



# EMPTY BOWLS

A fundraising  
campaign  
to benefit  
Pajaro Valley  
Loaves & Fishes

2022



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Dear Friends,

I am writing to ask for your support of our **2022 Empty Bowls Fundraising Campaign** to benefit the thousands of people we serve through our pantry and kitchen programs at Pajaro Valley Loaves and Fishes each year.

We will not hold the traditional Empty Bowls dinner and auction this fall, rather we will invite campaign Sponsors and Donors to our open house celebration in spring 2023. You will be able to tour our newly renovated facility, enjoy wine and appetizers, and reconnect with the amazing community that supports our work helping families facing food insecurity in the Pajaro Valley.

Economic and pandemic uncertainty has hit our community hard, and the need for food assistance has grown. The rising cost of living forces many families to make difficult decisions about how to feed their children, often choosing the cheapest pre-packaged foods available. One out of three Santa Cruz County residents are reported to be food insecure.<sup>1</sup>

Loaves and Fishes meets an essential need for those families and individuals. We operate the only food pantry and lunch program available to residents of Santa Cruz County and north Monterey County that is open every Monday-Friday, including holidays. Loaves and Fishes has been a dependable resource for a hearty, nutritious lunch, healthy staples, and fresh produce for families in need for over 30 years. Last year we served **37,700 lunches** and had **9,975 visits to the pantry**. In total, we distributed **615,000 pounds** of food, of which 49% was fresh produce.

**Our Empty Bowls Campaign goal this year is to raise \$100,000 to support our year-round kitchen and pantry programs. Your contribution will alleviate hunger in our community.** We are a dedicated team of volunteers and small staff with a big mission. Your support makes our work possible.

Thank you for your support of Pajaro Valley Loaves and Fishes, where all are welcome, no one is turned away, and food is provided in an accessible and compassionate environment to support the nutrition and well-being of local families.

With sincere appreciation,

Ashley Bridges, Executive Director