



## Shepherd's Table Commemorates 40 Years of Feeding our Neighbors in Need

Creating a Place for the Most Vulnerable in our Community to Rely On

**SILVER SPRING, MD (August 31, 2023)** -- Forty years ago, a handful of faith-based organizations in downtown Silver Spring put their faith into action by cooking dinner for community members in need.

"The first evening of service was a bit slow; I had to go out and encourage people to come in," remembers Rev. Richard Leslie. "I'm amazed at the success and progress of this organization. I am so proud to have been there the first night."

Today, Shepherd's Table has served over two million meals. We serve multiple meals daily to an average of 150 people and have never missed a meal service in the last four decades. Through government shutdowns, pandemic chaos, and bad weather, our table has been set, and doors open for all who need a fresh hot meal. Our anniversary year began with a stark reminder that food insecurity is still prevalent, homelessness is on the rise, and access to daily necessities is more critical than ever; we have seen a 58% increase in meals served daily in the first seven months of 2023.

Inflation has continued to rise post-pandemic; the Washington Metropolitan area must have a reliable source for consistent free, hot, and healthy meals as many face food insecurity – some for the first time. This increased need comes at a crucial time, as many COVID-19 relief programs are ending. This includes the end of emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) payments that provide families with increased monthly food assistance. According to the [USDA](#), "the average price of all grocery items rose 9% in 2023."

"Our programming was designed to foster a safe community where individuals facing inequalities can pursue meaningful transformation in small steps or giant leaps," said Executive Director Manny Hidalgo. "We aim to address disparities in our community and care system by offering tangible support to individuals facing homelessness, health issues, lack of affordable housing, and food insecurity. Our work doesn't stop with just food—we believe a hot and fresh meal can be the entry point to a larger journey of healing and empowerment."

On October 18<sup>th</sup> at the Silver Spring Civic Center at 6:30 pm, Shepherd's Table will be hosting [Cornucopia](#), a celebration of 40 years of the power of community giving! We'll enjoy music, great food from Lemon Slice Café, a live and silent auction, and a lively program honoring our founders, volunteers, and donors. This is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the communities and individuals who have made our last impact possible and have a chance to be a part of our continued growth.

To learn more about Shepherd's Table, visit <https://www.shepherdstable.org/>

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## **ABOUT SHEPHERD'S TABLE**

[Shepherd's Table](#) is a community-based nonprofit serving individuals from all walks of life. We address food insecurity and homelessness through various programs designed to meet immediate needs and provide sustained social support. Our mission is to improve quality of life, create a pathway towards self-sufficiency, and inspire hope for the most vulnerable. We envision a DMV where lives are transformed with nourishment, empowerment, and care.

## **ABOUT CORNUCOPIA**

Join us on Wednesday, October 18th, at the Silver Spring Civic Center at 6:30 pm to celebrate 40 years of the power of community giving! We'll enjoy music, great food from a local restaurant, a live and silent auction, and a lively program honoring our founders, volunteers, and donors. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about our 40-year impact on the community, celebrate all the people who helped us along the way, and have a chance to be a part of our continued growth.

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