



LOAVES & FISHES MINISTRIES | FREMONT COUNTY

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Client Testimonies



"Other homeless shelters did little to help me get on my feet or else they treated me like a commodity they could exploit. The people at Restoring Hope actually are caring and compassionate. I do not know what I would do or where I would be without them."

- Doug Jackson



"I thank God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit for everything He has said and done for me. I am truly grateful to Loaves and Fishes Ministries for helping me with a safe place to stay and the hospitality is unbelievable. I have a warm bed, a warm place to stay, a shower and good food. Thank you to all the staff members and workers here at Loaves and Fishes Ministries. I am eternally grateful and appreciate

everything you guys do. You are the best and I highly recommend this place. Thank you again." - Frank Verdugo



"When I volunteered to organize cooking one day per week for E Free Church, I wasn't sure what to expect. I was certainly not known for my cooking skills! Now, over 1 ½ years later, I am still amazed each and every week at how the Holy Spirit helps our team prepare the meal to "perfection" in taste and amount. Admittedly, some weeks are better

than others. As one volunteer stated, "It was total chaos and it all turned out perfect!" Working each week with different volunteers from the different communities from E Free is a blessing in itself. It's where we strengthen our E Free friendships, but mostly we are meeting the residents where we can listen to their stories and have the opportunity to visit with them. It's very exciting when we share who Jesus Christ is. When a resident approaches one of us and asks if we can pray for them—oh what glory that brings to my heart! Being able to serve at Loaves and Fishes has taught me not only cooking skills but has brought me so much joy, so many blessings, and the excitement of being able to share kindness, hope, and God's love." - Suzi Hart

2023 Impact Snapshot



\$519,778 Food received through donations
5,734 Food boxes distributed
18,409 Meals served in our emergency shelter
221 Nonperishable meals provided weekly to students
934 Holidays meals provided

213 Adults and 20 children stayed in our shelter
9 Individuals received respite care



\$186,004 Rental assistance provided
\$124,388 Utility assistance provided
\$17,596 Other financial assistance provided

Journey Home provided housing to 52 families
Restoring Hope provided housing to 53 families
New Creations Inn provided housing to 25 families
Oak Haven provided housing to 20 families
Totaling 127 adults and 23 children



122 Individuals became homeless in 2023
215 Previously homeless individuals found housing
or moved from the area

65% decrease in homelessness in 2024

*As of December 31, 2024, 94 adults and 21 children
were experiencing homelessness in Fremont County.*

A Year of Growth

This year marked the 40th anniversary for Loaves and Fishes Ministries. We started out by handing out food to our hungry neighbors from the back porch of a church. Over the years, our programs expanded and today over 6,500 individuals receive life changing and critical services annually.

What hasn't changed though, and still remains just as important today as it was in the beginning, is that everything we do is centered around building relationships with those we serve. We work hard to establish and nurture connections, prioritize open communication, listen to understand, show empathy and build trust.

God's timing is always perfect!

The new warehouse was completed in August, just in time for us to get ready for the Canon City School District Backpack Program. The Backpack Program provides nonperishable food to students over the weekends and school breaks. Food backpacks include healthy, easy-to-prepare food for kid-friendly meals. Weekly, volunteers pack 221 bags for schools to distribute.



The client self-select food pantry opened in October, allowing our neighbors to choose food items for their families. 200 families visit our food pantry each week.

After years of maintenance challenges with our refrigerated truck, we were able to purchase a new refrigerated truck that our drivers say is like going from "driving a horse and buggy to a Mercedes." Our plan is to expand our food reach in 2025 to remote areas in Fremont County that do not have access to grocery stores or food pantries.

Stoneham Wright serves as our Warehouse Manager and oversees all of the food programs. This new position ensures that our clients continue to receive excellent service.

Thanks to Brent Briggs (Program Director Emergency Shelter) and our emergency shelter residents, we now have a garden! This crew was responsible for designing, building, planting, watering and harvesting. Fresh produce was used in meals served in our emergency shelter and distributed in our food pantry. Plans are already underway to expand our garden in 2025.



A new Street Outreach program was created this year. Yvette Sheets (Street Outreach Coordinator) and Tomi Jordan (Street Outreach Peer Support) are the dynamic duo who help recruit and train new outreach volunteers. Through their efforts, street outreach is now conducted 5 days a week. The team works closely with law enforcement, provides assistance to downtown businesses and helps those who are living on the streets connect to local resources.

Our emergency shelter also received a much needed case manager to help our shelter residents navigate next steps as they transition out of homelessness. Our emergency shelter provides temporary shelter for 38 individuals and having a full-time case manager helps to ensure our residents receive sufficient support. Diane Nelson (Case Manager) assists residents with getting their Colorado Identification Cards, Social Security Cards and other important documents. She also helps connect them to medical providers and other community organizations.

An \$80,000 grant from UnbridledACTS served as the capstone to our 40th anniversary.

Funds will be used to help with the construction costs of our new warehouse.

We are grateful for UnbridledACTS' generosity and for God's continued faithfulness to this ministry. To Him be all the glory!



Reduction in Homelessness

For the past 5 years our community has been very deliberate in reducing the number of individuals who are homeless in our service area. Several taskforces and forums have been established that focus on the various challenges around homelessness.

Some of the taskforces and forums include:

- Monthly Fremont County Homeless Coalition meetings
- Weekly housing meetings for individuals who are homeless and have a housing resource
- Bi-weekly case conferencing for the chronically homeless
- Bi-monthly solution focused discussion to reduce homelessness
- Quarterly meetings with CCPD focusing on the top 12 high utilizers
- Monthly street outreach meeting

On January 1st, 2024, our county had 208 individuals who were homeless.

Throughout the year, an additional 122 individuals became homeless, resulting in **330 individuals who experienced homelessness in 2024.**



Our community's homeless response system was able to identify and quickly connect people experiencing homelessness with housing and provide services when needed. By the end of 2024, the number of individuals who were homeless dropped to 115, resulting in a **65% reduction in homelessness.**

This remarkable achievement is the direct result of the amazing community collaboration that exists with over 20 community partners. Partners include law enforcement agencies, local government, community service providers, mental health and medical providers, government agencies, churches, landlords, and many concerned citizens. Our community will continue to collaborate until all our neighbors have a safe place to call home.

To learn more how you can become involved please send an email to deedee@lfministries.org.

Services Provided

Chayah House Emergency Shelter – provides a safe place for men, women and children to sleep. Case management supports are provided to help our guests connect to community resources, employment and housing. Hot meals, showers, and laundry facilities are also available. Open every day from 4pm – 8am.

Homelessness Prevention Financial Assistance – provides limited financial assistance for rent and utilities to help families and individuals avoid homelessness.

Street Outreach – builds relationships with people experiencing homelessness who may be disconnected and alienated not only from mainstream services and supports, but from the services targeting homeless persons.

Food Pantry – no one should go hungry in our community. Our client-choice food pantry and mobile food pantry are open to all. Additional food support is available to low-income senior citizens.

Work and Gain Employment and Education Services (WAGEES) - strives for a nonjudgmental holistic approach to individuals recently released from prison. Our WAGEES program is not just about getting a job to survive, it's about building confidence and skills to thrive.

New Creations Inn (NCI) Transitional Housing- offers a fresh start to single adults who are seeking a Christ-centered safe, supportive, structured and sober-living environment.

Restoring Hope Supportive Housing - assists families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness transition into permanent housing and reach self-sufficiency. Various housing resources are available that include short-term and long-term rental assistance. Ongoing case management supports are provided.

Journey Home Supportive Housing – offers supportive housing to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Comprehensive services and a thriving community provide the foundation tenants need to connect with local resources designed to move them to healthier, more productive lives. Empowering tenants to secure employment and/or education is a cornerstone of the Journey Home program.

Who we are

The vision for **Loaves & Fishes Ministries** of Fremont County began with our local pastors as they desired a more holistic way to help neighbors in need. Since 1984, we have been serving people who are experiencing homelessness and poverty by providing essential services and life-changing programs.

From the beginning, our foundation has been grounded in the Gospel of Christ. Our goal is not for individuals to become dependent on us or the programs we offer, but instead to find freedom in Christ that will lead to a restoration with God, their families and their communities.

Our Core Values

Holistic approach—We believe in a holistic approach that deals with the spiritual, physical, relational and economic brokenness faced by those we serve. Our hope is to make a lasting difference in Fremont County by affecting change in all of these areas.

Origin in Dignity—We believe that all people have inherited dignity by being created in the image of God and thus have an innate right to be valued, respected and to receive ethical treatment.

Partnerships—We believe that partnerships with other nonprofits, local businesses, government agencies and faith based communities are essential as we seek solutions for our community. In addition, these relationships extend to those who are touched through this ministry as we strive towards a cooperative attitude in every interaction.

Empowerment—We believe in empowerment instead of handouts, where solutions are lasting and transferable. This method of ministry requires patience and perseverance, but this approach leads to healthier families and ultimately a stronger community.



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Loaves & Fishes Ministries is an eligible project for the Homeless Contribution Tax Credit. This status provides an additional 30% state tax credit for cash contributions of \$250. Please call (719)275-0593 for additional information.