. Listen for a response from an adult. If no response, keep knocking at 5-minute intervals till you get a response.
- Periodically check to see if there are kids out of their rooms. If so, invite them to come upstairs for breakfast. If a parent has several children, it can help if you take charge of the older ones so the parent can focus on the youngest.
- At least 15 minutes before the van is expected, make sure all families are upstairs on the main level. **Make sure you have the church key fob with you**, as you may need to go in and out of the building several times.
- Watch for the van, escort guests to the van (helping with little ones or carrying bags) and **deliver the med bag to the driver. Make sure the FH phone has been returned to the med bag!**
- Put away refrigerated breakfast foods. Other cleanup will be done by the Morning Volunteer.
- **Return the church key fob to the FH binder in the overnight host room**—or hand it to the Morning Volunteer, who will return it to the downstairs binder.
- Once the families have departed, you can leave. If the Morning Volunteer arrives earlier, one Overnight Host can leave earlier. There must be two adult volunteers present at all times while families are on site.
- Contact the FH coordinator with any problems, concerns or breakfast items needed.

#### MORNING WALK-THROUGH JOB DESCRIPTION

- Arrive by 6:30 weekdays, 7:30 weekends
- Let Overnight Hosts know you have arrived.
- Make sure FH phone is back in the med bag and the med bag is handed to the van driver.
- Make sure Overnight Hosts return church key fob before they leave!
- Make sure kitchen, bathrooms and dining area are clean and tidy.
- Check each family room for soiled linens. Supply clean linens as needed.
- Collect trash and used diapers and take outside to dumpster.
- Report any issues or maintenance needs to FH coordinator.

## SET UP JOB DESCRIPTION

A checklist will be provided for the set-up crew. Main tasks are:

- Set up cots in each room, make beds, deliver towels for each family in each room.
- Set up tables in dining room, including highchairs and booster seats.

## TAKE DOWN JOB DESCRIPTION

**A checklist will be provided for the take down crew. Main tasks include:**

- Strip beds and gather towels for laundry.
- Fold and store cots.
- Restore Rosa Parks to its usual Sunday morning arrangement.
- Put away FH supplies that are in family bedrooms, dining hall and kitchen.
- Sweep, vacuum, mop and sanitize surfaces.

## LAUNDRY JOB DESCRIPTION

- Pick up laundry on Sunday after church or the next day. Launder at home or laundromat. Return clean, folded laundry to church within a week.
- Please add a laundry sanitizer such as Lysol laundry sanitizer to each load and use the warmest water that is safe for the fabric. Do not use fabric softener or dryer sheets on sheets.
- If you take the crib bedding, please use an unscented, gentle laundry detergent (any “Free” brand should do—it doesn’t need to be specifically for babies).
- There will be multiple laundry volunteers, so don’t feel you need to take all the bags of dirty laundry.

## GROCERY SHOPPER JOB DESCRIPTION

- Week coordinators will provide a list of items needed for lunch and breakfast plus general supplies.
- Get a St. John’s tax exemption form from FH coordinator before shopping.
- Purchase needed pantry supplies at the store of your choice. Save the receipt for reimbursement. Deliver your purchases to the kitchen anytime during the week prior to the FH host week. Mark all items for FH and leave on the kitchen counter or in the refrigerator.