



Together,  
We Are Making  
a Difference.





# As I reflect on 2025...

I can honestly say that it was a year of joy, change, and growth through challenges that brought on new opportunities. Though some changes have been hard, it has been a blessing to see how God works all things for His Glory.

As many may or may not know, one of our own, Mrs. Pam Edmond, who has served our community through the Help Center for over 10 years, had to take a leave of absence due to the extended illness and loss of her husband, and now, as she presses forward through her own health recovery. We do ask for your continued prayers for her and her family and look forward to her return in God's timing. The foundation that she has helped to build will continue to be a foundation upon which our programs will continue to grow.

We have seen our team change and grow in ways that not only continued moving us forward but also looked at better ways to serve our community with dignity, respect, and compassion. We have seen the changes in those that we serve extend to a larger group of the "working poor" as the cost of living far exceeded the rise in pay. We have seen our community continue to help us fill the need through your continued support, despite many of you navigating your own challenges.

We have been able to serve our neighbors in countless ways through our food bank, helping with living expenses through our financial assistance program, and so much more. Month after month, we have been able to meet real needs that could have caused lasting impacts on our neighbors. Then we had the blessing of closing out the year by providing food for Thanksgiving and gifts to those who needed a little extra hope at Christmas.

As always, none of this would have been possible without your support. Together, we were able to put God's love into action in ways that matter.

As we move forward to 2026, I'm excited about all the ways we will continue to serve our neighbors. If you'd like to know more about what we do, please feel free to stop by, call or email me. I would love to connect with you. Thank you for being a part of our mission and helping us make Dickson County a stronger, more caring community. **Together, we are making a difference.**

**Renee Boehm**  
Executive Director  
Dickson County Help Center





# Offering **Hope**, Extending **Compassion**, and Providing **Dignity**

At the Dickson County Help Center, we believe no one should have to face a crisis alone. In 2025, as in every year, most people did not come to us because they planned to. *Something happened*, and they were trying to figure out what came next. We have long been a steady place in this community during those moments, offering practical help while treating people with care and respect. At the center of that work is our faith and a commitment to reflect the **love of Christ**, especially when circumstances are hard.

People come to the Help Center in many ways. Some walk through our thrift store doors looking for affordable items or a familiar place to shop. Others come as donors, volunteers, or during a hard moment when help with food or basic expenses is needed. *Those roles are not fixed.*

Someone who needs help one year may return as a volunteer the next. A donor or volunteer may one day need support themselves. *Because of that, every interaction matters.* How someone is treated here stays with them, and we welcome every person who comes through our doors with dignity and intention.

**As Dickson County has grown and changed, our work has grown with it.** The needs we see now are often more complicated and rarely come neatly packaged.

Much of what we do focuses on immediate needs, but it is seldom just one thing. A visit that begins with food support may uncover another barrier that needs attention. *We are not here to solve everything at once.* Most often, our role is to steady the situation, take care of what can be handled right now, and help someone regain their footing so they can move forward. Our team works thoughtfully, guided by faith, and takes time to listen. People are not rushed or reduced to forms or checklists.

The pages that follow show why this work matters, the scope of what we are able to do together, and the people at the heart of it. We are grateful for the community that supports this work and for the many hands and feet that make it possible. *By God's grace, we are making a difference together* in ways that reach farther than most will ever know.



# Feeding our **Neighbors**

## OUR FOOD BANK

When someone reaches out for food, they are usually already carrying more than they expected: a job loss, a medical bill, a family emergency. We try to make sure that asking for help is not one more hard thing they have to get through.

Families call or stop by between 9 AM and noon, and by that afternoon, they are loading groceries into their car. That kind of same-day response did not happen by accident. It took rethinking how we do things.

This year, **we brought on Nick Dugan as our Food Logistics Manager**. Nick looked at every part of the process, from how donations come in to how carts go out. He leads staff, regular volunteers, and trustees from the Dickson County Sheriff's Department, all showing up every day to keep things moving. ***Under his leadership, we went from serving 20 families a day to 40 on a regular day***, and on our first day back after the holidays, we served 60. The need has grown, and so has our ability to meet it.

Each cart is valued at around \$150, sometimes more depending on family size or dietary needs, and every box holds four to six days worth of food. This year through our daily food bank operations, we served **3,822 individuals** within **1,448 families** across **3,763 instances** of food assistance. **540 households** even came to us for the **first time**. These are neighbors who had always found a way until something changed. They came to us, and we were able to say yes.

Click [HERE](#) or Scan the QR Code to See our Food Bank Team in Action!

## WHEN THE NEED GREW OVERNIGHT

On October 24, Tennessee announced a temporary suspension of federal SNAP benefits during a government shutdown. The impact was immediate. Daily food *assistance requests increased from an average of 20 to 25 households to more than 40* and remained elevated through mid-November. This surge also came during the fall season, when the community was already collecting food in preparation for the Turkey Giveaway.

We are grateful for a community that responded generously when the need increased. Even as food was already being collected, neighbors gave more. Shelves stayed stocked, and we did not turn anyone away.







## BEYOND OUR WALLS

Every second Saturday of the month, Mobile Food Pantries provide food access to families across Dickson County. Held at rotating locations, these drive-through distributions offer fresh produce, proteins, and pantry staples with no appointments or paperwork required.

Over the course of 2025, Mobile Food Pantries served **3,603 families** across the county. Each event reaches hundreds of households in a single morning and is made possible through partnerships with Second Harvest Food Bank, local sponsors, and volunteers who help move food quickly and efficiently.

These food giveaways remain one of the most visible ways our community responds to immediate food needs beyond our building.



## A PART OF THE TEAM

At every food giveaway, our Executive Director Renee says the same thing: *The only difference between me and these guys is, they got caught.*

She is talking about the trustees from the Dickson County Sheriff's Office. These men are currently incarcerated, but they have become part of our team. They keep our food bank stocked, show up at mobile pantries, and pitch in at events like Thanksgiving, where they helped hand out more than 1,500 meals. They set up for our annual banquet, help prepare the Christmas Store, and even repainted the historic tunnel for Give 'N Gobble.

They are willing and faithful, and there is no better feeling than running into one of them later, free, in a checkout line with their kids.

## FEEDING KIDS THROUGH THE WEEKEND

In Dickson County, nearly half of all students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. For many, school meals are their most reliable source of nutrition. When the school week ends, access to food often becomes uncertain. Our Backpack Food Program helps bridge that gap.

In partnership with Dickson County Coordinated School Health and White Bluff Church of Christ, we provide shelf-stable, child-friendly food weekly during the school year. Teachers, counselors, and school nurses identify students who would benefit, and food is distributed discreetly by school staff. In 2025, **approximately 350 students** received weekend meals, returning to school on Monday nourished and ready to learn.





# The **Light** and **Love** of **Christ** for our Community.

## MORE THAN PAYING BILLS

When someone walks through our doors, they usually start with one thing: a shutoff notice, a request for food, an impending eviction. That one thing often reveals layers underneath. A job loss led to a missed rent payment. A medical emergency drained the savings. *What looks like a single problem is often several, stacked on top of each other.*

Our Assistance Office exists to meet people in those moments. We ask questions, listen carefully, and look for meaningful solutions, not just quick fixes. We do not hand out checks. Payments go directly to landlords, utility companies, mortgage holders, and pharmacies, and every dollar is tracked so we can be responsible stewards of what our community has entrusted to us.

This year, we welcomed **Christie Arnold as our Client Services Manager**. Many in Dickson County will recognize Christie from her time as Executive Director of our area's CASA. She comes with deep roots in human services and a commitment to continuing the legacy of meeting clients where they are. *As demand for assistance has grown, so has her team.* Each of them brings experience in human services or emergency response, and each has their own story. They have been in an "oh no" moment too, and that allows them to meet our clients with compassion.

We have also reopened our assistance lobby this year, giving families a dignified space to have hard conversations with our team. And through Christie's connections, we are continuing to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones, helping us connect people to the right resources as quickly as possible.



## A **STRONG** START

Getting ready for a new school year can be stressful, especially for families with limited resources. To ease this burden, we participated in the *Back to School Bash* in July.

In partnership with 101.5 The Ride & WDKN, The Greater Dickson Gas Authority, and Zochem LLC, we provided school supplies to hundreds of students. Families gathered at the fairgrounds to pick up the items their children needed and learn about other local resources available to them throughout the year.



This year, we provided **\$124,375** in financial assistance to **688 households**, including **\$42,788 in rent and mortgage assistance**, **\$53,840 in utility assistance**, and **\$27,747 in other support**, including medical assistance.

For many families, that single intervention kept them from losing everything.





# Neighbors **Helping** Neighbors.

## **BREAKING THE BENEFITS CLIFF**

The Dickson County Help Center participates in Our ChanceTN, an initiative that helps caregivers overcome the “benefits cliff,” the sudden loss of public assistance that can come with even a small increase in earnings. Through coaching and financial counseling, we help families increase income and transition into the workforce with confidence.

Currently, **25 families** are enrolled and receiving support to address barriers like childcare, transportation, rent, and education. Several participants have enrolled in college courses to further their careers, and our Family Centered Coaches have extended support to families in neighboring counties as well. These caregivers are building toward long-term stability, and we are proud to walk alongside them. To learn more, visit [www.ourchancetn.org](http://www.ourchancetn.org).

## **WHEN DISASTER STRIKES**

When a family loses everything to a fire, a flood, or a storm, they need help immediately. That is why we keep restricted funds set aside for emergencies and maintain partnerships with organizations like the American Red Cross, EMA, and the Humane Society of Dickson County. When the call comes, we can act.

**In April, an unexpected weather event displaced four families from an apartment complex in Dickson.**

Within the hour, we met EMA and the Red Cross at the Dickson County Family YMCA to coordinate a response. The Y did not become a shelter in this case, so while we let the Red Cross take the lead, we stepped in with hotel rooms for the families over the following several nights. Nearly all of them had pets, so through the Humane Society, we provided food and crates so the animals could stay with their families.

In the days that followed, our team helped recover undamaged belongings and move families into new units within the same complex. We also provided gift cards to Walmart and Lowe’s so they could purchase tarps, toiletries, clothing, and everyday items. It is one of the few times we give anything with a dollar amount directly to clients, but disasters call for a different kind of response.

Whatever the crisis, we are here to help families get back on their feet as quickly as possible.







# Find **Amazing Deals** and Help **Neighbors.**




## SHOPPING WITH PURPOSE

*Probably the most visible growth in 2025 has been in our thrift store.* Every item sold helps fund our assistance programs, and every voucher we issue through our Assistance Office gives a client access to what they need with dignity. That is why we only accept the best. We have a saying: ***if we would not give it to Jesus, we will not give it to you.***

At the beginning of the year, **we promoted Cindy Smith from Volunteer Coordinator to Thrift Store Manager,** and in just nine months she led a significant transformation. The store relaunched with refreshed branding, updated signage, and a more functional layout designed to better serve our shoppers. As a result, **sales increased 33 percent** compared to the previous year, and transactions grew by 19 percent, totaling nearly 44,000 purchases.

Our volunteer pool in the hanging and sorting areas is regrowing as well, after being significantly reduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

And for the first time ever, we won the **Main Street Award** for Dickson County for Best Thrift & Consignment Store!



On the sales floor, our cashiers and stockers have become familiar faces to shoppers. The Thursday half-off crew knows customers by name and takes the extra time to chat and be intentional. People do not just come in to find a deal. They come in because they enjoy being here. Our team understands that our customers love the thrill of the hunt, so we've introduced more sale days and up-to-the-minute flash sales on certain items. A surprise deal or a big-ticket find on the floor keeps people coming back.

***Check our social media for sales announcements, or just stop by. You never know what you might find!***

If you're interested in volunteering, reach out to Cindy by calling **615-441-0076**, filling out an application in person or emailing her at **[cindy@dchelpcenter.org](mailto:cindy@dchelpcenter.org)**.





## EVERY ITEM MAKES A DIFFERENCE

This year, our Facilities Manager **Jeff Jefferson** took on the **additional responsibility of overseeing the Donation Center**. He leads a team of expert sorters and pricers, each with their own specialty area. By dividing responsibilities between the thrift store and the donation center, we have seen *faster processing times, fuller shelves, and a more consistent flow of quality items* to the sales floor.

### DON'T MISS OUR WEEKLY SPECIALS!

Senior Citizens & Veterans receive 20% OFF every Saturday (some exclusions apply)

50% OFF SALE every Thursday and Second Saturday (some exclusions apply)

### THRIFT STORE HOURS

Monday - Saturday: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Thursday: 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday: Closed

### DONATION CENTER HOURS

Mon - Sat: 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

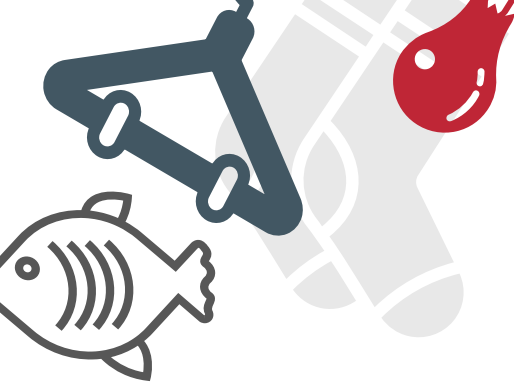
At the donation door on South Mulberry Street, volunteers and staff greet every donor with a smile. For many in our community, this is their first interaction with us, and we want that moment to reflect who we are and what we represent.

We are grateful for every donation that comes through our doors. Not everything can make it to the floor, but that does not mean it goes to waste. Under Jeff's leadership, we upgraded our recycling program to generate additional income from items that are not quite right for our customers or clients. Everything that comes through our door, unless it is truly garbage, will benefit our neighbors in need.

Click [HERE](#) or Scan the QR code to see our thrift store & donation center team in action!







# Hope for the Holidays...

The holidays can be the reason a family falls behind. A parent stretches to make Thanksgiving and Christmas happen, and by January the bills have stacked up. Our Hope for the Holidays programs exist to prevent that.

Our food bank and assistance programs are responsive. They meet families in the middle of a crisis. *Our Hope for the Holidays programs are preventative.* They meet families before one begins.

Starting in October, our staff and volunteers shift into high gear. It is the busiest time of year, and every program creates an opportunity for the community to serve alongside us.



## BIG TURKEY GIVEAWAY

A parent will wait in line for hours if it means their family gets to sit down to a real Thanksgiving meal.

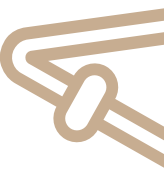
Through the Big Turkey Giveaway, we provide whole turkeys and all the ingredients to make it happen, giving families the dignity of cooking for the people they love. This year, we served **1,507 families** in just two days, with over 1,000 served on the first day alone. On the day before Thanksgiving, Topless in Tennessee Jeep Club deep fried turkeys for recipients at the fairgrounds, giving some families a hot meal ready to take home.

The logistics require weeks of preparation. Bags are pre-packaged by church groups, banks, businesses, Girl Scout troops, and youth groups. Community members run independent food drives to ensure we have enough. Frozen turkeys are stored in a refrigerated truck donated by generous partners.

*This year, all of that happened during the same period SNAP benefits were cut, making the need even greater.*

Hundreds of volunteers, along with the Dickson Police Department and the Sheriff's Department, kept the line moving smoothly.

We joke that we hope people can excuse the traffic on Highway 46 near the YMCA, but *that traffic represents over a thousand families* going home with a homemade holiday meal.







## ...from **Thanksgiving...**

### **GIVE 'N GOBBLE 5K**

What started as an idea from a local running club has become *one of the largest races in Middle Tennessee*. In 2014, members of the Prize Runners approached us about hosting a Thanksgiving Day 5K. Eleven years later, the Give 'N Gobble draws nearly 1,800 runners to Main Street on Thanksgiving morning.

This year's theme was **love**, and you could feel it everywhere. All of Main Street was painted with banners in November leading up to the event. The drumlines from Dickson County High School and Creek Wood High School set the energy. The DCHS dance team and cheerleading squads from across the district lined the route. Our official mascot, Jake Turkee, who had made his way through the community in the months leading up to the event, buckdanced at the start line. And before the race began, David Baggett led a moment of worship, grounding the whole morning in gratitude.

In the beautiful chilly weather, **1,762 runners** and **198 volunteers** gathered on Main Street and throughout downtown Dickson. **Together, we raised \$103,000.**

Through the event, *we also raised funds for the Humane Society of Dickson County*, strengthening a partnership that has become important to both organizations.

The dollars raised through the race are unrestricted and help cover operating expenses at the beginning of the year, when giving slows down but need does not. In the first six weeks of 2025 alone, \$53,000 went directly to rent, utility, mortgage, and financial assistance. That is how crucial these funds are.

*The race would not be possible without our partnership with the City of Dickson*, which was especially close this year, along with the City of Dickson Police Department, the Dickson County Sheriff's Department, and a grant from the Jackson Foundation for safety equipment. Neighborhoods along the route came out to cheer runners on, turning the whole morning into something that felt less like a race and more like a celebration.

Click [HERE](#) or Scan the QR Code to See Race Day in Action!





# ...To Christmas

## THE GIFT OF GIVING

After Thanksgiving, the focus shifts. The Turkey Giveaway wraps up, the Give 'N Gobble runners go home to their families, and our attention turns to the program many of us consider the most meaningful work we do all year.

For five years, we have welcomed parents and caregivers into the Christmas Store to **shop at no cost for brand-new toys for their children** to open on Christmas morning. Parents know what their kids want better than anyone, and as far as the children know, the gifts are from them. We do not want to spoil Santa, or however each family chooses to celebrate. The goal is simple: to give families a sense of normalcy during a season that can otherwise feel heavy and uncertain.

Our Executive Director, Renee, knows that weight personally. As a young mother, she could not always provide Christmas for her own children. That lived experience shaped this program from the beginning and continues to guide how we serve families today.

Because of that, the Christmas Store is built around one core idea: **we give parents the gift of giving**. Asking for help is hard, especially during the holidays, and every detail of the experience is designed to preserve dignity. Families are welcomed into a space that is warm and intentional, not rushed or transactional. Parents choose gifts themselves, knowing they are the ones providing something special for their children.

The store operates on an appointment-based model, welcoming five to six families every 30 minutes to keep the experience calm and personal. Volunteer shopping elves walk alongside each family to help them build a full sleigh for each child: **four gifts, one wow gift worth \$100 or more, stocking stuffers, new clothing, books, and a board game for the family to enjoy together**. After shopping, caregivers can visit the wrapping station where volunteers wrap each gift beautifully, or they can take their gifts home to wrap themselves. For those families, we provide wrapping paper so they can still have that moment. It takes **92 volunteers per day** to make the Christmas Store possible.

When parents are given the space to provide for their children with dignity, the impact is measurable. This year **1,309 children** received brand-new gifts through the Christmas Store, and over **525 families** were able to experience Christmas with joy, dignity, and hope.





# A PLACE OF HOPE

A large part of our work would not be possible without our partnership with the Dickson County Family YMCA, their Board of Directors, and their members. Through the support of their membership and our shared commitment to the community, the YMCA provides space at no cost for some of our most essential programs. Because of that partnership, we are able to host Mobile Food Pantries, the Big Turkey Giveaway, the Christmas Store, and countless trainings and meetings throughout the year. The YMCA is more than a gym. It is a place of hope that opens its doors to serve our community in ways most people will never see.

***That partnership carries special meaning in this space.*** The building that now houses the YMCA was once a Kmart, and the Christmas Store operates in what used to be the layaway stockroom. As a young mother, Renee stood in this exact room, putting toys on layaway and making small payments when she could. Sometimes she had to cancel the layaway just to keep food on the table or the lights on. She did not realize it until last year, but her own children's gifts once waited in this room.

The Christmas Store began here more than 30 years ago. Today, because of the YMCA's partnership and a community willing to step in for one another, ***this room now tells a very different story.***



## FILLING THE SLEIGH

***The Christmas Store does not fill itself.*** Giving every child the same experience takes thousands of toys and planning that starts long before December. This year, meeting the growing need meant starting earlier and being more intentional about how toys were collected.

When **Bargain Hunt** and **Big Lots** closed their Dickson locations in February, they reached out to us. During their liquidation periods, both stores set up collection boxes, turning a difficult moment into a way to support local families. ***Bargain Hunt also donated remaining inventory*** and sold us racks, shopping carts, and retail equipment at discounted rates, improving the layout and flow of the Christmas Store.

That early start carried through the summer with **Christmas in July**, launched by our summer intern, **Lillie Harris**. The month-long drive included drop-off locations across the county and a Shop and Share event at the Dickson Walmart. Several local businesses and churches helped collect new, unwrapped toys, giving us a strong start heading into the fall.

Finding meaningful wow gifts for teens is always a challenge, so Lillie went straight to the source. She asked local high school students what they actually wanted. The answer was clear: **shoes**. Through a connection with **Soles4Souls**, that answer led to an entire pallet of new, high-end name-brand shoes. We ended the Christmas Store with just two pairs remaining.

**Kringle's Kids** remains the backbone of the Christmas Store. This year's drive included Shop and Share events and downtown collections, supported by local media, businesses, and the City of Dickson Police Department. ***Zochem donated \$40,000 early***, allowing us to take advantage of Black Friday sales. At one point, our administrative office suite was packed wall to wall with Power Wheels, Barbie Dream Houses, trampolines, and TVs. Additional gifts from our sister agency, GraceWorks, helped ensure every child had a wow gift waiting.

Because of this community, every toy collected and every dollar given helped create a Christmas morning where ***no child in Dickson County was forgotten.***







# How **You** can **Help** your Neighbors.

## GIVE FINANCIALLY

The Dickson County Help Center is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax-deductible. Your generosity helps provide food, utilities, and essential services to neighbors in need. We value transparency, and you can review our financials at [www.givingmatters.com](http://www.givingmatters.com). You can give online by scanning the QR code or visiting our website. We also accept checks and cash by mail or in person at our Downtown Dickson office. Every dollar makes a difference!


## GIVE ITEMS

You can support our mission by donating gently used, unsoiled clothing, household items, and furniture to our Thrift Store. These donations help fund our programs and provide affordable goods to the community. Items can be dropped off at our location on N Mulberry Street.

## GIVE FOOD

Help keep our food pantry stocked by donating at our Donation Center or in the collection bins at Kroger in Dickson. If you'd like to organize a food drive, call or email us. We can provide donation barrels if they are available.

## GIVE TIME



Volunteers are essential to everything we do! Whether sorting donations, stocking shelves, helping at events, or assisting in our Thrift Store, your time makes a direct impact. No matter your skills or availability, there's a way for you to help.

## 2025 BY THE NUMBERS:

### *Resources Used to Help Our Neighbors*

Food .....	\$562,185*
End of Month Food Delivery .....	\$108,000*
Mobile Food Pantries .....	\$42,000
Thanksgiving .....	\$150,700*
Christmas Store .....	\$458,150*
Clothing & Household .....	\$8,982*
Hygiene Products .....	\$75,260*
Emergency Relief .....	\$2,463
Lodging/Homeless Aid .....	\$6,178*
Home Repair .....	\$1,140
Rent/Mortgage .....	\$42,788
Utilities .....	\$54,166
Medical .....	\$5,883*
Back Pack Food Program .....	\$35,717
Gas/Transportation .....	\$881*
Miscellaneous .....	\$8,198*

*\*Includes In-Kind  
Donated Items &  
Resources*



Make an **Impact**  
Donate [HERE](#)



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[www.dicksoncountyhelpcenter.org](http://www.dicksoncountyhelpcenter.org)

