**HOPE OMID FOOD BANK**

A local family has been spreading kindness to their neighbours – one food hamper at a time.

Several years ago, New West residents Roqiya Ahmadi and Mohammad Amin Ahmadi started [Social Forum Hope](http://socialhope2016.com/?utm_source=new%20west%20record&utm_campaign=new%20west%20record%3A%20outbound&utm_medium=referral), a New Westminster-based non-profit organization that fights against child poverty and child labour in Afghanistan. It targets poor orphans whose fathers have been killed in war and whose mothers are unable to support their families – resulting in children being sent out to work rather than attending school.

To raise money for the non-profit organization, the couple opened Hope Omid, a small thrift store selling clothing and household items at 20-825 McBride Blvd. When the pandemic forced the store to close temporarily in March 2020, they considered how they could help out closer to home.

Through the help of a few local churches and the City of New Westminster, Mount Zion was approached to offer space to Hope Omid. Since coming to Mount Zion in the fall of 2022 we have valued the relationship that is growing over time.

Mount Zion's Community Connections Team is always looking for opportunities to join in with what the neighbourhood is up to, and to be good neighbours to those around us This was a perfect opportunity to do just that! We are so pleased to offer space, and our support to Roqiya and Mohammad and all the volunteers who work so hard to provide for our neighbours.

Food is distributed Friday and Monday afternoon. Just this last Easter Monday over 215 people were fed! **If you would like to offer support please contact the church office at: 604-521-0120 or email** **mountzion930@gmail.com****.**

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