

When Hurricane Sandy struck, God's Love, along with the rest of lower Manhattan, lost power. Our refrigerators, lights, and computer systems failed. We had no idea how long it would take for power to be restored, but we knew that thousands of people who rely on our meals—people with serious illnesses—needed our help. Thankfully, with the help of our exceptionally talented and dedicated staff and volunteers, not even Hurricane Sandy could keep us from carrying out our mission of providing nutritious meals (and comfort) to those who are too sick to shop or cook for themselves.

That week in late October was an exceptionally trying one for our City, and remained so for months after for so many in New York and New Jersey. Today we reflect on Hurricane Sandy, and we remember the resilience with which we met the storm, the hundreds of people who offered their help, and the ways in which we were able to bond together to make it through that difficult time.

The week after Hurricane Sandy was one of mixed emotions here at God's Love—concern for the safety of our clients, volunteers and staff, sadness for those who lost so much, gratitude for what was still standing, and pride in our volunteers and staff who worked tirelessly and travelled far to help their neighbors in need. Despite having no access to email or phones, we received an overwhelming outpouring of support from both dedicated and brand new volunteers. First, they helped us clean up after the storm. We had to throw away food that was spoiled from the power outage and then sanitize refrigerators, kitchen racks and other equipment. Then, they answered our call to head out on a delivery van for the day, or stop by the office to lend a hand making emergency bags for our clients. Many made generous donations online to help us purchase new food, and others spread the news through [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Indeed, our incredible God's Love community came forward to help us. So many hearts and hands worked together to figure out our operations, order new food, make "Sandy Bags" of shelf-stable food, clean the kitchen, throw out food, box meals in inventory, deliver food to clients and shelters, gas up our vans, welcome and lead our volunteers, restore our email and data systems, clean the building and so much more—for days in the dark and cold, and through the weekend after power was restored.

Although our power was out for days, together with our wonderful volunteers, we accomplished so much:

- We assembled and distributed 2,300 emergency meal kits containing non-perishable food items;
- We saved 8,000 frozen meals we had in inventory and delivered them to clients and to evacuees and others displaced by the storm;
- We provided meals at Project Hospitality on Staten Island, the Bowery Mission, the Community Kitchen & Food Pantry in West Harlem, and to St. John's Hospital (where the evacuees from The Rockaways sought shelter); and,
- We delivered to the homes of 750 God's Love clients, who were grateful for their meal delivery and who humbled us by their concern for our safety out on the road.

This work was the result of incredible dedication and resourcefulness on the part of so many who walked or biked miles to our building and those who reached out to friends and family to spread the word that we needed help. By the time we shut the door the weekend after the storm, our kitchen was cleaned and sanitized, more Sandy bags were packed and counted, and our IT systems and phone were up and running. And, everyone who participated in the effort felt great that we were able to reach so many displaced people as well as our clients. Thank you for coming together to ensure that our food would help those in greatest need, and that we would be able to start our regular service again.

It was inspiring to see everyone pull together in the wake of the storm. As always, we were grateful for the dedication of our volunteers who demonstrated once again their willingness to do whatever it takes to make sure that our clients receive their meals. We found ourselves appreciating not only the time and talents of our many volunteers, but their flexibility and patience as we figured out our operations during that trying week.

Gratefully, we remember all those who helped us restock our shelves after the storm. Our thanks to our generous friends at [Whole Foods Market NYC](#) who held food donation drives in each of their Manhattan stores through last November, collecting much-needed canned and dry goods. We also thank the 55 staff members from [J. Crew](#) who donated their CSA shares, which were distributed to our grocery bag clients. We also thank our friends at [Douglas Elliman](#) for bringing the 200 meals we cooked to a group of families they "adopted" in the Far Rockaways. Thank you to [Stonehenge](#) for inviting us to participate in their Hurricane Sandy Relief Block Party at 10 Downing Street.

Our marathoners who were scheduled to run the then-cancelled ING NYC Marathon ran the "Run Anyway" marathon that weekend. We send our thanks to all of our team members, including [Heather Shipman](#) and [Eddie Jacobs](#), who wrote powerful posts about their personal

marathons on our blog. We thank all those who came out to support and run in the Race to Deliver at the end of last November, as it became our “Race to restock our shelves.”

Our thanks also to the publications in the area that helped share the story of all that we were able to accomplish during the storm. Thanks to [HIVPlusMag](#), [POZ](#) and [Architectural Digest](#) for publishing news of our recovery and asking for people to donate to our cause.

To see some of the images of our volunteers and our staff working together after Hurricane Sandy, please see our [Facebook album](#).

Today, we know that many are still recovering from Hurricane Sandy, and we hold them in our thoughts. We hope the relief they have long-awaited comes soon.

Again we thank our community for bonding together and enabling us to demonstrate, once again, that we will always be there for our clients and their families when they need us most.