

SPRING 2026



**Feed My People**  
FOOD BANK



# Hunger Herald



## Strengthening the Whole System

**We're shifting resources to better serve every corner of our region.**

*At Feed My People, our mission has always been clear: to feed our neighbors in need across West Central Wisconsin. What's changing isn't that commitment, but rather how we're living it out as needs shift across our 14-county region.*

While we've long served the full region, we're now sharpening our focus and directing resources more intentionally to close gaps and strengthen access to food across every community.

To understand this, it helps to step back and look at how our work is designed.

At our core, Feed My People is a food bank. That means we source, store, and distribute food in large quantities, working behind the scenes to supply a network of local partners. Those partners—food pantries, schools, shelters, and community organizations—are the ones directly serving neighbors every

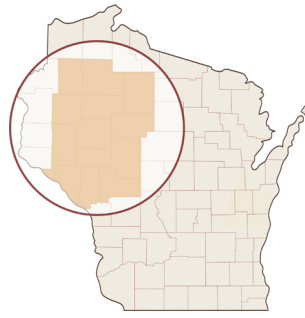
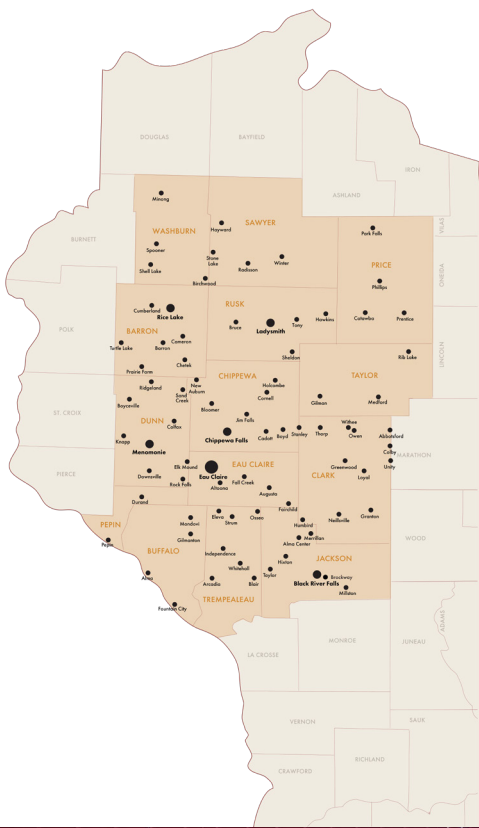
day. We call this our partnership network, and it's the backbone of hunger relief in our region.

Alongside that, we operate direct programs, including pop-up pantries and school-based efforts. These are designed to fill gaps, not replace our partners. When a community doesn't yet have enough resources, or something unexpected happens, we can step in quickly to make sure people aren't left without support.

And those gaps are real.

Last fall when two pantries unexpectedly closed in Taylor and Rusk counties, communities like Medford and Ladysmith felt the impact immediately. In Medford, we worked to support a community-led effort to reopen a pantry, now called Taylor County Food Pantry. In Ladysmith, we ran a temporary pop-up while a local partner expanded to meet the need.

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Across 15,000 square miles of West Central Wisconsin, Feed My People partners with 250+ local organizations to serve 14 rural counties.

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This past winter, we identified a need at Gateways, a transition school in Eau Claire without an existing food program. We stepped in with direct support.

More recently, the closure of Ruby's Pantries created another sudden gap. While they were not a partner of ours, as they operated under a different model, we recognized that when a consistent food resource in 11 locations in our region disappears overnight, the impact is real. Our team quickly connected with local leaders, organized temporary pop-up distributions where needed, and helped bridge the transition to longer-term solutions.

This is where our role as a regional food bank matters most. Because we're looking at the whole map, we can move resources, respond quickly, and support communities wherever the need is greatest.

That bigger-picture view is also what's guiding an important shift closer to our home base.

Over the past several years, our Eau Claire pop-up pantry has been a vital resource, especially during times of uncertainty. But today, we're seeing something encouraging: our local partners are strong, and with our increased support, they will be equipped and ready to lead.

Because of that, beginning in June, we'll scale back from four Eau Claire pop-up distributions each month to two, with plans to gradually wind down the regular schedule completely.

This shift isn't about doing less; rather, it's about focusing where we're needed most. As our Eau Claire partners continue leading distribution locally, we'll be able to reallocate food, funding, and staff capacity to not only help them but also come alongside communities where gaps still exist or are emerging.

Importantly, the pop-up model itself isn't going away. It remains one of our most vital tools, allowing us to respond quickly in times of disruption, emergency, or unexpected need. Pop-ups will continue in rural communities without enough immediate access to food resources. In times of emergency need, including in Eau Claire, we'll also be able to quickly roll out a pop-up to strengthen the total community response.

Change isn't always easy, especially when it involves programs people have come to rely on. But every decision we make is grounded in a simple goal: making sure that no matter where someone lives in our region, they have access to the support they needed.

Because in the end, this work is bigger than any one program. It's about building a system that's strong, connected, and ready for every neighbor, in every community.



It truly takes a community working together to make great things happen!

- Taylor County Food Pantry



Your gift powers hunger relief across our region. You make this work possible.

Give today and see the impact at [fmpfoodbank.org](http://fmpfoodbank.org).



We're grateful to Dunkin' Donuts! Their employees volunteer annually at Feed My People. Dunkin' Joy in Childhood has also provided funding towards our kids programs over the past three years.

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Some small interactions instantly convince us that our work to combat food insecurity is necessary and impactful.* A mischievous smile from a toddler lives rent-free in my mind from a time that I was loading groceries into the backseat of his dad's car. Another time, I connected a donated birthday cake to a mother who was panicked that she had nothing for her son's eighth birthday. Then there was the time I used a call-in translator, walking beside a Hmong elder as she shopped a pantry alone for the first time because her adult daughter was in the hospital.

Memories like these really stick with me and are easy reminders of the importance of this work. I am not alone in this, though. Thousands of people, in hundreds of critical programs in Feed My People's service area, have each had similar experiences. They are each similarly grateful that they were able to tell a neighbor, "I've got you," and make a difference.

When I transitioned from the work of providing a pantry to a community to the work of providing a food bank to communities throughout 20% of Wisconsin, I knew that I would miss these regular direct interactions with our neighbors.

There was another experience, however, that I brought with me from that work: the reassurance that I felt as a Feed My People truck backed up to our pantry door. I knew that the scale of work that we were able to accomplish in that pantry would not have been possible without Feed My People's partnership and dedicated mission.

In this experience, too, I am not alone. Thousands of people, in hundreds of critical programs in our area, also know the sound of a Feed My People truck backing up to provide food to their community. They know how crucial it is to have a reliable source of affordable, plentiful, and nutritious food. They know what it is like to be supported as they do the important work of supporting our neighbors.

As we work to be a stronger partner to communities across our region, meeting growing need with fewer barriers to quality food, I ask you to recognize how essential you are. Your hands, volunteering with Feed My People, may not place groceries directly into a father's car, but they prepare pallets and fill orders that make that moment possible. Your donations may not buy a single cart of groceries, but they fuel the trucks delivering thousands of pounds of food to multiple programs each day. And your voice, advocating for this work, helps ensure our neighbors can access nutritious food through FMP-supported programs every day. Already in 2026, those programs have provided food to our neighbors more than 300,000 times, and we're not even halfway through the year.

Thank you for your continued support. We truly cannot do it without you.

In gratitude,

Padraig Gallagher, Executive Director



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We're excited to expand opportunities in our Clean Room, now open Monday through Thursday, mornings and afternoons. In this hands-on role, volunteers help repackage bulk food into family-sized portions, a simple but impactful task that helps stretch resources and get more food to neighbors across our community. Individuals and groups are welcome.

If you're planning to bring a group of more than five people, please reach out ahead of time so we can help coordinate your visit. To coordinate your visit, contact Heather at [heather@fmpfoodbank.org](mailto:heather@fmpfoodbank.org).

### UPCOMING EVENT

#### Empty Bowls

Thursday, May 28

Various shifts 11 am–7 pm

Volunteer at our largest annual fundraiser, bringing the community together to fight hunger! Volunteer roles include parking assistance, registration, bowl sales, silent auction support, event set-up, and clean-up. Volunteers must be 16 or older. Individuals and groups are welcome.

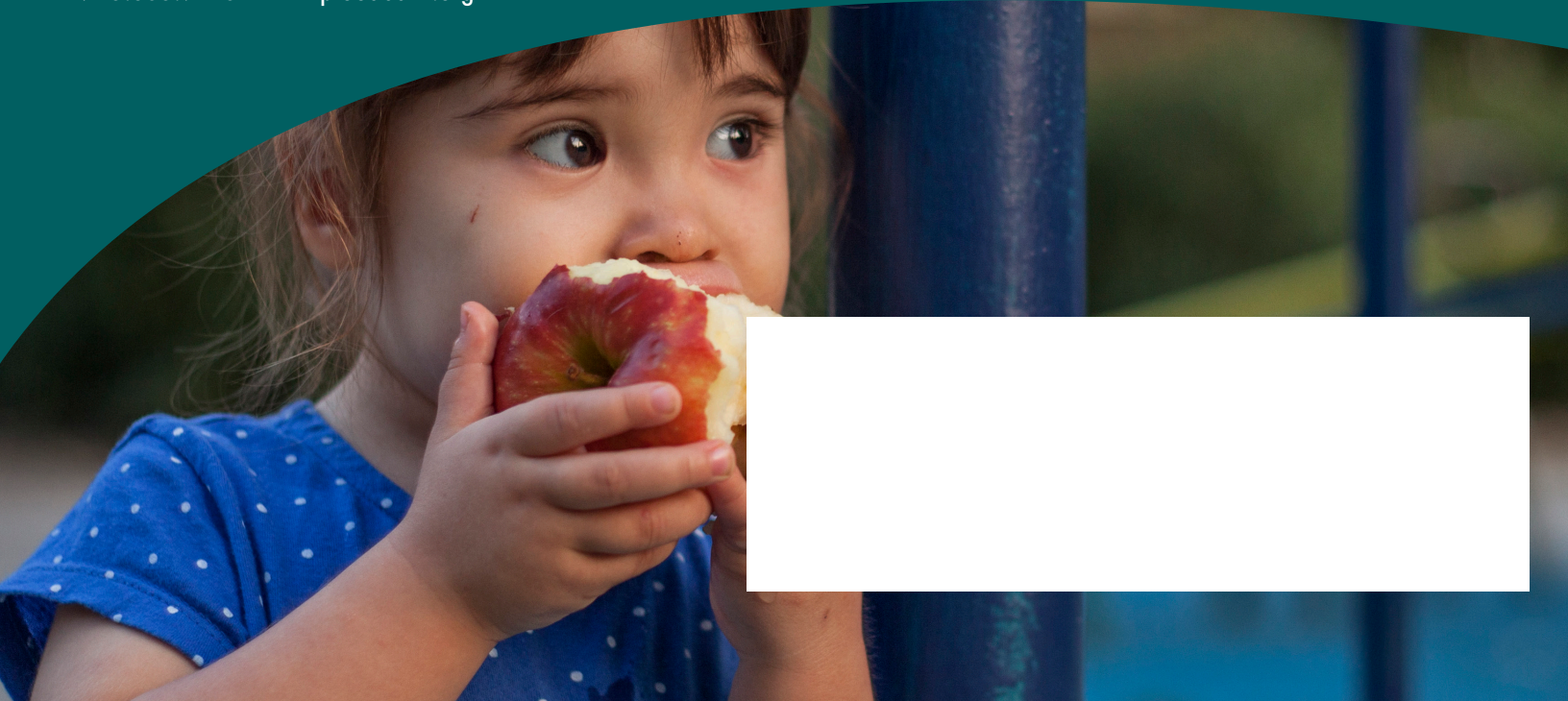
Sign up at [fmpfoodbank.org](http://fmpfoodbank.org)



**Feed My People**  
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**Reserve Your Tickets**  
[give.fmpfoodbank.org/  
EmptyBowls](http://give.fmpfoodbank.org/EmptyBowls)

\$25 for 1 Bowl & 1 Meal Ticket  
\$10 Bowl Only  
\$15 for 1 Meal Ticket

Each meal ticket includes 2 menu items of your choice.

# EMPTY BOWLS 2026

Where every bowl helps fill another.

**Thursday, May 28 at Feed My People**  
11 am-7 pm | 2610 Alpine Rd, Eau Claire

Come celebrate Empty Bowls with us! Feed My People's largest annual fundraiser brings hunger relief to thousands of our West Central Wisconsin neighbors.

- **Enjoy Food & Soup From a Variety of Food Trucks**
- **Select & Take Home a Handcrafted Bowl**, donated and made by local artists and students
- **Browse an Online and In-Person Silent Auction**, featuring artwork, experience packages & more
- **Tour the Food Bank**
- **Live Music & Games**



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