



**Annual Report
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**

Lawrence Interdenominational Nutrition Kitchen, Inc.

Lawrence, Kansas

<http://www.linklawrence.org>

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Introduction – Who We Are & What We Do

Lawrence Interdenominational Nutrition Kitchen, Inc (LINK) was established on Valentine's Day, February 14, 1985, with a mission of providing healthy, home-cooked meals in a safe environment for the homeless, hungry, lonely, physically or mentally disabled, and low socioeconomic individuals at no cost to them. Diners are treated as guests and members of the LINK family. Thirty-six years later, this continues to be LINK's mission - to feed people regardless of their circumstances.

LINK is committed to improving the quality of life and honoring the dignity of those it serves when providing a hot meal to any member of our community who wants one.

Currently, LINK is supported by about 45 religious organizations, businesses, and civic groups which provide and serve the food, as well as many individuals who contribute to the organization. LINK is grateful for the support of the leaders and congregation of The First Christian Church, which allows LINK to use the church's basement as a kitchen & dining room for minimal rent.

LINK is a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Corporation which operates out of the basement of the First Christian Church, 1000 Kentucky, Lawrence, KS 66044. LINK's dining room and kitchen can be accessed through the north basement door of the church, on 10th Street. LINK's employer identification number is 48-1071888.

LINK's Board of Directors encourages you to visit our website <https://www.linklawrence.org/> We update our website regularly and it contains LINK's serving calendar; updates on LINK's activities; a Sign-Up Genius link for volunteering opportunities; and a link to make online donations to LINK through the Douglas County Community Foundation. You can also follow LINK on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/link4lunch/>

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President's Report

When I assumed the role of LINK president at the beginning of the 2023-24 fiscal year, my predecessor, Anne Emert, coming off of a three-year term as president, had capably and admirably led our organization through the pandemic and significant changes in how we served our guests through that difficult time. We experienced a sharp decline in the number of people served during the early years of the pandemic, for obvious reasons, but during her tenure numbers increased, and things finally began to feel “normal” again.

Not long after I took office, Bonnie Reedy's death rattled us all, and presented the organization with the challenge of how to keep doing what we do under these sad circumstances.

As the board of directors began the search for a new weekday coordinator, the remaining staff stepped up to continue the mission, our service teams continued to come, to bring food, and to serve the meals, and the work went on, week after week, demonstrating that the commitment and generosity of our dedicated volunteers always has, and still does form the backbone of the organization.

As the data you will see below demonstrate, while our numbers declined during the pandemic, we are now back to pre-pandemic levels of guests and meals served. As the financial report below attests, even with substantial increases in expenses this past year, LINK ended the year in a strong financial position. The Lawrence community came through with generous financial support of LINK's mission, and we benefitted from several important grants.

The challenges we weathered together over the past fiscal year notwithstanding, the work still goes on. As you will read in the Coordinator's report below, we have hired a new weekday coordinator, our volunteers continue to prepare food and bring it, our service teams continue to come to serve food and clean up, and LINK continues to serve hot, nutritious meals to anyone and everyone who shows up. I cannot thank our board members, staff and volunteers nearly enough for all of their work and other contributions to the LINK effort over the past year, and I am grateful for the community that continues to embrace the LINK mission and enable us to do this work.

Under the leadership of our incoming president, Amy Carlson, we expect LINK to continue to thrive, to explore new ways to serve our guests, and to explore other organizational collaborations to widen the community that serves this mission. And I have no doubt that a growing and engaged cohort of volunteers will continue to be the heart of the work. It has been a privilege to participate with so many people who are so generous with their time and resources, and I look forward to good things for LINK as we continue to work together for good in our community.

Rev. Doug Heacock, October 2024

Coordinator's Report

I am writing this Report as a current board member, and not the Weekday Coordinator. During this past fiscal year, all of us connected with LINK were deeply saddened to lose our beloved Weekday Coordinator, Bonnie Reedy. In October 2023, Bonnie passed away after fighting a courageous battle with cancer, continuing to work at LINK and serve meals to those in need through the final months of her life. We all miss her greatly.

Through most of the last fiscal year, Darrell Vann (Weekend Coordinator) and Sara Hoppe (Custodian) covered Bonnie's responsibilities as Weekday Coordinator until LINK was able to hire Ryker Brandt to serve as the new Weekday Coordinator beginning in May 2024. Also in Bonnie's absence, several board members volunteered their time and energy to cover Bonnie's many responsibilities, especially Deb Engstrom who took care of the laundry, ordered food products from Sysco, and took on many other tasks. We are grateful for Deb's service and dedication to LINK.

Despite the tremendous loss of Bonnie and the challenges that LINK faced as we worked to bring on new personnel in the last year, the number of guests that we served during our 2023-24 fiscal year increased 24.7% over the prior year. And this year's number of guests has resumed to the numbers that we were serving before the pandemic. The increase in our guest numbers shows the need for our services in Lawrence.

Total Meals Served During FY:			Total Meals Served Since LINK Began	
	Guests	Meals	Guests	Meals
2012-2013	23,218	32,743	574,955	618,976
2013-2014	23,710	33,544	598,665	652,520
2014-2015	22,612	33,300	621,277	685,820
2015-2016	21,646	30,348	642,923	716,168
2016-2017	18,000	23,184	660,923	739,352
2017-2018	17,277	21,840	678,200	761,192
2018-2019	16,642	21,165	694,842	782,357
2019-2020	16,208	20,463	711,050	802,820
2020-2021	9,407	13,255	720,457	816,075
2021-2022	11,663	15,297	732,120	831,372
2022-2023	13,592	16,704	745,712	848,076
2023-2024	16,958	20,960	762,670	869,036

Anne Emert, Member of Board of Directors, on behalf of:

Bonnie Reedy, Weekday Coordinator (Served as Coordinator until October 2, 2023)

Ryker Brandt, Weekday Coordinator (May 2024 to the present)

LINK Financial Report - July 1, 2023– June 30, 2024

It was another financially strong year for LINK. Although donations from serving groups declined, generous contributions from the Lawrence community remained steady. Also, we received grants from:

United Way : \$5,000
 ALDI: \$2,500
 Hallmark : \$4,000
 FEMA: \$2,000

LINK’s expenses rose nearly 25% in FY 2023, with the largest increases in food and payroll, primarily due to personnel changes and inflation. The departure of our coordinator, Bonnie Reedy, who had efficiently managed our food purchases, significantly impacted our food costs. The high food prices also affected our Thanksgiving meals, where costs increased by 14.8%, mainly driven by the rising cost of turkeys. As in previous years, our volunteer groups provided most of the other food, and Corpus Christi Catholic Church graciously allowed us to use its facilities to assemble the meals with volunteers.

Below is a summary of 2024 fiscal year receipts and expenses.

		FY 2022-2023		FY 2023-2024	
	Net Assets (start of Fiscal Year)		\$167,644		*\$189,815
RECEIPTS	Unrestricted Donations	13,821		28,362	
	Donations from Serving Groups				
	Restricted Donations	6,000			
	Grants	15,000		14,393	
	Earnings on DCCF Account	10,710		12,321	
	Interest Income	41		35	
	Other Receipts	0			
	Endowment Donations	14,776		13,724	
	Endowment Earnings	1,073		3,689	
	TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$61,421		\$72,524
EXPENSES	Operating Expenses	6,354		12,639	
	Thanksgiving Meal Expenses	4,267		4,809	
	Equipment Purchase & Repair				
	Rent	4,200		4,200	
	Payroll & Contract Services	18,204		19,328	
	Administrative Expenses	4,125		4,835	
	Fundraising Expense				
	TOTAL EXPENSES		\$37,151		\$45,811
	NET REVENUE		\$24,270		\$26,714
	Net Assets (end of Fiscal Year)		\$191,913		\$216,529

While the cost per meal increased slightly this year, LINK served 25% more meals than last year. Since many of LINK’s operating costs, such as rent and payroll, are fixed regardless of the number of meals served, the cost per meal remains relatively low by historical standards. The table below presents a history of LINK’s cost per meal over the past decade.

FISCAL YEAR	GUESTS SERVED	MEALS SERVED	OPERATING EXPENSES	COST PER MEAL
2023-2024	16,958	20,960	\$45,811	\$2.18
2022-2023	13,592	16,704	\$37,151	\$2.16
2021-2022	11,663	15,297	\$35,120	\$2.29
2020-2021	9,407	13,255	\$30,261 ¹	\$2.28
2019-2020	16,208	20,463	\$33,994 ¹	\$1.66
2018-2019	16,642	21,165	\$33,708 ²	\$1.59
2017-2018	17,277	21,840	\$33,649	\$1.54
2016-2017	18,000	23,184	\$33,293	\$1.44
2015-2016	21,646	30,348	\$31,163	\$1.03
2014-2015	22,612	33,300	\$29,795	\$0.90
2013-2014	23,710 ³	33,544	\$31,169	\$0.93

¹ Operating expenses do not include the purchase of new appliances (one stove in 2019/20 for \$700; 1 freezer and 3 refrigerators in 2020/21 for \$2,846)

² 2018-19 operating expenses do not include the purchase of chairs for \$2,375. Total expenses for the year were \$36,083.

³ Only total meals served are counted. Guest counts are estimated based on 1.41 meals per guest.

*Beginning net assets has been changed due to accounting software change

Ji Yeon Lee,
LINK Treasurer

APPENDIX

LINK Officers

	<u>FY2023-24</u>	<u>FY2024-25</u>
President	Doug Heacock	Amy Carlson
Vice President	Amy Carlson	Barbara Clinger
Secretary	Jason Schmitz	Jason Schmitz
Treasurer	Ji Yeon Lee	Ji Yeon Lee
Liaison Officer	Deb Engstrom	Deb Engstrom

LINK Directors

	<u>FY 2023-24</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>
Terms Expiring in August 2024:		
Director	Anne Emert	
Vice President/Director	Amy Carlson	
Secretary/Director	Jason Schmitz	
Director	Christopher Cushing	
Terms Expiring in August 2025:		
President/Director	Doug Heacock	Doug Heacock
Treasurer /Director	Ji Yeon Lee	
Director	David Pratt	
Terms Expiring in August 2026:		
First Christian Church Rep	David Nanne	David Nanne
Liaison Officer/Director	Deb Engstrom	Deb Engstrom
Director	Jen Marsh	Barbara Clinger
Director	Barbara Clinger	Katie Konie
Director	Kate Konie	
Terms Expiring in August 2027:		
Director		Anne Emert
Vice President/Director		Amy Carlson
Secretary/Director		Jason Schmitz
Treasurer/Director		Brennan Clark
Director		Tom Ruddy