

— CELEBRATING —

25 YEARS
OF MINISTRY

— REAL LIFE CENTER —

Real help. Real hope.

A Mission of Dogwood Church

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



THE MISSION OF THE REAL LIFE
CENTER IS TO WALK WITH THOSE
WHO ARE HURTING IN FAYETTE
AND COWETA COUNTIES BY
PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT,
SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST,
AND PROMOTING
LONG-TERM CHANGE.

A note

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Supporters:

What does a quarter mean to you? For us at the Real Life Center, it represents 25 years of ministering to those in need and bringing hope to our community. In 2024, we celebrated this incredible milestone - a quarter-century of assisting individuals facing food insecurity, needing financial assistance to remain in their homes, or clothing to keep warm, along with addressing many other challenges faced in their day-to-day lives.

As we reflect on this journey, we invite you to join us in remembering and celebrating the moments that led us to today. This anniversary is a testament to God's enduring love and grace, which sustains this ministry and allows us to extend real hope and real help to those in need.

From our humble beginnings distributing bread, we've grown to provide over 21,000 services annually. This growth points to the importance of prayer and the faithfulness of a promise made to bless this ministry. There's probably nothing that God enjoys more than keeping his promises. He continues to honor that promise, answering prayers and opening doors for us to serve even more people.

Thank you for giving your time, treasures, and talents to make our work at the Real Life Center possible. As we cast the vision, our staff, volunteers, church partners, and community members step forward in faith to bring it to life. Together, we are making a lasting impact and helping our clients become stable in their households.

It has been said that when we pray regularly, irregular things happen on a regular basis. Thank you for standing with us in prayer and support!

**"I pray to you, O God, because you answer me; so turn to me and listen to my words."
Psalm 17:6 (GNT)**

Greg

Greg Georgianni
Executive Director



Stay up-to-date! Scan here to sign up for our monthly newsletter:



Looking Back: 25 YEARS OF MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY



160,000

client visits across all
programs and services



8.0 million

pounds of food distributed



127,395

pounds of produce from
the Real Life Center
Orchard & Garden

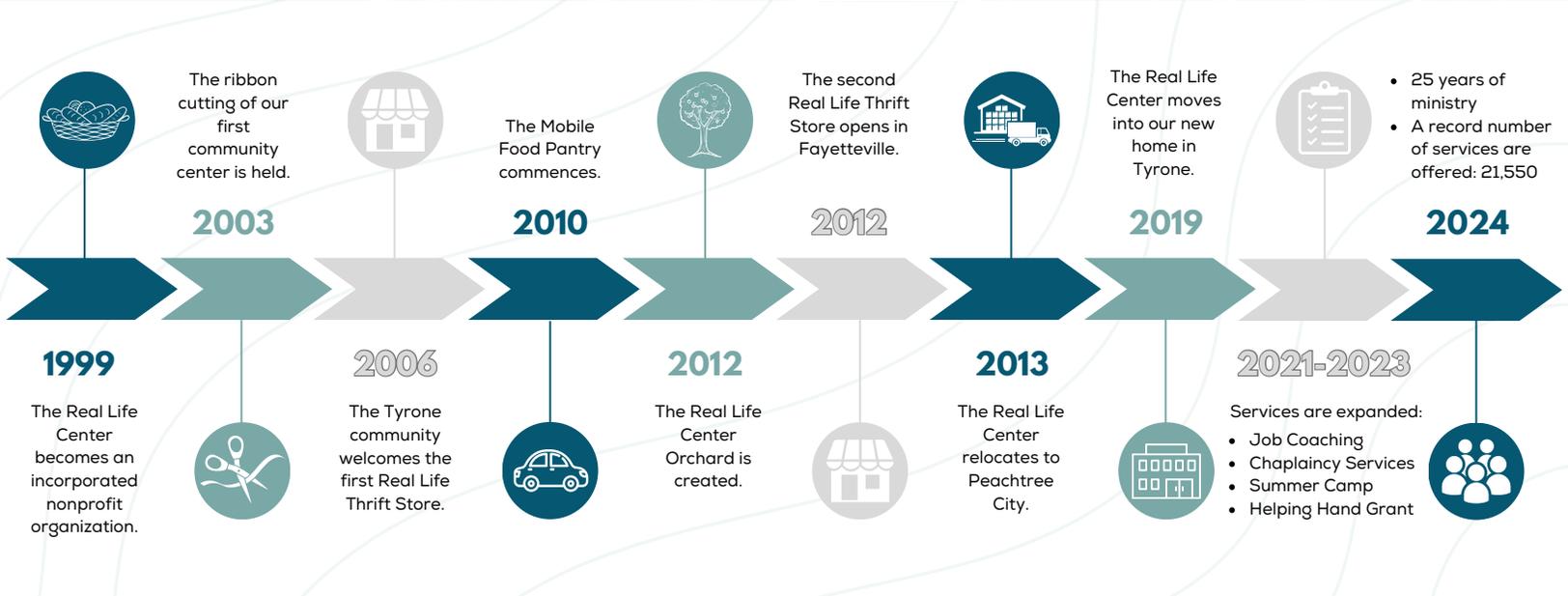


\$2.6 million

in financial aid given



THE HISTORY OF THE REAL LIFE CENTER



Ministry Impact - CLIENT STORIES



"I praise God and thank him for helping turn my life around and get back in focus with him. It's helpful for me to know I have a place I can come to when I'm struggling. I know I'm always welcome here."

-James, RLC Client

Amanda and James's Story

Amanda and James came to the Real Life Center at one of the hardest times in their lives. After years of struggling with addiction, legal troubles, and serious health challenges—including James's leukemia diagnosis—they felt like they had been knocked down over and over again. With mounting medical expenses and Amanda facing her own mental health struggles, they knew they needed help to keep going.

At the Real Life Center, they found more than just groceries and financial assistance—they found hope. But something was still missing. They felt a deep void and knew it was time to refocus their lives and turn back to God.

Their journey led them to Dogwood Church, where they were welcomed with open arms. As they reconnected with their faith, they made the life-changing decision to be baptized. On a warm July morning, surrounded by their church family, Amanda and James publicly declared their commitment to Christ.

Their story is one of resilience, redemption, and faith, and it stands as a testament to the power of hope and second chances.



"The people here, they actually seem like they care. They're very concerned about you."

-Richard, RLC Client

Richard's Story

Seven years ago, Richard found himself in a hard place. He was struggling financially and wasn't sure where to turn. A friend encouraged him to visit the Real Life Center, where he received food and financial assistance for a power bill. What started as a simple visit soon became a lifeline.

Richard now comes weekly for groceries and never misses a Senior Social breakfast, where he's built lasting friendships with staff, volunteers, and fellow clients. Through health struggles, he's always found support, prayer, and encouragement at the Center.

One of his most cherished memories is the day he arrived too weak to get out of his car. Without hesitation, staff and volunteers rushed out with a wheelchair to help him inside. That moment reminded him that at the Real Life Center, he is never alone.

Through his hardships, Richard has found unwavering support at the Real Life Center. No matter what the future holds, he knows one thing for certain: he can always count on his community. The Real Life Center isn't just a place that provides food and assistance - it's a family that walks with him through every season of life.

Ministry Impact - CLIENT STORIES



I sincerely appreciate everything the Real Life has done and continues to do in my life! You are all amazing!

-Lisa, RLC Client

Lisa's Story

Lisa came to the Real Life Center after her life had been turned upside down. Once an administrative assistant to two state representatives, she lost her job and savings due to an online romance scam. The person she thought she loved manipulated her into sending him money, leaving her with almost nothing.

Feeling lost and unsure of how to move forward, Lisa shared her struggles with her mother's caretaker, who had once received help from the Real Life Center. Following her advice, Lisa made an appointment and found the support she needed. The center provided financial assistance, food, and job search assistance.

During her job coaching meeting with Greg, Lisa mentioned her background in administrative support, and he shared an opportunity for a job at a local church. Lisa applied, interviewed, and was offered the position as their new administrative assistant.

Today, Lisa is on her way to stability and plans to write a book and speak at seminars to help prevent others from falling into the trap of romance scams.

We are grateful to partner with our volunteers and supporters to help people like Lisa rebuild their lives.



"It was such a blessing to know that the help was here and that I didn't have to worry"

-Vanessa, RLC Client

Vanessa's Story

Vanessa came to the Real Life Center during one of the hardest seasons of her life. In a period of just five months, she lost seven beloved family members, and at the same time faced unexpected financial struggles herself. With her family still living in Michigan, she traveled back and forth, which took an emotional, physical, and financial toll on her.

When she couldn't afford rent for the first time in seven years, friends urged her to visit the Real Life Center. Though hesitant, she prayed for guidance and took a step of faith. From the moment she arrived, she felt relief. She connected deeply with her counselor, sharing and praying together—specifically asking for a job to regain stability.

Just a week later, Vanessa returned with homemade cookies and good news—she was hired at Wendy's, where she had previously thrived. Overjoyed at how quickly God answered her prayers, she was eager to express gratitude for the love and support she received.

Now, every visit comes with her famous baked goods, a reflection of her joy and gratitude. Her warmth lights up every room, and we are honored to be part of her journey.

Ministry Impact - VOLUNTEER STORIES



"When we started coming to Dogwood, I was so happy to see a place like the Real Life Center. It's great because it's a full circle approach and you get to meet with the people in person."

-Bongi, RLC Volunteer



"I have always wanted to help at a food pantry, and I decided to start last summer. The most meaningful part of volunteering at the RLC is being able to serve those in need. It remains the highlight of my week!"

-Andrea, RLC Volunteer



"I just love helping the people here, encouraging them, and cheering them up when I can. I enjoy getting to interact with the other gentlemen, having good conversation, and just being around the crew."

-Calvin, RLC Volunteer



"Every job here is important, but I like helping the people load their cars. You get to talk to the clients, and they're very nice and grateful. It really shows you what we're doing all this for."

-Don, RLC Volunteer



"My favorite part of volunteering is working in the back with everybody, being friendly, and getting to know them. It's great to be working in the back."

-Avery, RLC Volunteer



"My day is better when I come here. I don't walk away from my corporate job and feel the way I feel here by helping others."

-JoAnn, RLC Volunteer

Real Life Center PROGRAMS

The Real Life Center is dedicated to offering help and hope to individuals and families in Coweta and Fayette counties who are in need. Through various programs, we provide practical resources to help our community thrive.

- **Food Assistance:** Our Market, Pantry, and Mobile Food Pantry offer fresh and nonperishable food items to those experiencing food insecurity. We obtain food through individual donations, food drives, partner agencies such as the Atlanta Community Food Bank, Midwest Food Bank, and local grocery stores, along with our Real Life Center Orchard.
- **Clothing Closet:** We provide new and gently used clothing, shoes, accessories, and household linens to help families stretch their budgets.
- **Financial Assistance:** We offer limited financial support for those struggling to meet basic needs such as rent/mortgage and utility bills.
- **Education & Job Coaching:** Free classes along with job coaching and referrals help individuals gain new skills and pursue better opportunities to work toward stability in their household.
- **Holistic Support:** We aim to care for the whole person through programs including chaplaincy services, mentoring, goal-setting, and connections to other community resources. We also offer additional programs such as Backpack Buddies, senior programs, summer day camp, holiday meal giveaways, and Christmas gift assistance.

At the Real Life Center, we believe in walking alongside those hurting, offering not just immediate relief but long-term hope for a brighter future.



2024 in Review - NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR

682,692



Pounds of food given to the families we serve



16,395

Pounds of produce distributed from our orchard



21,550

Client visits through our programs and services



\$172,921



Given in financial assistance for rent and utilities

828

Individuals attended an educational class



152

Individuals received career coaching and assistance finding a job



117

Individuals received support from our Chaplaincy Program



119,772

Pounds of food distributed through our monthly Mobile Food Pantry



15,852

Hours served by our volunteers



Who We Cared For in 2024



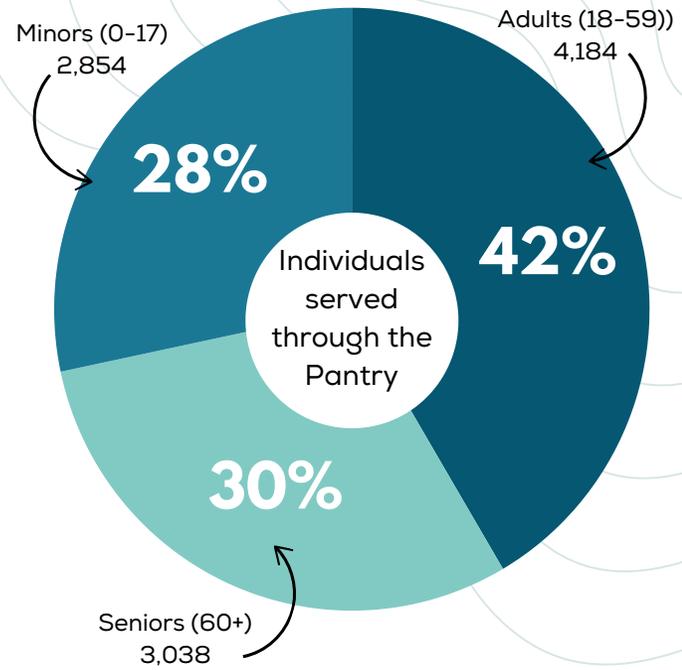
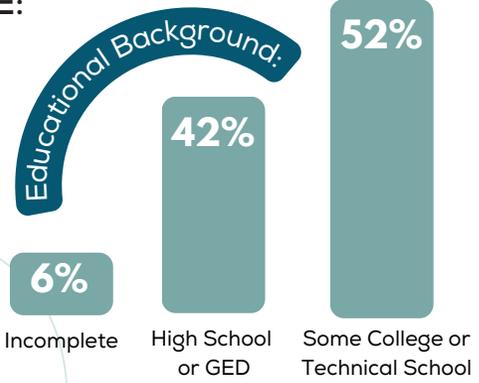
"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."
John 13:34-35 NLT

TOP 3 REASONS FOR NEEDING ASSISTANCE:

Job Loss 30%

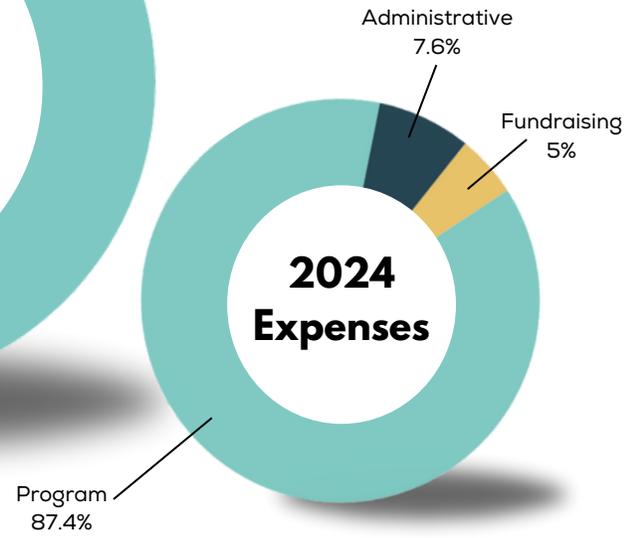
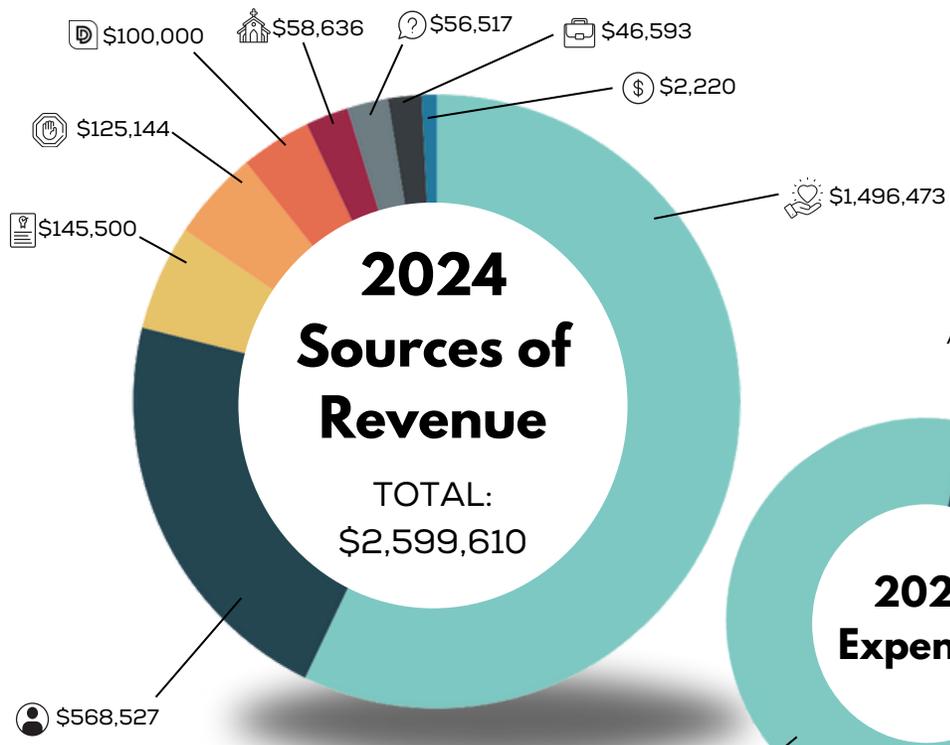
Health 21%

Under Employment 16%



Financial Summary 2024

-  DOGWOOD CHURCH
-  OTHER CHURCHES
-  OTHER
-  BUSINESSES
-  FUNDRAISERS
-  IN-KIND
-  INDIVIDUALS
-  GRANTS
-  RESTRICTED



Expanding Our Reach - NEW AND GROWING IN 2024

At the Real Life Center, we remain steadfast in our mission to demonstrate the love of Christ by offering hope and practical support to our neighbors in need. Through the generosity of our community and the blessings of new opportunities, we have expanded our reach in several key areas:

- **New Commercial Refrigerated Truck**– Secured a new refrigerated truck through generous corporate donations and grants, which provides us with a more reliable vehicle to pick up fresh food donations while reducing maintenance and repair costs.
- **Backpack Buddies Growth** – Increased our Backpack Buddies program by 253%, providing over **5,000 meals** to children experiencing food insecurity over weekends and school breaks.
- **Mentoring Support Initiative** – Launched to offer guidance, encouragement, and wisdom to individuals seeking direction in their lives.
- **Expanded Educational Programs** – Introduced new classes like Grief Share, Stress Management, and additional topics taught in Spanish to equip individuals with Christ-centered tools for healing, resilience, and managing daily life.
- **Strengthened Community Partnerships** – Developed new collaborations with local organizations to extend our impact and better serve our families.



MEET THE REAL LIFE CENTER TEAM



The ministry of the Real Life Center could not effectively reach and serve our clients without our team of committed staff that believes in our mission, cares for those in need, and brings to work each day a servant attitude.

We are grateful that our entire staff is focused on investing in our clients and providing encouragement and hope along their journey to reach stability in their household.

"Perhaps the greatest psychological, spiritual, and medical need that all people have is the need for hope."
-Billy Graham

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Pastor Keith Moore
- Ann Stone
- Beth Geeslin
- George Williams
- Joe de la Cruz
- Len Romano
- Rob Coker

REAL LIFE CENTER STAFF:

Greg Georgianni - Executive Director
Chris Schumaker - Operations Driver
Dana McKay - Business Director
Dixie King - Food Drive & Orchard Coordinator
Jennifer Nolder - Development & Special Projects Manager

Mark Dull - Operations Support Assistant
Matt Lowe - Chaplain & Volunteer Coordinator
Pete Trebotte - Operations Manager
Sebastian Kuehnl - Operations Driver
Seth Crouch - Client Care Coordinator
Tessa Henson - Education & Marketing Coordinator



BUILDING HOPE TOGETHER

Ways to Get Involved

Join hands with the Real Life Center and make a meaningful impact in your community. Together, we can provide help and hope one donation, prayer, or volunteer effort at a time. Thank you for partnering with us to provide a safe environment, share the love of Christ, and promote long-term change.

Donate Funds



When you give to the Real Life Center, over 87% of your donation goes straight into our programs. Scan below to donate:



Donate Items



Help us keep our food pantry and clothing closet stocked by donating clothing, food, and toiletry items. A food drive is a great way to get others involved. Scan below for our most-needed list:



Partner in Prayer



We believe in the power of prayer. Join us in praying for the ministries and clients of the Real Life Center. Stay up-to-date with what's going on by signing up for the newsletter:



Volunteer



Our volunteers are the heartbeat of the RLC. Whether you're available for 2 hours or 10, we are thankful for your willingness to serve. Scan below for more information:





Providing Necessities for Living, Equipping People for Life

REAL LIFE CENTER

Real help. Real hope.

A Mission of Dogwood Church

975 Highway 74 North
Tyrone, GA 30290

www.reallifecenter.org

