Dear Neighbor,

As we reach the halfway point of this year, we are looking back on 2025 and looking ahead to the start of our new fiscal year. We are so thankful for the support we received in 2025, a year of challenges and growth. Our challenges included the loss of significant federal funding to programs at the Greater Boston Food Bank, and delays and cuts in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). When the government shutdown in November threatened SNAP funding, the Reading community rallied behind us and supported us in unprecedented ways. We received donations from new supporters and old, gained new volunteers, and made new partnerships in the community.

We also began our new cooking program, making take-home meals, snacks, and desserts that our neighbors can choose each time they visit the pantry. A creative team of volunteers uses extra food and produce to whip up great options like chicken stir-fry, turkey dinners, vegetable chowder, lasagna, fried rice, eggplant parmesan, hummus, blueberry banana muffins, and so much more. The program has been a big hit, with neighbors emailing us to tell us about a meal they particularly enjoyed and making requests for more of their favorite recipe. If you're interested in cooking with us, check the Volunteer page on our website at readingfoodpantry.org for more information and a link to sign up.

Throughout the year, our focus has remained on providing a welcoming environment for our neighbors who visit the pantry, whether through our delivery program to our homebound neighbors or to those who visit in person. We are indebted to our wonderful volunteers who help us achieve that goal and we thank everyone who supports us in ways large and small!

With thanks and best wishes,

Simone Payment

Simone Payment, Executive Director
Reading Food Pantry