



WHEN LIFE FEELS HEAVY, WE SHOW UP.

Join us this November for Give to the Max Day. Your gift will be doubled!



Kerry, a volunteer at Friday Community Distribution

01 When Life Feels Heavy, We Show Up.

Join us this November for Give to the Max Day. Your gift will be doubled!

02 How Loaves & Fishes Shows Up

Turning challenges into solutions that nourish, connect, and uplift every day.

04 Mark's Legacy Giving

Learn how you can make an enduring impact through a planned gift.

Fueling Families

Our Partnership with Pinky Swear Foundation

I want to introduce this Fall Newsletter with a simple question: Have you ever worried about how you're going to pay a bill?

You know that tightness in your chest when the bills stack up faster than your paycheck, when the fridge looks emptier than you'd like, and payday feels a mile away? That quiet little panic where you hope time will move fast enough for your accounts to refill, but slow enough that you can still breathe, even for a moment? That quiet panic where you tell yourself that everything is fine, but as hard as you contest, it's not totally true.

For thousands of Minnesotans, that's not just a bad month; it's a daily experience. And when someone's stomach is rumbling, their anxiety is heavy, or the world just feels too hard to face alone, that's exactly when Loaves & Fishes steps in. That's why we opened our doors 43 years ago.

We meet people exactly where they are. No questions or paperwork. No judgment. Just a warm, reliable meal and a simple message: you matter.

When you walk into one of our 35+ Community Meal Sites, you feel it instantly. The hum of laughter, the smell of something cooking, the steady rhythm of genuine care. Volunteers and guest from every walk of life.

About 17% of our Community Meal Site guests are under the age of 13, while 12% are over 75. Nearly half of our guests live in rentals, almost a third own their homes, and roughly one in five are veterans.

Every meal site tells the story of real people, everyday Minnesotans, all one emergency away from needing a sigh of relief.

And right now, our work is more important than ever. Funding and grants are shifting, costs are rising, and the need in new communities keeps growing. Every day, our team shows up, rolling up their sleeves, expanding into neighborhoods when we grow aware of a gap in food access, and feeding hope along with reliable and well-balanced meals.

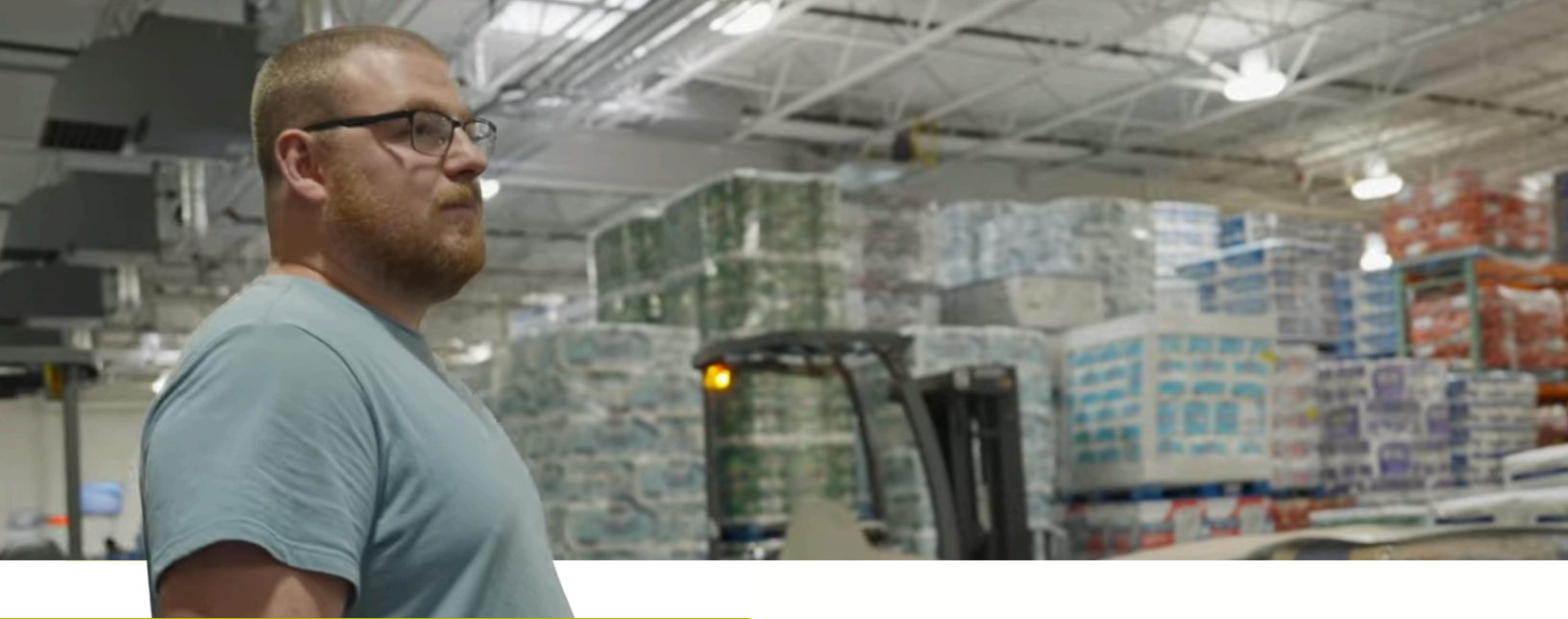
Give to the Max Day is more than just November 20th circled on a calendar. It's a lifeline for nonprofits like us. Every donation, no matter the size, powers meals, drives outreach, and makes it possible for us to be the steady presence families and neighbors need in their hardest moments.

So this Give to the Max Day season, we ask you to join us. As we strive to reach this new level of operational demand. We simply can't do our work without you. Together, we can make sure no Minnesotan goes hungry.

Special thank you to the



Join us November 20th!



Anthony, one of our Food Rescue Drivers, waiting for a pickup from Costco Business Center



Food Rescue



Commissary Kitchens



Community Meals



Street Outreach



Community Distribution



HUB Partners



Institutional Partners



Cooking For All

HOW LOAVES & FISHES SHOWS UP

Turning challenges into solutions that nourish, connect, and uplift every day.

Nearly 128,000 tons of food waste was generated in 2024 in Minneapolis alone...

At Loaves & Fishes, we see this as an opportunity to turn this quality food into nourishment, dignity, and hope for our one in five neighbors experiencing hunger in Minnesota. Our mission isn't just to serve meals; It's to remove the barriers that make people feel less than human when they seek help. We strive to eliminate the stigma of what a soup kitchen is, creating a system so dynamic that someone could be a millionaire one day and lose everything the next, but they still feel welcome to receive support.

Food Rescue is at the heart of that mission. But rescuing food isn't as simple as taking it from a landfill. It's a carefully orchestrated process. We follow food from the farm, through distributors, manufacturers, and packagers, to ensure nothing good goes to waste. Labels may change, boxes may get damaged, or produce may bruise, yet the food inside remains nutritious and valuable. Volunteers in our kitchens learn to prep everything, from a slightly bruised apple to a green pepper with a nick, and multiplied across thousands of servings, the impact is enormous.

Our drivers are more than transporters; they are the connective tissue of our system.

By sending the same drivers to the same areas and partners consistently, they build relationships with our Food Rescue partners that make operations seamless. Mistakes happen less, and food gets where it's needed, when it's needed. One of our warehouses operates entirely on an inventory system designed to provide robust selection for meal planning. Produce, grains, and dairy are meticulously categorized and made available for Community and HUB Partners and Site Coordinators, who can place orders and pick up exactly what they need.

From the warehouse, some of the food moves to our Commissary Kitchens, a system we developed during the pandemic to alleviate the pressures on Site Coordinators. When volunteer numbers were low and meal counts skyrocketed, the three Commissary Kitchens allowed us to maintain quality, consistency, and menu variety. Here, fresh produce is prepped by our chefs and volunteers and meals are cooked for distribution to some of our Community Meal Locations, ensuring every guest receives nourishing, well-prepared food, regardless of slow volunteer seasons.

As our Food Logistics Specialist Rebecca shares, "I love that I can go and just get fresh produce like this." She was prepping plums for the Salvation Army as we talked.

Will you be the reason someone goes to bed with a full stomach tonight?

At the Community Meal sites, every detail is intentional. From picking up prepped food at the Commissary Kitchen to warming meals and arranging produce, Site Coordinators like Alyssa make sure every guest feels seen and respected. Guests arrive, often carrying stories of hardship, and are met with a sense of care that goes beyond a simple meal. **“I love this site because I relate to most of my guests. I have a similar past, a similar history,” Alyssa shares.** Here, people are greeted with dignity, families are served together, and everyone, no matter their age, background, income, or circumstances, can experience the simple but profound act of being welcomed and nourished.



Our Salvation Army Temple Community Meal Location

Among our Street Outreach guests, 10% are ages 13–19, 18% are over 65, and 18% are employed, highlighting the broad spectrum of Minnesotans who rely on us.

All of these programs are made possible by more than 50 dedicated staff who show up every day, alongside an incredible network of donors, rescue partners, and volunteers across Minnesota. Our legacy is simple: people serving people. We ensure that over 95% of every dollar donated to us goes directly to serving guests, creating impact where it matters most. We fill gaps where other organizations cannot, showing up in neighborhoods and communities that might otherwise be overlooked.

We are here to engage new communities, and continue innovating to meet the ever-changing landscape of food access in Minnesota. But we can't do it alone. Every donation helps us maintain and expand this critical work, so we can continue rescuing food, preparing meals, and offering dignity to those who need it most. We are committed to building a world where no one goes to bed with an empty stomach.

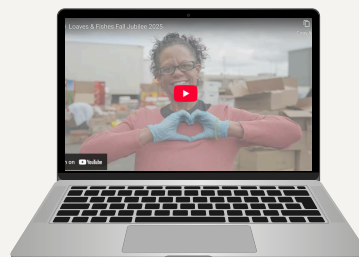


A Community Distribution volunteer checking Sarah in

Our work extends beyond kitchens and warehouses. Community Distribution was born from the realization that some guests face barriers far beyond getting to a Community Meal Site. Families can arrive with one to six households in tow, and we ensure they leave with the food they need. **For guests like Sarah Sutman, the experience is transformative: “We had never been part of a meal program before... and immediately I felt just so much joy.”** Volunteers, like Lisa, dedicate their time on Friday and Saturday to make these distributions seamless. Lined up one by one, cars follow the line as volunteers stock their trunks with groceries, creating an environment of care and intentionality.

Street Outreach emerged from our early efforts to distribute sandwiches, revealing the need for consistent, year-round support across Minnesota. Our drivers deliver fast-casual food, ensuring that perishables maintain quality, whether it's sandwiches for people experiencing homelessness or other food for those in transitional housing. This intentional approach meets communities where they are, respecting both their needs and circumstances.

See this story in motion.
Scan the QR code on the right to watch!



Video filmed and edited by Billie Jo Laitinen at B.J.Laits Productions

Did you know about

1 in 5

of our guests are veterans

45%

of guests at our Community Meal Locations bring home less than \$1000/month



NOURISHMENT NETWORK

Why should YOU join the Nourishment Network?

Hunger doesn't take a day off, and neither can we. Your monthly gift ensures individuals and families have reliable access to meals, groceries, snacks, and support when they need it most. Quiet, consistent, and powerful, your generosity nourishes people across Minnesota.

Help us a world without hunger. YOU can make a tangible difference today.

Are you in?

Learn More



Join the Nourishment Network today! It's the most effective way to make a continued impact.

MARK'S LEGACY GIVING

Learn how you can make an enduring impact through a planned gift.

At Loaves & Fishes, every meal shared is a moment of connection, a reminder that compassion can outlast any one of us.

Our Legacy Giving Campaign is about ensuring that this spirit of care continues for generations to come. It's about transforming today's generosity into tomorrow's security for thousands of Minnesotans who depend on us for reliable nourishment and hope.



Photos of Mark Hoiland and friends volunteering at Community Meal Sites

For longtime supporter and Emeritus Board Member Mark Hoiland, that mission became deeply personal. After decades of working in finance, Mark realized he "needed more than just a business career." He quickly became more involved, serving at nearly every site, attending Board meetings, and helping lead Loaves & Fishes through seasons of difficult financial challenges. Then came a bequest, a gift from two longtime volunteers, that changed everything, keeping Loaves & Fishes thriving and growing into what it is today. Inspired by that act of generosity, Mark has chosen to leave his own legacy gift, ensuring that future generations can continue to experience the same connection and care that moved him all those years ago.

For more information on Legacy Giving, contact our office at 612-377-9810 or via email at office@loavesandfishesmn.org.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT MORE THAN EVER BEFORE

One in five of our neighbors is experiencing hunger in Minnesota. Our work is more important than ever. Funding and grants are shifting, costs are rising, and the need in new communities keeps growing. Donate today.



FUELING FAMILIES

Our Partnership with Pinky Swear Foundation

This September, we proudly partnered with Pinky Swear Foundation to help restock their hospital pantries for families facing pediatric cancer. Our team spent an afternoon loading shelves that will help families at both Children's Hospital and Masonic Children's Hospital, filling them with over 700 pounds of nutritious food, snacks, and grab-and-go meals.

By keeping these pantries stocked, we're helping ensure that parents can stay close to their children during treatments without the added stress of finding or affording meals. It's one small way to show families that they're not alone, that their community is standing with them through every step of the journey. We're grateful to Pinky Swear Foundation for letting us play a new role in this meaningful work, and to our donors, volunteers, and food partners who helped make this partnership and partnerships like this possible.



Our Director of Operations Mel and Warehouse Associate Mario at Pinky Swear Foundation