

Feeding Struggling Families

Agency: Salvation Army

Program: Night Watch

Service: Provides a hot meal on Saturday and Sunday evenings, when The Banquet is not open to provide meals. During winter months, the Emergency Canteen is used to take food to 2-3 areas of the city along with blankets, coats, gloves and hats.

Need: A family of four needs to make at least \$16/hour to maintain their household. 11,800 meals were served in 2008.

What does that mean to me? Those that are struggling in the Sioux Empire are able to enjoy warm meals on the weekends. During winter months, warm clothing and blankets are provided to those who need them most.

Life is a struggle when you're living in a van, especially with five children.

The Jones family is currently facing that struggle. Wendy is struggling to find a job, and Jim is unable to work.

The Jones family isn't alone. Over 500 people in the Sioux Empire were homeless, living with a family member or friend, in a vehicle, or at a homeless shelter. But the problem is much larger than that number. 36% of households eligible for food stamps do not receive them, leaving many families in our community struggling to afford food, clothing, and shelter.

The family of seven jumps out of their van and scurries up to the Salvation Army's Night Watch serving window, none of them wearing coats and all of them shivering in the cold.

Two and a half days is a long time to go without food. The Salvation Army's Night Watch program provides hot meals, warm clothing, and blankets on the weekends at three locations throughout Sioux Falls when the Banquet is not open.

Thanks to money from Sioux Empire United Way, Salvation Army has served over 11,000 meals in the past year. These meals are keeping struggling families alive.

This means parents like Wendy and her family can have a warm, nutritious meal.