

FOCUS

+ BRIDGEPORT +

February 2026



A Ministry Rooted in Prayer

With only a short time in this role and our first meal ministry about to launch, I found myself praying more fervently – for guidance, wisdom, courage, strength, and humility.

Big prayers. Necessary prayers.

As the date drew closer, my prayers became more specific: Food. Supplies. Helpers.



I knew I wasn't alone. So many of you were praying, too.

That's the beauty of prayer. It draws us together as we lift our hearts to God and seek His will. This ministry began over a year ago with your prayers and support – and it will continue to depend on faithful prayer as we work to share God's love in Bridgeport.

Was it a surprise when those prayers began to be answered? Not at all.

Frozen hams and turkeys. An Amazon wish list fulfilled. Cookies and bread. Art supplies for the kids. And plenty of willing helpers.

When we pray and prepare for provision – trusting that what we need will come – it's hard to call these moments coincidences.

Our prayers are not always answered in the way or timing we expect. But we are reminded to keep praying, to trust that we are heard, and to move forward in faith and love.

We are especially grateful to St. George Albanian Orthodox Church and St. John the Baptist Church, and to each of you who is helping share God's love in Bridgeport.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers in the week ahead as we launch our first meal and meet our new friends from the Beardsley School community.

Because in the end, this ministry is not only about providing a meal – it is about building trust, nurturing relationships, and showing children and families that their community sees them, loves them, and walks alongside them.



Making Friends, Building Trust

At its heart, community work is about trust – and when you work with children, that trust feels even more sacred.

A couple of weeks ago, Beardsley School principal Tiffany Ladson-Lang invited FOCUS Bridgeport to meet school families at their Valentine's Day dance. The gym was filled with music, laughter, and children dressed in their party best. After a warm welcome, we shared what we hope to do in Bridgeport and

invited families to our upcoming meal service.

Then came a small but powerful moment. When the principal reminded everyone that we represented the same group that organized the Christmas toy drive, faces brightened. Smiles of recognition spread across the room. You could almost feel the barriers soften.

The warmth in that space was a beautiful reminder: relationships come first. Trust grows when children and families experience steady care, kindness, and love – not just once, but over time.

As we look ahead, we're grateful for the fruit beginning to bud. And we remain committed to putting down deep roots in the lives of the families we're here to serve.



March Meal Service

We'll be setting the table again in March. Can you come lend a hand? Whether you enjoy cooking, welcoming guests, working with children, organizing behind the scenes, connecting us with community support, or simply showing up with compassion, there is a place for you!

Register to volunteer and be a part of something wonderful!

As we enter the season of Lent and think about how we can prayerfully return to God, we ask that you consider FOCUS Bridgeport in your prayers and almsgiving!

**With gratitude,
Linda Kolton, Center Director
and the FOCUS Bridgeport Team**