

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Christiansted SDA Provides Door-To-Door Kindness on Thanksgiving Day

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Thanksgiving Day in the Virgin Islands is much like everywhere the holiday is celebrated--it is marked by family and good fare. It is also the time of year when island residents take a collective pause to focus attention on those who are less fortunate among them.

Such was the mission of the Christiansted Seventh-day Adventist Church Community Services organization on Thursday morning, which, under the leadership of Annetta Joseph, prepared 150 platters of home-cooked meals and 250 fruit baskets to deliver to seniors and those in need across St. Croix.



over the 20 years
SDA church.

Fruit basket given

out to local residents on Thanksgiving Day.

"It's part of what we do in our community services," Joseph said. "We like to share and we like to give. We love sharing love."

The process of getting the items to the community was a well-organized and tightly coordinated one. A group of women in the church hall could be seen filling platters with hearty helpings of rice, stuffing, macaroni, vegetables and veggie protein; and other volunteers had packaged bags of mixed fruit containing apples, oranges, bananas, grapes and bottles of juice as bounty for the fruit baskets.

Then, there were those who carried the goods out to several waiting vans that would transport the items to elderly residents in various housing communities, including John F. Kennedy, Flamboyant, Carib Villas and Grand Princess Manor, as well as to individuals in need, Joseph explained.

But, the SDA Community Services organization is no stranger to doing good for the St. Croix community. Johnson said every third Sunday of the month, the group feeds homeless residents at the Christiansted fish market, in addition to other benevolent activities. A similar food and fruit basket giveaway is also conducted at Easter.

"We do whatever we can to help," she said the soft spoken Joseph, who had been a Community Services member at her SDA church in Antigua before migrating to St. Croix.



Volunteers prepare meals and fruit baskets to be delivered on Thanksgiving morning.

Joseph went on to explain that in order to help streamline the distribution process on Thanksgiving Day, during visitation with community residents on the second Sunday of each month, Community Services team members would compile a list of names of persons desiring to have the goods delivered to them.

And, to get the job done on Thanksgiving Day, Community Services members were provided with additional manpower from the church's Pathfinders and Adventurers youth organizations.

Vern Lansiquot-Graham, the newly minted director of the Pathfinders Club at the Christiansted SDA church, said she had been involved as a volunteer in the food distribution activity as a young Pathfinder herself.

"This is a yearly event that we all look forward to," she said. "I've been doing it from since I was a young girl and our Pathfinders are continuing this tradition."

Of the 15 Pathfinders Club members at the Christiansted church, Lansiquot-Graham said nine participated in the Thanksgiving Day activity.



Pathfinder

youth deliver goods to residents on Thanksgiving Day.

"As Pathfinders, we follow through with different requirements, such as being on God's errands, so today we're going on God's errands, which is helping humanity and helping mankind," she said. Pathfinders are geared toward 9-15 year-olds.

Jasmine Griffin, director of the Christiansted SDA Adventurers Club, which caters to youngsters aged 5-8, said it was important to get even the littlest parishioners involved in performing acts of kindness.

"We want them to be in the practice of serving others," she said. "And this time of year, when it's all about gifts and things like that, the first thing we'd like them to understand is 'you give first; God gave to you and now it's time to share'. And we come out and share by passing out food, and doing cards and just being kind to people."

Joseph summed up why she has dedicated more than two decades of her life to serving her church and her community in this capacity.

"It's something that I love to do and I enjoy doing it," she said. "It's a pleasure."

Without a doubt, we can all be thankful for people like Joseph and the members of the Christiansted SDA Community Services organization.

Feature Image: Young Adventurers deliver food to St. Croix residents on Thanksgiving Day.

Images: Courtesy of Bruce Graham