

A Quiet Crisis Continues. A Generous Community Responds.

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK

PARTNER
FOOD BANK OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**





The pandemic is over, unemployment is at record lows, and employers can't find enough workers. **So why is food insecurity a bigger problem today than in 2019?**

Even for those of us working and volunteering at the Food Bank, it can be hard to understand how the number of people we served last year averaged 127,500 per month. That's about 23% higher than at the start of the pandemic.

The reason, of course, is that inflation created high hurdles for families with low incomes. And for single mothers, that bad news is compounded by expensive childcare, which can now exceed the cost of tuition at Virginia state universities. A mother who is trying to support two young children with a low-wage job literally cannot afford to go to work.

This is why we are working hard to get more food to families who are underserved, support their health with nutritious foods they enjoy, and help them access resources like SNAP (formerly, food stamps) that ease financial stress and improve food security. The support we provide makes a material difference in the lives of our neighbors by freeing up some of their limited resources for necessities like childcare, healthcare, and rent.

Our guiding vision is nourishing food and good health—for everyone, every day.

It's a vision we can and will realize with your help. Thank you!



Michael McKee

Michael McKee
Chief Executive Officer



Hatsy Vallar

Hatsy Vallar
Chair, Board of Directors

Our Collective Impact

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



127,500
People served
each month, on
average



215,000
Individuals
(unduplicated)
served*



27.4 million
Pounds of food
distributed



22.8 million
Meals
provided



8.2 million
Pounds of
produce
distributed

COVER PHOTO: At Agape Center Lynchburg, Lavania picked up clothes, food, and items for her apartment, after meeting with her mentor. "This is like my second family."

*The unduplicated number of people served is a conservative and low estimate; not all partners use the same method of data collection at this time.

They Worked Hard All Their Lives.

Now They're Living on the Edge of Poverty.

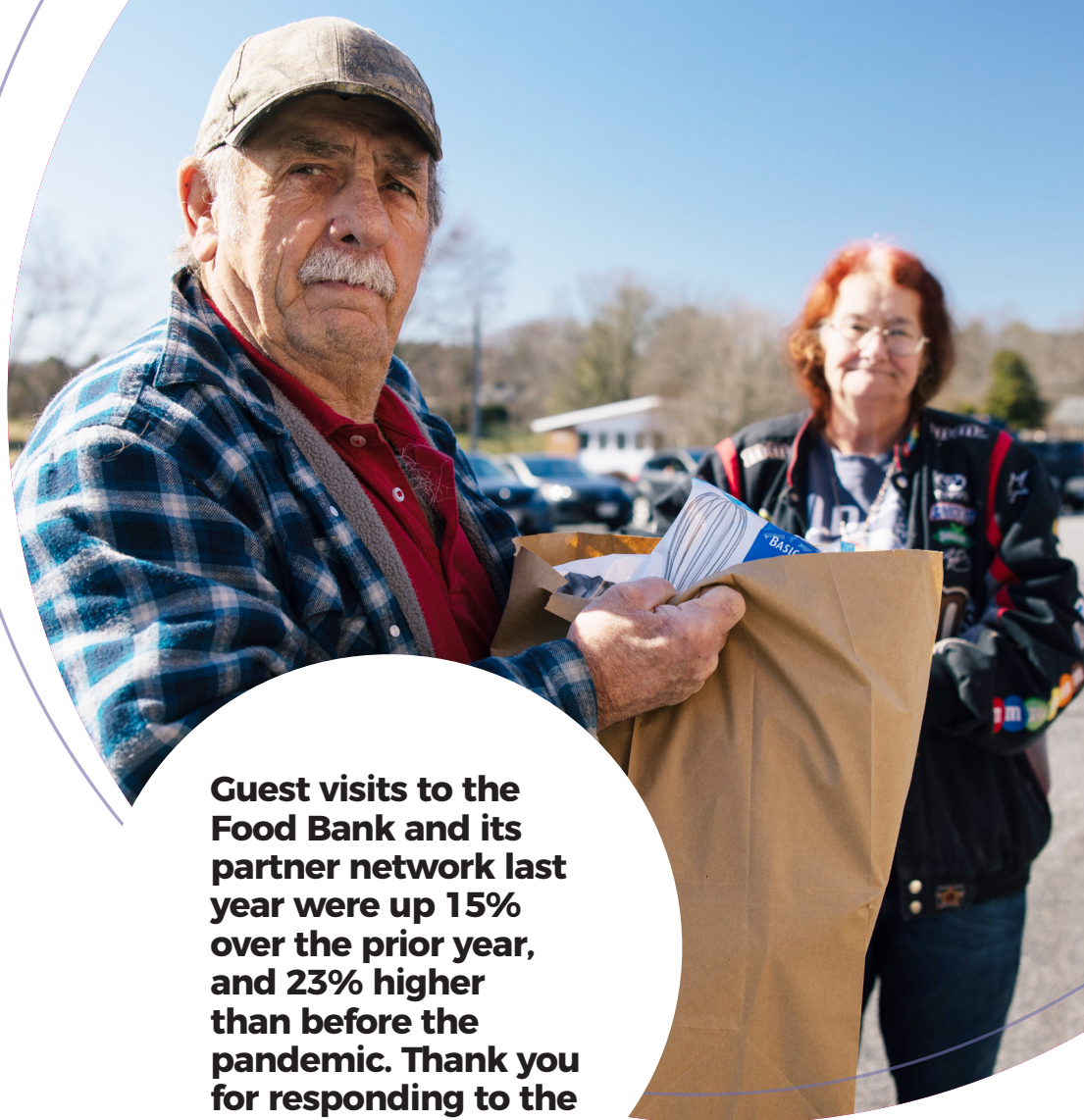
Ronald, now 70, was employed at a quarry for decades before a heart attack forced him to stop working. Michelle had knee replacements, so standing for long periods of time is a problem. They would still be working if they could.

"The hardest thing about the whole situation is for 40-some years I worked, provided—and now I can't," Ronald shared in frustration.

The increased cost of everyday goods, rent, and health care made living on a fixed income harder than ever this past year.

Ronald and Michelle depended on our partner, Empowering Culpeper, to get by. They have even put off buying their medications to make it through the month. Michelle said, "We just don't get enough money to live."

When asked what the pantry means to them, Ronald said bluntly, "We eat." Michelle echoed the sentiment with, "That says it all. We're able to eat."



Guest visits to the Food Bank and its partner network last year were up 15% over the prior year, and 23% higher than before the pandemic. Thank you for responding to the need and helping your community.

Times Were Tough. Together, We Provided Food and Hope to Increasing Numbers of Neighbors.

When you hold the firm belief—as we do, as you do—that everyone should have enough to eat, it’s a problem when anyone in the community goes hungry.

Here’s why we call this a continued, quiet crisis. The Food Bank and its 400+ community partners are providing free groceries to many more people now than before the pandemic. After 42 years of food banking, we have not “solved” hunger in the Blue Ridge area.

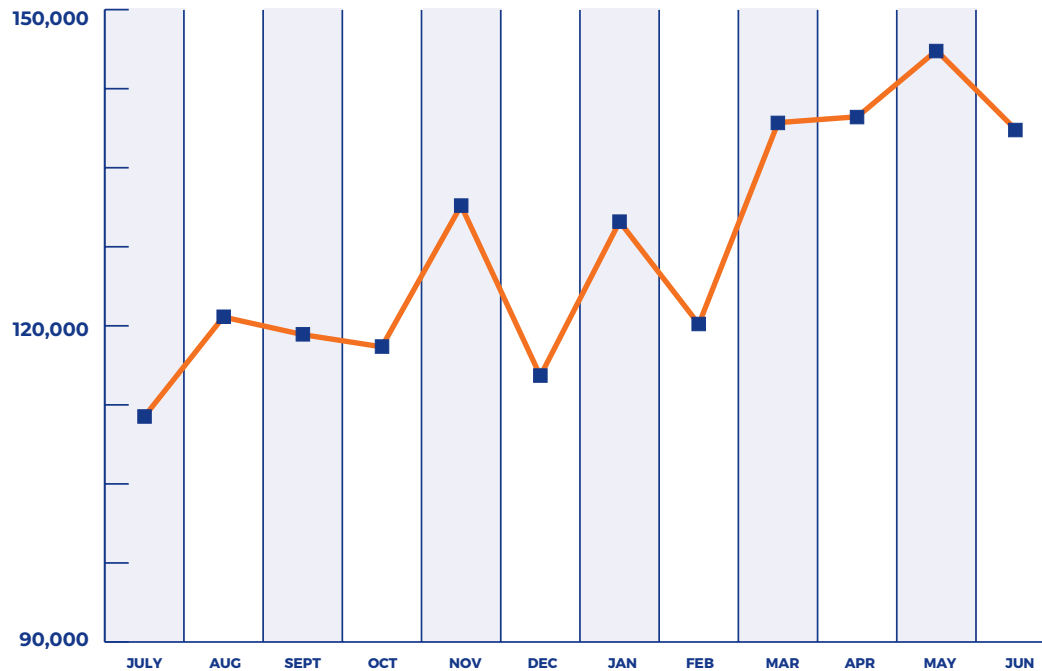
Seniors, families, and working adults stood in lines across our service area waiting for food assistance. Lines that are invisible to most people.



When she’s not working full-time, commuting, being a mom to two boys, being a wife, or coaching her son’s soccer team, Angela (pictured with 6-year-old son Link) is managing the household food budget of \$70 a week for their family of four. Her husband works full-time too. “By no means are we poverty level but at the same time we’re barely just keeping afloat.” Her local food pantry helps with the groceries.

Individuals Served

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



What drove this quiet crisis?

- The 11% increase in the cost of food items in the fall meant rising prices took a toll on family grocery budgets for many months.
- As temperatures dropped, neighbors had a tougher time paying their heating bills, especially with skyrocketing energy prices: The annual fuel oil index rose 28 percent, electricity increased 12 percent, and natural gas increased 27 percent.
- Pandemic-era SNAP benefits ended. Many households faced monthly reductions of \$250 or more.
- Even as unemployment rates went down, wages in the lowest-paid households were too low for many people to live on.



The Food Bank's Response to This Crisis

We purchased a lot more food—spending \$2 million beyond what we budgeted. This was both a supply and demand issue because USDA food donations were down 2.2 million pounds at the same time that guest demand rose.

We ran public service announcements via media outlets to help people learn how to access food assistance.

We began hosting monthly partner town hall meetings to quickly identify trends, share strategies, and lend support.

And more. See our plans (p. 10) for helping make more long-lasting change in the lives of our neighbors.

Service Is a Shared Value

We watched our partners and volunteers stretch to do more this year, and we extended our hands to support them. While distributing near historic amounts of food, these helpers were digging deeper to reach more people and make a lasting impact on families across the Blue Ridge region.

Together, we are eliminating disparities in access to nutritious food and setting a place at the table for everyone.

Partners

With our support, long-standing members expanded services:

- FISH launched a mobile pantry to extend their reach in Clarke County.
- Broadway High School, the Monacan Indian Nation Food Bank, and Loudoun Hunger Relief began piloting OrderAhead, a way to order free groceries online.
- Feeding Greene learned how to help guests apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The result? In just a few months, they had already helped 30 guests submit applications.
- Hope Distributed delivered food to Remote Area Medical (RAM) clinics.

And we worked with new partners to expand our reach:

- Tree of Life Ministries will expand home deliveries.
- Westhaven public housing now hosts a Neighborhood Produce Market site.
- Meals on Wheels (Lynchburg) will distribute shelf-stable, ready-to-eat meals.
- The Blue Ridge Free Clinic is a new Food Pharmacy partner.



FISH of Clarke County Director Anne, (pictured above, center) a volunteer who works full-time hours, is driven to serve. Why? *“The people that I’m working with and helping make it, that’s why I’m doing it. ... It’s because of the relationship we have. It’s just the humanity of it all.”*



412
Community
Partners*

26
NEW
Community
Partners
this year

**food pantries, soup
kitchens, shelters,
and program sites*



“You never know who’s struggling with hunger. Somebody could be putting on a good front, but behind closed doors they’re trying to figure out how they’re going to feed themselves and their family. ... It’s nice to know that you’re taking care of other people because that’s how a community is supposed to work.”

— GRACE, A NEW FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER



Volunteers

“Sometimes, it might seem that one person can’t make a difference against a big problem like hunger, **but one person can have a huge impact on the lives of others.** Volunteers are the backbone of our organization, and only with your help can we make sure everyone has enough to eat.”

— JENNIFER CLARK-ROBERTSON



Jennifer Clark-Robertson was the first full-time manager of the Food Bank’s volunteer and food drive programs, serving from 2012 to 2023. She passed away in July 2023. Her spirit and legacy of helping others will live on.



Food Bank volunteers serve in many vital ways—from sorting and packing food in one of our four warehouses, to distributing food at a mobile program, to sharing language translation or data entry skills. Volunteers make a big impact.

Volunteer Contributions

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



*We use the standard value of volunteer time in Virginia, as provided by independentsector.org



Want to learn more about our regional network—to find or give help?

Visit our Food Finder at www.brafb.org/find-help/



When You Give Food, You Nourish Health

One simple act can have a profound impact.

Hunger and health are deeply connected. Without regular access to nourishing food, people are more likely to have chronic health conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Without proper nutrition, children are more likely to have health conditions such as anemia and asthma, as well as academic, behavioral, developmental, and social problems.

Guest Snapshot

AVERAGE MONTHLY PARTICIPATION

127,500 TOTAL VISITS

40,350 children (32% OF ALL VISITS)

24,630 seniors (19% OF ALL VISITS)

5,620 first-time guests (14% OF ALL VISITS)

When people have access to enough nutritious food—that they select, that is culturally familiar to them, that meets their dietary needs—more doors open, and lives improve.

Meet Amalia, whose family loves the traditional Guatemalan recipes she makes with the meat, fresh vegetables and fruits they receive at their pantry. The family works in landscaping, but their income is not always enough to cover housing and utility bills.



Meet Anne, a caretaker by nature—currently, of her 15-year-old twins, including a daughter who has many health issues. Recently, she was also helping a sister battling cancer. Because of her own chronic health condition, Anne cannot drive and that makes it more difficult to take care of everyone. She's dependent upon other people's schedules and kindness to visit a local pantry.

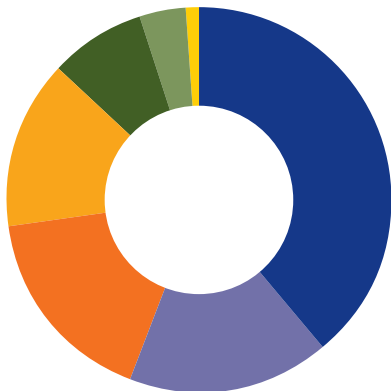


Thriving communities and well-being start with nourishing food. By supporting the Food Bank, you help elevate the entire community.



PRODUCE = 30% of food we distributed.

Sources of Food 2023



- Retail Grocer Donations **39%**
- USDA Contributions **17%**
- Purchased Food **17%**
- Donations from Farmers and Produce Traders **14%**
- Manufacturer Donations **8%**
- Miscellaneous **4%**
- Food Drives **1%**

NOTE: Miscellaneous includes transfers and trades with other food banks, prepared foods, and other misc. food.



WIN

Retail donations totaled **10.1 million pounds**—our highest ever.



CHALLENGE

We received **2.2 million pounds less than expected from The Emergency Food Assistance Program**, resulting in the purchase of more food at higher than anticipated costs.

Common Challenges Guests Face



Language barriers

Guests speak more than 50 languages



Lack of transportation

40% of guests report this barrier to getting help



Special dietary needs

Half of guest households report this need, for health reasons

We're working with our guests and partners to innovate solutions to improve access to nutritious food—for everyone, every day.

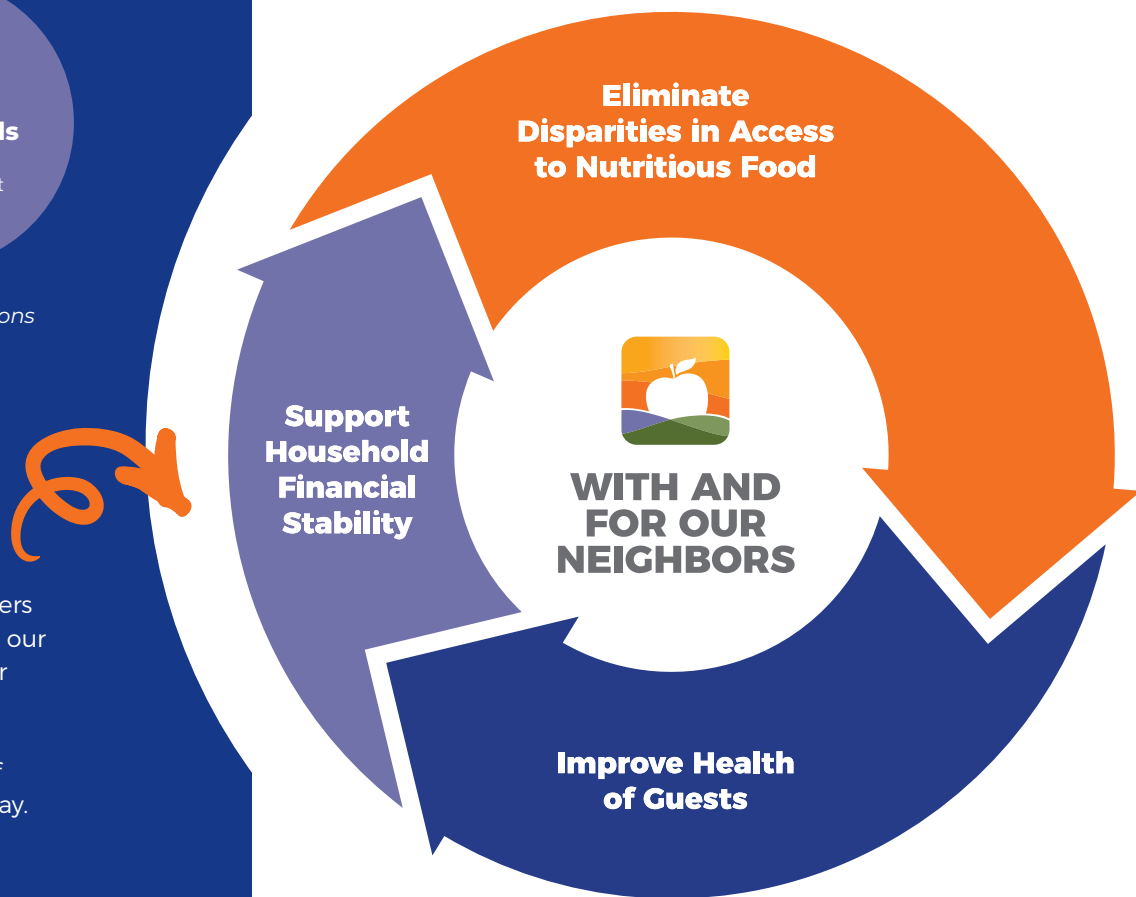
A Bold New Path

After listening to what our guests, neighbors, and partners told us was most important or difficult for them, we set our direction for the next five years. To learn more about our strategic direction, visit www.brafb.org/strategic-plan

Your continued support will help us realize our vision of nourishing food and good health—for everyone, every day.

Opportunities to stay involved

We are a *community* food bank, supported by you and here to serve. We need many hands and hearts to achieve our shared vision. If you're inspired, visit www.brafb.org/get-involved to find ideas that can help you make an impact locally.



THROUGH A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD BANK, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Financial Summary

Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2022 – Audited

Assets

Cash	\$	1,949,719
Receivables, net		726,438
Inventory		3,367,411
Prepaid and Other Current Assets		148,086
Investments, Short-Term		5,073,601
Investments, Long-Term		13,683,355
Property and Equipment, net		5,766,577
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	30,715,187

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities

Current liabilities	\$	522,503
Accrued payroll liabilities		450,299
Operating lease liabilities		1,213,992
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$	2,186,794

Net assets

Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	\$	14,122,264
Board designated, Operating reserve		2,725,600
Board designated, Capital reserve		3,936,256
Board designated, Long-Term Investments		5,873,932
Total unrestricted		26,658,052
With donor restrictions		1,870,341
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$	28,528,393
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	30,715,187



Revenue & Support

Revenue

● Agency handling & delivery fees 1%	\$	815,476
● Government grants 3%		1,821,138
● Investment earnings 1%		465,212
● Investments, realized & unrealized losses		(2,169,242)
● Other <1%		58,516

Support

● Donated food 75%	\$	43,764,035
● Contributions 20%		11,857,164

TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT \$ 56,612,299

Expenses

● Program services 95%	\$	55,680,608
● Fundraising 3%		1,881,642
● Management & General 2%		1,124,929

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 58,687,179

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS \$ (2,074,880)

Board of Directors 2023-2024

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CHAIR
Charlottesville, Virginia

DEBBIE METZ
VICE CHAIR
Staunton, Virginia

SHAVONE DUDLEY
SECRETARY
Associate Director of Employer Engagement and Recruiting, University of Virginia Darden School of Business

NICK PERRINE
IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
Partner, PBMares, LLP

DIEGO ANDERSON
Charlottesville, Virginia

KIM BLOSSER, EdD
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BOB DAVIS
Vice President, Mid-Atlantic Division, The Kroger Company

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Associate Professor, Communications Studies, Lynchburg College, and Director, Pierce Street Gateway, Lynchburg

CLINT MERRITT, MD
Chief Clinical Officer for Population Health, Augusta Health

JAMES PERKINS, PhD
President Emeritus, Blue Ridge Community College

CARL ROSBERG
CEO/Owner, CDR Investments LLC

MATT SORENSEN
Vice President, Quad-C Management, Inc.

MICHAEL MCKEE
Ex-Officio



NOTE: These audited FY22 financials include the value of donated and purchased food. Donated product on hand at year-end is valued at the national wholesale value of one pound of food as determined by the most recent study conducted by Feeding America. Food donations and distributions of donated product are recorded at the weighted average wholesale value in effect during the year. The change in net assets is the result of unrealized losses in the market value of long-term investments. The information in this summary was excerpted from our complete audited financial statements, which are available on our website and upon request.



Headquarters:
P.O. Box 937 | 96 Laurel Hill Road
Verona, VA 24482
P: 540.248.3663

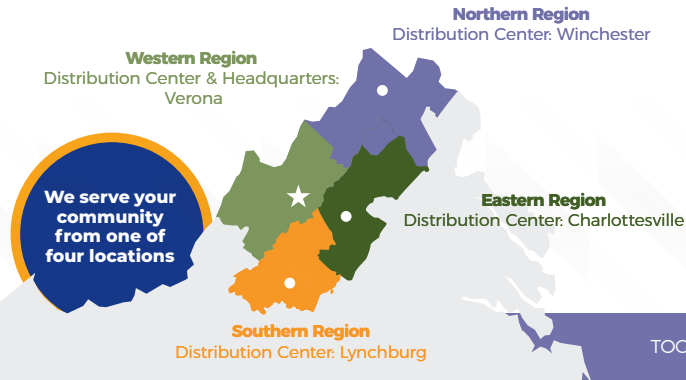


Blue Ridge Area FOOD BANK

Everyone should have enough to eat.



Headquarters:
P.O. Box 937 | Verona, VA 24482



TOGETHER. WE SET A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE IN THE BLUE RIDGE. THANK YOU.

NEW
Our **VISION** is nourishing food and good health—for everyone, every day.

Our **CORE BELIEFS** are that hunger is unacceptable, that everyone deserves access to enough food, that food sustains life and nourishes health, and that we are called to serve without judgment.

NEW
Our **MISSION** is to improve food security through equitable access to good nutrition and the resources that support health and well-being.

