



SUMMER 2025

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"Chili Cooks" Recipe

Ingredients:

- 34 pounds hamburger
- 1 pound dried onions
- 1 cup salt
- 109 oz can tomato paste
- 109 oz can diced tomatoes
- 16 ounces chili powder
- 3 109 oz cans pinto beans

Preparation:

- Step 1:** In a large Dutch oven or heavy pot, brown hamburger and remove grease.
- Step 2:** Chop onions, then transfer to pot to let them sweat down.
- Step 3:** Add all other ingredients except the pinto beans. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Step 4:** Distribute the mixture evenly to pots. Evenly distribute the beans to pots.
- Step 5:** Cook over medium heat for 1.5 hours, adding water as necessary along the way.

Decades of Dedication

A cross-generational story of connection.

There's something special about the smell of chili in the kitchen at Peace House in Minneapolis. It's familiar, comforting, and it means Barb, Rich, and Sarah, aka the "Chili Cooks" are here. This dedicated crew of volunteers has been serving with Loaves & Fishes since 1984. That's over four decades of chopping, stirring, dishing up hearty meals, and showing up for our community.

They're part of our history, but also part of what keeps us moving forward.

New volunteers are joining our efforts every day, each bringing their own energy and heart to the work.

"I thought I was just coming to volunteer," one student shared. "I didn't realize how much it would change the way I see food."

The cross-generational web is one of the many elements of what makes Loaves & Fishes unique. And no matter how long someone has been part of our work, each person adds a thread to something bigger.

You don't have to serve every month for 40 years to make a tangible change: One day can make all the difference in reducing barriers to food access for our community. It's pretty inspiring to know some of our volunteers have been with us through the decades. They've watched us evolve in a way many will never comprehend.

This interwoven network of people—retirees with time to give, young adults seeking space to get involved, families looking to serve our community together—creates a culture of shared responsibility and connection.

These moments don't just build meals; they build relationships, empathy, and a deep understanding that we're stronger when we show up for each other.

In a world that often feels divided by differences, this is where those lines blur. Everyone has something to offer, and everyone is still learning. Whether it's your first shift or your hundredth, you're part of a living, breathing network. That's not just unique, it's essential to who we are and how we can continue to evolve.

What we're building together isn't just a meal, and we welcome you to come alongside us as we continue to learn, grow, and listen to how we can serve our community.



Barb, Rich, and Sarah, aka the "Chili Cooks" at the Peace House Community Meal location in Minneapolis.



Evolving with Intention

Where We've Been. Where We're Going. Why It Matters.



After our recent Jamboree, a conversation sparked around the office. Not just about the food (though the BBQ was excellent), but about the feeling in the air. Something about being together in Peavey Park just felt... like coming home.

Peavey Park holds history for us. It was the very first site for our Street Outreach Program, and we've been returning ever since. Over the years, faces have changed, new stops have been added, and the scope of our work has stretched far beyond our first visit. But the heart? The heart has stayed the same.

That's the story of Loaves & Fishes. Not just rescuing food or serving meals, but evolving to meet the need.

Each step we have taken over the last forty-two years wasn't just a new program. It's a new way to answer the same question:

What does it take to meet the growing need for food access right where people live, work, and gather?

Now, we're re-asking that question in a new way:

What does it look like to support this mission when funding shifts? When grants get cut? When our donors are feeling the impacts on their households too?

It means getting creative. It means testing new revenue streams and investing in partnerships that help us stretch our resources and deepen our impact.

And most of all, it means staying flexible, because hunger doesn't wait for budgets to bounce back.

"When I donate to Loaves & Fishes, I know it's going straight into the hands that need it most. It's not just a meal. It's stability, it's dignity, it's a lifeline." — James

We can grow what's working, reinvent what's needed, and keep rescuing food with intention.

But in full transparency, our work isn't possible without supporters like you.



Volunteers. Donors. Neighbors. Friends.

You are the root system that makes every new idea possible and every evolution sustainable. And right now? We need that foundation more than ever.

Summer is always our busiest season. Kids are home. Grocery costs are high. Routine winter volunteers are busy. Families are already stretching tight budgets, and while schedules shift, our team is still showing up. We are rescuing food, preparing meals at our 35+ Community Meal Locations, delivering Street Outreach, and supporting our 40+ HUB partners across Minnesota.

"This meal saved me this week. I was confronted with having to choose between groceries or gas to get to work, and you meant I could do both." -Sarah

As complicated as it is to ask: If you have time, we welcome you to volunteer with us this summer. If you have resources, a financial gift today will make an immediate impact. If you're not in a place to give right now, stay engaged! Your voice is powerful.

Thank you for being a part of our mission.

We have so many exciting things ahead, and so many ways to plug in. We'd love for you to be part of it all.

Thank you for walking with us, cheering us on, and choosing to believe that everyone has the right to meals, comfort, and kindness.

Because of you, we aren't just feeding our community. We are continuously adapting to serve them better.

Did You Know?

In 2024, we rescued 15.3+ million lbs. of food. That weight is the equivalent to 38.25 blue whales or 425 school buses.

We Have a Summer Match!

This summer, we have a generous \$50,000 match on the table. That means every dollar you give until September 1st is doubled. Use the enclosed remittance envelope to mail in your donation or donate online at www.loavesandfishesmn.org/donate. **Can you help us meet this match?**

Upcoming Events

Ready to race, play bingo, or celebrate at our annual gala? **Scan the QR code on the bottom right** of this newsletter or visit loavesandfishesmn.org/events to register and get involved! Check out all our upcoming events:



Saturday, July 26th | Miles for Meals 5K at Crystal Frolics

Join Us for the Miles for Meals 5K! In partnership with Crystal Frolics, this event is more than a race. It's a chance to connect, raise awareness, and support the programs that feed our community.

Whether you're chasing a new personal best or strolling with friends, every step makes a difference. This year, your impact goes even further with peer-to-peer fundraising. Start a team with coworkers, classmates, or your Sunday walking crew. It's more fun (and more powerful) when you do it together!

Can't make it in person? Join virtually from anywhere! Register today!



Monday, August 11th | BINGO at LTD Brewing in Hopkins

We are thrilled to partner with LTD Brewing in Hopkins for another Give Back Monday on August 11th. We will be hosting bingo from 6-8 PM 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



Saturday, September 20th | Fall Jubilee at Minneapolis Club

Join us on Saturday, September 20th, at the Minneapolis Club downtown. This year's Fall Jubilee promises to be an unforgettable evening featuring a gourmet menu, a silent/live auction, live music, raffles, and more! All proceeds will go directly to fueling our mission.

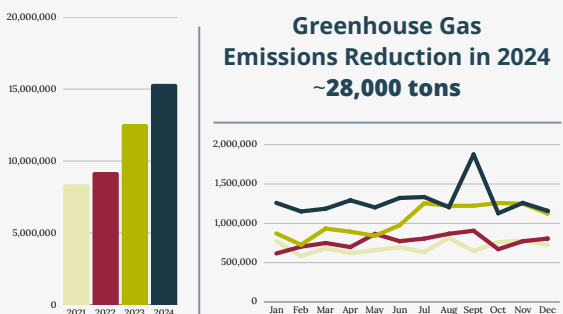
The Fall Jubilee is not just our biggest annual fundraiser; it's a celebration of community and collective effort to break down barriers to food access.

Your support will help us continue our critical work. Get your Fall Jubilee tickets today.

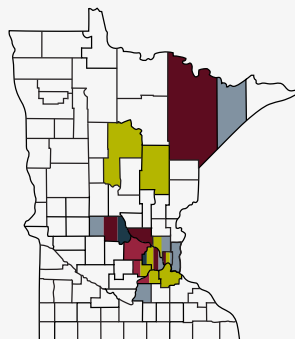
Tickets to our Fall Jubilee are available today online at www.loavesandfishesmn.org/events.

The Impact of Your Support

**Data in this infographic is from 2024*



15.3+
MILLION POUNDS
of food rescued in 2024



Minnesota Counties served in 2024: Aitkin, Anoka, Carver, Cass, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Stearns, St. Louis, Lake, LeSueur, Washington, and Wright.

15
Counties
Served

6.9+
MILLION MEALS
Served in 2024



721 Kasota Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414
612-377-9810 | office@loavesandfishesmn.org
www.loavesandfishesmn.org

