

PRESS RELEASE

Open House and Dedication for The Little Closet Community Food Pantry

Samantha, Alabama – February 21, 2016: The Operations Board of The Little Closet Community Food Pantry hosted Open House and Dedication Sunday, February 21, 2016. It was a wonderful celebration with the community. Bro. Josh Johnson who serves on the Operations Board blessed the Pantry, joined by Bro. Shane Smith, grandson of Johnny Williamson, who is the inspiration of this ministry and Rick Taylor, Pastor at Sulphur Springs Free Will Baptist Church.

The Little Closet Community Food Pantry is a ministry of The Johnny Williamson Good Shepherd Foundation. Johnny Williamson, who passed away in 2013, left quite a legacy for his community. He was an avid gardener, and fed his neighbors, friends and family with his bounty and although he was a man of meager means, he met people's needs in other ways. After his death, his children started a Foundation to continue his efforts and to follow in his footsteps. A food pantry for the Samantha community has evolved out of the Foundation. "We do things a little different than daddy did. He grew most of the food he gave away and was a one man show, so to speak. We have formed partnerships with our neighbors and businesses so that we can multiply the principle he taught us – to take care of those down on their luck", says Larry Williamson. An Operations Board was formed in August of 2015 to manage the pantry.

"Every family has a story", says Becky Williamson-Martin, "Welcome to ours. We come from a long line of love – a family of deep roots. And like the roots on redwood trees that reach out and intertwine with each other in order to stand strong, we recognize that we need our neighbors and friends support to help make our community strong. We believe God wants us to be like giant redwood trees supporting each other and planting shade trees for others to sit under. So we invited others to join us and we found that there are a lot of servant hearts who are ready and eager to get in on the fun."

"It is our desire to always honor and glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in all we do. That's what Dad did. He glorified The Good Shepherd when he was feeding the community. And I'm so thankful for the legacy he left us", Ricky Williamson.

FOR RELEASE FEBRUARY 21, 2016

Open House and Dedication for The Little Closet Community Food Pantry

PAGE 2

The story behind the name: The Little Closet. Johnny's mother, Pearl Williamson, was an avid gardener like her son and worked feverishly to preserve the bounty of her labor so that she could share it with neighbors and all who entered her home. She called her pantry, the little closet. We can still hear the echoes of her saying "Hun, go in the little closet and get you some beans or whatever you want". She always kept the door open to this room. A Legacy of Love in Action. The Little Closet Food Pantry offers this same "open door" welcome to anyone who needs a hand-up.

The Pantry is open to the public on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. and serves Northwest Tuscaloosa and Southeast Fayette Counties with a primary focus on the Samantha Community.

There are many opportunities for anyone who wishes to get involved actively or passively with this organization. The goal of the members is to act as volunteers and meet the needs by serving others with a variety of needs.

The Closet offers porch sitting opportunities, striking up a game of scrabble, checkers, or visiting and catching up with an old and new friends while enjoying a cup of coffee and some delicious homemade baked goods provided by our sweet, "community ladies".

We are very blessed by God to be able to serve others and be served in a community of love and friendship that is driven by Christ examples" said Sandy Milling.

If you need more information about The Little Closet Community Food Pantry, call (205) 534-3104, email info@thelittlecloset.org or visit the website at thelittlecloset.org. We have many opportunities to be a neighbor and help a neighbor who could use a little helping hand through this operation. All people in the community and surrounding areas are welcome to work with us in fellowshiping with the community through many projects and activities.

The Little Closet Community Food Pantry, is a ministry of The Johnny Williamson Good Shepherd Foundation, a (501)(c)(3) registered non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

##

###