



The Helping Center of Marble Falls Area, Inc.

February 15, 2024

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

HELPING CENTER ANNOUNCES “ECLIPSE HUNGER” CAMPAIGN

On April 8, Central Texas will witness a total solar eclipse when the Moon will block the light of the Sun entirely from our view. At the same time, The Helping Center plans to do its part to eclipse hunger in our community. In an effort to do just that, THC wishes to announce its “ECLIPSE Hunger” campaign.

Since opening its new facility just three years ago, The Helping Center has experienced a significant increase in requests for food assistance with family visits increasing from 450 per month to over 2,400 per month. Board President Paul King noted, “the greatest cause of this increased demand is the inflation we have experienced in recent years. We are seeing many new clients, especially seniors or disabled individuals living on fixed incomes, who are visiting a food pantry for the first time in their lives.” King continued, “Although we allow families to visit on a weekly basis, the average family comes in for assistance only once a month. It is also interesting to understand the duration of a client’s relationship with us. The large majority of our clients – about 80% - receive assistance for a period of less than 3 years. This indicates that we are fulfilling our mission and acting as a bridge of support and encouragement to help people through their time of need. Clients are seeking only the level of help they need for the period of time they need it. Once they are back on their feet, we see our clients go on to become contributors in our community.”

The Helping Center is sponsored by ten local churches and is supported by area businesses, civic groups, and private citizens. Executive Director Sam Pearce stated, “during this time of growing demand, the amount and cost of food we are purchasing to support our clients has increased dramatically. Supply chain disruptions and inflation have had a significant impact on our operations. We have gone from feeding a family of three for a week for \$7 to the current level of \$13.50. We have been well supported by our community in the past, with 96% of all donations going directly to our clients. We are committed to planning ahead so we can continue to meet the demand. A part of that planning is the launching of our “ECLIPSE Hunger” campaign.”

Beginning March 8th and extending through Eclipse Day on April 8th, The Helping Center will accept donations in direct support of food purchases. Those interested in contributing may do so through the “ECLIPSE Hunger” button found on The Helping Center website: www.helpingcenter.org. Alternatively, checks may be dropped off at 1016 Broadway, Marble Falls or mailed to P. O. Box 402, Marble Falls, Texas 78654.

The Helping Center is a registered 501(C)3 organization. It served families nearly 25,000 times in 2023 distributing over 1 Million pounds of food.