Greensburg Nonprofit Builds Capacity to Meet Growing Needs, Invites Community to Annual Fundraiser

Feeding the Spirit calls on Westmoreland County to help meet growing needs for food, shelter and crisis support at its annual Harvest Hoedown fundraiser.



Hoedown Flyer - Support a Great Cause

GREENSBURG, PA, UNITED STATES, September 18, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- GREENSBURG, PA -- Feeding the Spirit, a Greensburg-based nonprofit serving Westmoreland County residents facing financial hardship, homelessness, and hunger, will hold its annual fundraiser on Saturday, September 26. The event will be at Stratigos Banquet Centre in North Huntingdon from 4 to 7 pm. "Harvest Hoedown" will feature hearty appetizers and homemade pies, live bluegrass music, line dancing, and expansive raffles, with proceeds supporting FTS's crisis management and transition assistance work.

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>
> *Deb Thackrah*

The fundraiser caps a milestone year for Feeding the Spirit. It opened its first administrative office in downtown Greensburg in 2026, giving the 15-year-old nonprofit a permanent home for coordinating operations, volunteers, and community partnerships. FTS was also named one of just four Westmoreland County nonprofits to receive a competitive Hillman Foundation grant, recognizing its unique impact and expanding its capacity to respond to growing need across the region.

"Every day we meet neighbors facing difficult circumstances, and every day our community responds with extraordinary generosity," said Deb Thackrah, FTS Founder and Executive Director. "We're feeding hope, restoring dignity, and creating opportunities for people to move forward. Harvest Hoedown celebrates that spirit and provides the resources we need to keep

supporting individuals and families with urgent needs."

Founded in 2011, Feeding the Spirit has grown into a trusted resource for Westmoreland County residents facing some of life's biggest challenges, offering crisis management, emergency shelter, rent support, connections to longer-term community and government services, and more. FTS occupies a distinct niche in the region, meeting immediate needs quickly enough to give clients an opportunity for lasting stability. Weekly meals remain part of that work. This year volunteers planted a garden supplying fresh produce for Thursday night dinners, and FTS served its 100,000th meal, a milestone reflecting 15 years of sustained community support.

"We're so fortunate to live in an area that consistently steps up to care for its neighbors," Thackrah noted. “Every fundraiser ticket, sponsorship, raffle donation, and volunteer hour allows FTS to respond quickly when someone needs it most and helps build pathways to long-term independence."

Harvest Hoedown fundraiser tickets, sponsorship materials, and volunteer information are available at www.feedingthespirit.org. To donate a fundraiser raffle item, please email Michelle Havrilesko at michelleh.fts@gmail.com.



Volunteers bagging fresh tomatoes grown by their team



A little rain won't stop volunteer Karen Douglas.

About Feeding the Spirit Founded in 2011, Feeding the Spirit is a Greensburg-based nonprofit dedicated to nourishing the bodies,

minds, and spirits of Westmoreland County residents in need. Through crisis management services, emergency shelter assistance, rent support, and weekly meals, FTS helps local individuals and families overcome poverty, homelessness, and hunger. Central to its work is a commitment to maintain an environment of acceptance and respect that nourishes well-being, dignity, and hope. Feeding the Spirit is a 2025 Hillman Foundation grant recipient, a Westmoreland Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit of the Year, a partner member of the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and a GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency recipient.



Hats, Gloves, and Scarves Distribution - FTS supports the community in many ways

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