

## Feeding Brookings

## 2025 Annual Report

The current committee members are Michelle Nelson, Bill Alsaker, Roberta Olson, Tim Hayes, Sarah Dammen, Carley Landmark, and Jeremiah Bergstrom.

### Year in Review

Feeding Brookings continued its robust ministry efforts in 2025 working to serve those facing food insecurity in the Brookings community. In 2025, we served an average of 435 households each week. This is a 5% increase over 2024, when we served an average of 416 households each week. The increase in 2025 has definitely slowed from the growth seen in several previous years but demand for this ministry continues to remain strong.



*Donations from Bel Brands and food recovery items from local vendors including Starbucks and Kwik Star.*



We find Feeding Brookings on solid financial footing at the end of the year and heading into 2026. We have managed uncertainty and inconsistent access to food purchasing while absorbing a surge in guests in November. The committee's focus continues to be leveraging our funding and buying power to purchase staples that can supplement a family's weekly menu. Each week Feeding Brookings provides access to a gallon of milk, a dozen eggs along with frozen meat, protein items and pasta or rice. We purchase these items along with canned or dried fruit, canned vegetables, soup, bananas and more.

### 2025 Spotlight

Most important during this past year has been the generosity of local volunteers and businesses to help in food recovery efforts. Feeding Brookings has seen a tremendous increase in food recovery that supplements purchased food staples. Each week area volunteers and vendors work together to collect food items that would otherwise be

discarded. Committee member Tim Hayes coordinates with local food distribution organizations including the Food Pantry, Backpack Project, Jacks Cupboard, and Harvest Table to collect and direct recovered food items so that all those in need have access. Tim picks up food items on Wednesday directly from Kwik Star and also stops by the Food Pantry to pick up any additional donated items that the Pantry has not been able to distribute. Recovered food items come from Kwik Star, Walmart, and Aldi. On Thursdays, a Feeding Brookings volunteer drives a moving truck donated by Best Choice Real Estate to collect additional donations from Walmart and Aldi.



*Bread and Baked Goods recovered from Hy Vee and Kwik Star*

Volunteer Jill Dahl has been coordinating food recovery at Hy Vee for over a year now. After learning that recovery was happening at Hy Vee only 3 days a week and that on the other 4 days leftover bread and baked goods were being thrown out, Jill began to collect items and store them for distribution on Thursdays. Now she and five additional volunteers pick up food on Saturdays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays to be shared with guests during the weekly distribution (while the Food Pantry and Harvest Table pick up donations on other days). This requires a tremendous effort and commitment with the volunteers struggling to find suitable storage and often having to handle food multiple times.

The work of Tim, Jill and these dedicated volunteers is only a part of the story; we also have volunteers collecting donations each week from Bel Brands, Insomnia Cookies, Starbucks, and KFC. Again, the generosity of our volunteers and our community is what keeps this ministry alive.

Another important achievement surrounds the Thanksgiving distribution which is the largest event for Feeding Brookings each year. This year the event was held on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. Different from past years, this year we coordinated the purchase and distribution of Thanksgiving meal kits with community partners. We were able to leverage our financial and volunteer resources with partners from The Boys & Girls Club, Jacks Cupboard, and The Food Pantry to purchase 750 meal kits for the Brookings community. All food for the meal kits was delivered to Ascension Lutheran Church by Feeding South Dakota and the organizations worked together to distribute and direct the food to families in need. It was a tremendous success with over 600 families receiving Thanksgiving meals at the Feeding

Brookings distribution, 75 families from Jacks Cupboard, 25 families from the Food Pantry, and 50 additional families from The Boys and Girls Club.

**Thanksgiving 2025 Distribution included:**

12,000 lbs of fresh produce (potatoes, carrots, and apples)

2,190 lbs of dry goods (gravy mix, green beans, stuffing, etc.)

750 frozen turkeys

750 pies

750 packages of dinner rolls

Butter, milk, and more!



**Budget and Financials**

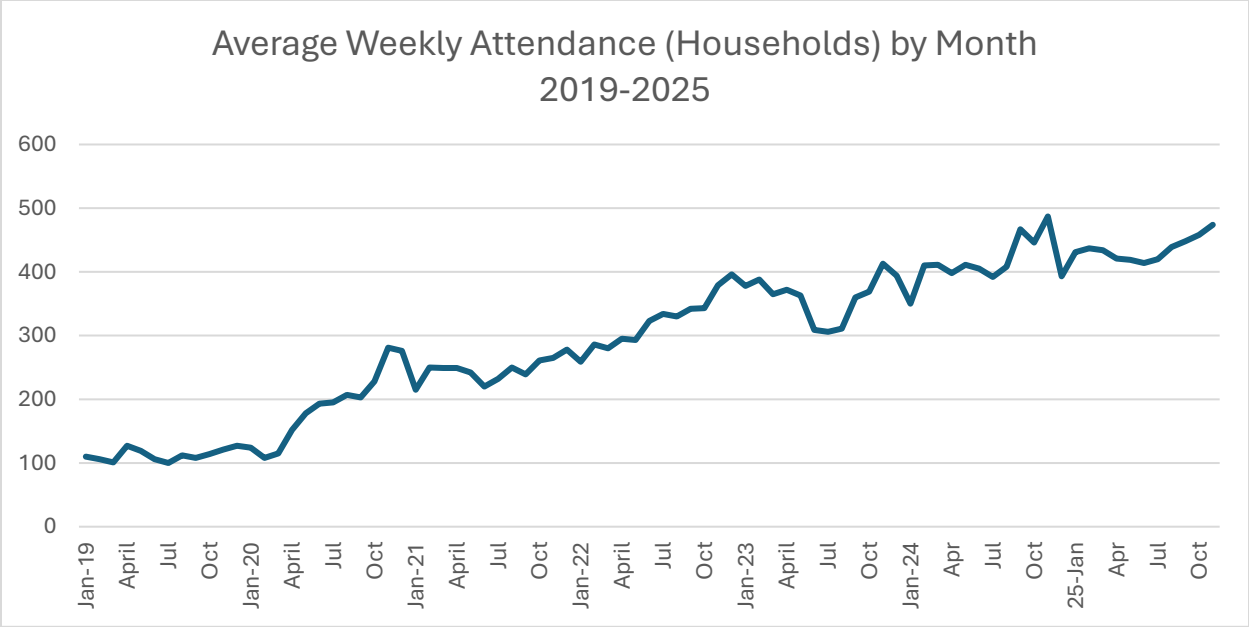
The following numbers are based on the November 2025 financial report (latest numbers available at the time of this report):

Starting Balance (January 1, 2025	\$ 61,141.86
Income in 2025 (January – November)	\$ 144,680.54
Total Expenses (January – November)	\$135,199.26
Available Balance (November 30, 2025)	\$ 70,623.14

This year we have worked to manage costs, while minimizing equipment purchases. We have been successful in staying within our 2024 projected budget of nearly \$200,000. In 2026, we are anticipating expenses of approximately \$153,000 and are projecting a budget of \$220,000 to keep pace with our current levels of effort while anticipating another 5-10% increase in guests participating in the weekly distribution.

**Numbers Served**

For the year Feeding Brookings served an average of 435 households each week. This is a 5% increase over 2024, when we served an average of 416 households each week. For a snapshot, In October 2025 these households each week consisted of approximately 365 children, 560 adults, and 218 seniors. In total over 5,000 individuals were served throughout the month of October. The increase in 2025 has definitely slowed from the growth seen in several previous years but demand for this ministry continues to remain strong.



*Feeding Brookings 2025*

**Looking Ahead**

There continues to be a number of challenges and opportunities ahead for the Feeding Brookings Ministry. We continue to struggle to utilize the physical space and resources we have to meet this vibrant outreach ministry. Uncertainty will continue to play a role in determining how we can best meet the needs of those facing food insecurity in our community. Food prices continue to rise. In 2025, food prices rose again by approximately 3.3% and no relief is in sight. With that being said, if we can continue to find dedicated volunteers and collaborate with our local partners, food recovery efforts should continue to grow as the new Aldi, Target, and a second Kwik Star come online in 2026. These entities have been strong supporters of food recovery efforts in communities throughout the region and we hope to be able to work with them in the coming year to meet the needs of those facing hunger and food insecurity in our community.

Again, we thank the congregation for their generous support of Feeding Brookings. We are always looking for volunteers to help in a variety of ways. Please consider contacting a committee member to learn more about the needs of the ministry and how you can help serve our neighbors in need.