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The Vital Role of a Hot, Nutritious Meal **Nurturing Our Guests Through the Cold Months Ahead**

Every winter, I see our Loaves & Fishes guests braving the dark, cold days and struggling to put food on the table. As the largest free, prepared meal program in Minnesota, we know the value of a hot, nutritious meal. Especially in these colder months. Programs like ours are crucial because government assistance doesn't cover prepared or hot meals. At Loaves & Fishes, we know that food security is not just about having enough to eat. It's about having access to meals that nourish you.

Recently, I was distributing food at a Street Outreach location we serve every week. A guest shared their situation with me: "I need a home. I need help. I want to get sober and don't know where to start."

The other day, I sat with a woman during one of our meals in Minneapolis. She had received an eviction notice that morning. She's been fighting to keep a roof over her head for months and now she's on the brink of homelessness. Meeting guests in these situations is what reminds me why we show up for Minnesotans throughout the winter.

This year, Give to the Max Day is on November 21st with early giving starting on November 1st. With matching gifts from multiple generous donors, gift, every dollar you give will be doubled. That means your donation goes twice as far in supporting those who need a hot, healthy meal in the coming months.

Your generosity ensures that Loaves & Fishes can continue to be there for Minnesotans and provide warmth and nourishment when it's needed most. Together, let's make this winter brighter for our neighbors.



Kiley Benson, Executive Director

A volunteer is distributing free meals curbside at a Loaves & Fishes Community Meal Site.





Veggies being prepared at a Loaves & Fishes Commissary Kitchen

"It's a relief knowing I'm eating what my body really needs."

— John, Loaves & Fishes guest

As a result, many rely on fast food or convenience store items, which are often high in fats, sugars, and preservatives. Over time, this leads to health problems like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. This further deepens the challenges these families face.

In response, our free meal programming is a critical resource for individuals living in food deserts. We bring nutritious meals to areas where fresh, healthy food is scarce. For people with limited mobility, single parents, and seniors who can't travel long distances to grocery stores, these meals aren't just a stopgap. They're a source of vitality and wellness.

The health challenges our guests face make it clear that nutritious meals are a necessity. Results from our annual optional and anonymous guest survey show that guests served at our Community Meal Sites struggle with a variety of health issues including living with a heart condition, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Our guests also report battling weight control and other health concerns. By offering healthy meals, we're helping our guests to manage and even prevent these conditions.

"I have high blood pressure and diabetes, and it's hard to get the right food where I live. The meals I get from Loaves & Fishes are healthy, and I can feel the difference in my body."

— Sarah, Loaves & Fishes guest

Every meal served at Loaves & Fishes is an opportunity to make a difference. By focusing on nutrition, we're tackling hunger and health issues simultaneously. Together, we can improve the quality of life for our guests one meal at a time. **This is made possible by the generosity of supporters like you.**

Nourishing Communities

Loaves & Fishes' Nutrition-Focused Approach

As food insecurity and health disparities grow, the need for nutritious meals is more urgent than ever. At Loaves & Fishes, we're on the front lines of this fight in Minnesota, ensuring that people in need have access not only to food but to healthy, well-balanced meals. And at the heart of it all is our Food Rescue program — a solution for both people and the planet.

Every year, millions of pounds of edible food are thrown away while millions of people struggle to put food on the table. Through our Food Rescue program, we work with grocery stores, farmers, wholesalers, and other partners to rescue this food before it ends up in landfills. Instead, it fills the plates of people who need it most. This helps to address hunger while simultaneously reducing food waste and promoting environmental sustainability.

The food we rescue plays a key role in providing nutritious, high-quality meals to our guests. At Loaves & Fishes, we believe quality is just as important as quantity. **The meals we serve are packed with fresh fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains — giving our guests the nutrients they need to stay healthy and strong.** These meals fuel physical health and also support mental and emotional well-being to provide hope and dignity during tough times.

Many of the people we serve live in food deserts or areas where access to fresh, affordable food is limited. The nearest grocery store might be miles away making it difficult for families to get fresh fruits and vegetables.

From November 1st through the 21st, your donation will be doubled thanks to generous donors in support of Give to the Max Day.

Together, we can continue fighting hunger, improving health, and bringing hope to our communities. Your support matters. Please consider making a donation today.



A guest picks up lunch at a Loaves & Fishes Community Meal Site



Join us for Minnesota's annual day of giving on Thursday, November 21st!

It's your chance to create change locally.

Every dollar you donate will be **DOUBLED** thanks to matching funds from multiple generous corporate, foundation, and individual donors.

Early giving starts this year on Friday, November 1st. Make your donation here: www.givemn.org/loavesandfishesmn

FIGHT FOR FOOD 5K

Join us for the Fight For Food 5K on Saturday, November 16th at 9am in Eagan. This run/walk is dedicated to helping end hunger and 100% of the proceeds will be donated to Loaves & Fishes.

Learn more about this year's Fight For Food 5k including how to register at www.loavesandfishesmn.org/events

THE VINE ROOM

HAPPY PEOPLE • GOOD VIBES • GREAT WINE

The Vine Room is a fun, welcoming wine bar pouring delicious wines by the flight, glass & bottle, located on Mainstreet in Hopkins! You'll also find beautiful cheese & charcuterie boards, a local beer selection, wine cocktails, and NA options.

Come experience happy people, good vibes, and great wine! Plus, 5% of sales from November's Featured Flight will be donated to Loaves & Fishes. Learn more here: www.vineroom.co/drinkwinegiveback

LTD BREWING CO HOPKINS, MN

We are thrilled to partner with LTD Brewing in Hopkins for another Give Back Monday on November 4th. We will be hosting bingo from 6-8pm and 20% of sales throughout the day will be donated back to Loaves & Fishes. Come enjoy some tasty beer while supporting our free meal programming in the Hopkins community! Learn more about it at www.loavesandfishesmn.org/events



Wishing a Happy Retirement

Celebrating Debbie Lieberman's Impact at Loaves & Fishes

We have been incredibly fortunate to have Debbie Lieberman on our team for the past five years. Since joining us in 2019 as our Director of Advocacy, Debbie has exemplified what it means to serve our community with compassion and dedication. She has regularly visited our sites and engaged with our guests to provide a listening ear and invaluable support.

Whether it's assisting guests in locating a Loaves & Fishes meal, connecting guests to social workers, or helping with shelter and housing needs, Debbie has consistently been a beacon of hope for those in need. Her tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to uplifting others have made a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals.

As she prepares to retire, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for her years of service and the many lives she has touched. Thank you, Debbie, for your incredible work and for being such an inspiring force in our organization. You will be greatly missed, but your legacy will continue to resonate in our community.



Photos of Debbie connecting with guests and coworkers as well as a photo celebrating her Whirlyball win at our 2023 annual holiday party.

We are looking for experienced, reliable, and passionate chefs to join our culinary team.

The ideal candidate will have a strong culinary background, demonstrate the ability to work well on a team, and commit to maintaining the highest standards of food quality and presentation. Our chefs have culinary experience, a willingness to contribute to the overall success of the culinary team through a variety of roles and responsibilities, and care about reducing barriers to food access in our community.

Learn more at www.loavesandfishesmn.org/careers/

INTRODUCING THE **NOURISHMENT NETWORK**



Because nobody deserves to be hungry.

Close your eyes. Imagine when your next meal will be. Is it in a few minutes, or a few hours? What if you weren't sure when? What if you couldn't afford your next meal? How would you plan your day? How would you work, learn, and connect with others around you if you did not have access to food? For many of us, food comes first. Food is how we might start our day. It is the fuel we need to thrive in all parts of our lives.

This is why we created the Nourishment Network. When you join the Nourishment Network, you become a part of the solution by giving the gift of food to Minnesotans in need every month. You'll join a community of like-minded individuals who are putting their values into action. You are an active participant in the fight against hunger and homelessness, and in caring for our planet as we reduce food waste in Minnesota. As a member of the Nourishment Network, you're a member of the Loaves & Fishes community.

Why give monthly rather than annually?

"Being a part of the Loaves & Fishes Nourishment Network has been incredibly fulfilling. I was moved to give monthly after volunteering at a meal site and seeing first-hand how many people are struggling every day. Knowing that my contributions are helping provide nutritious meals to other young families is incredibly rewarding. I'm proud to support a mission that truly makes a difference in our community."

— Emma, Nourishment Network Member

Members of the Nourishment Network are the reason we are able to plan ahead and sustainably expand our services to feed more Minnesotans. In 2023, we served a record of over 5.9 million meals and rescued a record of over 12.5 million pounds of food. We want to ensure we are meeting the need each year, but we can't do it without you. When you join, you set up an automatic recurring payment that can be changed or suspended at any time. Recurring donations allow the Loaves & Fishes team to more accurately plan for our increasing goals and keep our work moving forward.

Discover the benefits of joining the Nourishment Network today!



\$10 A MONTH

\$10 a month feeds a senior who is unable to cook for themselves once a week for a year



\$25 A MONTH

\$25 a month feeds a single mom and her two children once a week for a year



\$50 A MONTH

\$50 a month feeds a family of 5 people once a week for a year



\$100 A MONTH

\$100 a month feeds someone struggling with homelessness once a day for a year

Discover more about the Nourishment Network! Scan the QR code today.



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