

Feed My Sheep John 21:18

A Newsletter of the Hunger Task Force of the Southern Ohio Synod

November-December, 2012

HAPPY HOLIDAYS?



“What are you having for your Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners this year?”

That question seems to be asked almost everywhere at this time of year.

For too many, the answer is “I’m not sure . . . we may not have anything.”

After a disaster like hurricane Sandy and the Nor’easter that followed, many families in the areas hardest hit, as well as other areas in the world are facing food shortages. Lost power means the loss of refrigeration, and therefore loss of perishable food. Meanwhile, due to the bad economy, high unemployment, and the severe drought many families were already having a hard time feeding their children.

Hurricane Sandy brought extreme winds, storm surges and flooding not only to one of the country's most densely populated urban areas, but also to the nations of Haiti, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Cuba, which were still suffering the after effects of a devastating earthquake a short time ago. **Lutheran World Relief**, with its partners, the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** and **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**, and many other agencies responded to Sandy's aftermath. While these agencies, along with local food pantries, have seen record numbers of people coming to them for help, the amount of food donations and dollars needed to purchase food quantities have declined. Without food and monetary donations, a more catastrophic disaster is in the making. The burden of relief and prevention falls to those who have enough and are willing to share.

Individuals and congregations respond well at this time of year. Many churches serve free Thanksgiving and/or Christmas meals and invite any and all to come to be fed. Individuals open their pocketbooks and contribute to various appeals to provide happy holidays. There is a great effort to provide holiday cheer.

But what about the other 363 days of the year? How do we maintain the holiday spirit throughout the year?

“What are you having for supper next Saturday? “

“I’m not sure . . . we may not have anything.”

How do we respond?



CONGREGATIONS IN ACTION

Messiah, Urbana

Messiah Lutheran Church has begun a year of focus on Social Concerns. The congregation focuses on a specific Social Concern each month, reports Pastor Mike Poole.

The first concern was hunger. The series began on September 30th with a Hunger Kick-off Worship service in the afternoon. The Rev. Henry Zorn, chair of the Southern Ohio Synod Hunger Task Force, was invited to preach. Also, during the month, Jessica Fairfax from ELCA World Hunger came to speak.

Setting aside the Lectionary for the day, the texts chosen were those that dealt with hunger (Matthew 14:13-21; Exodus 16:1-31; Exodus 17:1-17; Luke 7:31-35). Each Sunday, five minutes were set aside for Mission Moments. Hunger ministry leaders from agencies such as Lutheran Social Services, Bread for the World, a local child weekend backpack feeding program, and ELCA World Hunger were chosen to speak to the congregation and also provide the Adult Education presentation for that Sunday.

A Potluck to End World Hunger was held. At the event, directors of the three major hunger ministries in Urbana were invited to speak. The three Kitchen ministries were **WhereHouse** – a ministry of the Methodist Church; **Caring Kitchen**– homeless shelter; and **Stepping Stones** – a ministry of a non-denominational congregation.

The youth Sunday School is using the **Taking Root** curriculum. They have also taken on the **ELCA Good Gifts** as a way to donate financially. The youth hope to collect enough money to buy a whole farm! One of Messiah's members built a large barn to serve as our "piggy bank." (Pictured right) If our congregation continues at the pace now set, we will exceed our goal. The awareness of hunger has definitely been raised in our congregation. This will serve as an excellent start to a powerful year!



North Riverdale Lutheran Church, Dayton

Pastor Monte Stevens reports his congregation assembled an easy event and raised a significant amount of money for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal under the direction of their Hunger Ministry Team leader Susan Dyer. They combined education with fun for an event to raise the consciousness of hunger and give people an opportunity to help those in need.

The event followed worship on November 4th. A simple meal, free and open to all from the community was served but donations were accepted from those who wanted to contribute. About 75 individuals attended. During the meal, a brief talk was given about the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, who benefits from the funds ELCA receives and how their money would be used both locally and globally. All the information was taken from the ELCA webpage www.elca/hunger.org.

After the meal, a bingo party was held. People who wanted to play, bought bingo boards for \$1 each. Prizes for winning were donated from members' homes, incurring no cost to the event. There were several large donations and the total amount raised was \$1,825.00. North Riverdale hopes to offer an average of \$30 per member this year to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. (The average is \$2.50 per member in the Southern Ohio Synod.) For more information contact Pastor Monte Stevens at 937-275-5750 or NRLChurch@aol.com.

Kids Against Hunger

A Kids Against Hunger packaging event is **planned for December 2, at 3 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church, 6135 Rings Road, Dublin.** Volunteers are now being recruited to help in this event.

The mission of Kids Against Hunger is to significantly reduce the number of hungry children in the USA and to feed starving children throughout the world. Kids Against Hunger is not affiliated with or restricted to a particular religious group and does not discriminate on any basis when distributing its meals. The organization's approach to achieving its goal - the eradication of world hunger - includes the packaging of a highly nutritious, vitamin-fortified soy-rice casserole by volunteers at numerous locations within the USA and Canada, and the distribution of those meals to starving children and their families in over 60 countries through partnerships with humanitarian organizations worldwide. Last year alone, volunteers at Kids Against Hunger's food packaging centers across the USA packaged **forty million meals** for children and their families around the world and around the corner.



Kids Against Hunger performs its mission through a network of food packaging "satellite" operations that extends across the U.S. and Canada. This network includes more than 90 locations. Satellites are nonprofit organizations affiliated with Kids Against Hunger that package the proprietary Kids Against Hunger formulated food for the malnourished and starving children of the world. A satellite must have a facility in which it can set up its manual packaging equipment and store supplies and the packaged food. The actual food packaging is done by volunteers; consequently the satellite needs the ability to attract, schedule, and supervise volunteer food packagers. In order for a satellite to be successful long-term, a strong team of leaders is needed, and the satellite must have the ability to raise funds to cover program costs on an ongoing basis.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans provides matching funds to those raised locally, and supports the work of Kids Against Hunter. For more information on how to become involved in this event, contact Rob Rucker, Community Engagement Leader, at rob.rucker@thrivent.com, or call him at 614-719-9317.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING, 2013

Now is the time to begin making plans for the coming year's Souper Bowl.

The Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-driven, nationwide initiative that raises more than \$10 million through local civic, school and parish groups (www.souperbowl.org). Students choose a charity to support that works to feed the hungry. The fund drive can begin at anytime and will end on February 3, 2013, the day of the NFL Super Bowl. The goal for the Souper Bowl of Caring is to receive funds from the community. Encourage the youth in your congregation to become involved.



Funds raised may be donated to Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio to be used to provide food locally and throughout the Southern Ohio Synod area.

CONGREGATION HUNGER LEADERS DAY SCHEDULED

Now that you find yourself named as the Hunger Ministry Leader for your congregations, are you asking yourself a lot of questions, like, “What do I do now?”; “How do I get others involved?”; “What is really expected of me?”; “Why do we need a Hunger Ministry Leader anyway?”

Well wonder no more. Help is on the way. The Hunger Task Force has heard your concerns and has set a date to answer all your questions and to give you information and support to help you. Set aside the date of **Saturday, March 9** and plan to attend the **Congregational Hunger Leader’s Day**. Here are some details of what you can expect.

The meeting is to be held at Messiah Lutheran Church in Reynoldsburg, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Here is a *tentative* agenda for the day.

9:30 a.m.	Registration/coffee
10:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Keynote speaker
10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	Eucharist worship – hunger oriented
Noon to 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	“How To?”/Best Practices/Take Home Ideas
1:45 – 2:45 p.m.	Workshops; Hunger 101, Hunger 201
2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Workshops; Hunger 101, Hunger 201
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Wrap up, Parting prayer

More information will be made available as details are confirmed. Right now, please, set aside the date and plan to attend. Also plan to share ideas and stories about the success (or failures) you may have experienced in your congregation’s hunger ministry. Together, we can help solve one of the world’s most pressing problems.

ELCA HUNGER RESOURCES

Hunger Sermon Starters

Need some help getting your sermon started and have a hunger-related theme to it? The ELCA has Hunger Sermon Starters for every month, available at <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger/Resources/For-Congregations/Worship-Helps/Sermon-Starters.aspx>.

Pastors who are advocates for hunger issues write the sermon starters each month, so every month offers something new to get you started writing your own, moving and memorable sermon. ***In December, the Southern Ohio Synod's Pr. Mike Poole will be writing the Hunger Sermon Starters.*** Pr. Poole has been a hunger advocate for years and is one of the two ELCA pastors who started *Potlucks to End World Hunger*, formerly called *A Month of Potlucks*.

To connect with Potlucks to End World Hunger go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Potlucks-to-End-World-Hunger/155641777839581> on Facebook

<http://www.amonthofpotlucks.org/> on the Web

Simple Living

Use these resources and find ways to eliminate conventional distractions in your life and focus on what's important.

What is your definition of simple? How about simple living? It can be easy to find distraction at nearly every bend in the road these days—job stress; coordination of children's schedules; keeping up with the latest technology, gizmos, and gadgets; "running out of time" to be still and reflect on God's purpose in our lives...the list goes on.



The resources in this ELCA hunger section often play up the maxim that "less is more." Strip away the distractions that you can, and accept or learn to better manage the areas of your life that by necessity cause you to become busy. All of these resources can be used in congregational life, and most lend themselves to practical lessons without a group setting.

The Simple Living resources to help you explore this topic even further include: an issue of [LifeLines](#), the World Hunger quarterly newsletter, devoted to helping you "slow down, slim down, quiet down"; ***Sustaining Simplicity***: A journal for leaders; ***Hunger Hope***, a book of 11 dramas to demonstrate in your congregation on how to squeeze new life into the ways you explore and facilitate discussion about hunger and poverty; and **Living Simply with God: A 40-Day Hunger Calendar** about hunger that helps show how God wants us to abbreviate, alleviate, eliminate. The calendar is also about how you can live a joyous and abundant life, filled with generosity towards others. A life modeled on Jesus' own. A life that's lived simply, so that others can simply live. All the above resources can be obtained for download at www.elca/worldhungerappeal.



ELCA PROVIDES, RECEIVES AID FOLLOWING HURRICANE SANDY

Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) continue to meet the immediate needs of people affected by Hurricane Sandy and its subsequent storms with food, water and shelter as damage assessments continue from the Caribbean to the northern Atlantic coast of the United States.

Through ELCA Disaster Response, "we are in contact with (ELCA) synods, congregations and affiliate organizations located in areas impacted by the storm," according to the Rev. Michael Stadie, director for domestic disaster response at ELCA churchwide ministries. "We have heard that ELCA congregations were damaged, but we are waiting to share the information until we have a more complete list."

Stadie said his office is receiving stories about the engagement of ELCA members, spanning from cleanup work to providing pastoral care, from distributing meals to offering shelter. "That is the work of ELCA Disaster Response," he said.

The ELCA is also receiving letters of support, expressions of sympathy and prayers from Lutheran churches overseas, according to the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for global mission at ELCA churchwide ministries. The general secretary of the All Africa Council of Churches has sent letters of support to the ELCA and The Lutheran World Federation, through its Department for World Service, has pledged its commitment to support the ELCA in its relief and rehabilitation efforts.

This is the first time the ELCA will be a recipient of international aid from The Lutheran World Federation, said Malpica Padilla.

The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 143 member churches in 79 countries all over the world. The ELCA is the federation's only member church from the United States.

MALARIA CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

Did you know one of the fastest and most powerful tools against malaria is education? Thanks to Lutheran generosity it's already working!

Here is how education made a difference in the rural area of Chambi in northwest Zambia. This rainy, remote region is home to about 500 families and millions of malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

Because parents didn't recognize the early signs of malaria they'd bring a feverish child to the local traditional healer instead of making the trip to a clinic 12 miles away. Many of the children died. This had to change—and this is where the church came in.

The ELCA companion churches, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Zambia and the Lutheran Evangelical Church in Africa worked with the ministry of health and the clinic to train and equip 50 community health educators for the region, including many pastors and other community leaders. Their job is to teach church members and neighbors how to prevent, recognize and seek treatment for malaria. They also offer testing and anti-malarial treatment.

So far in 2012, more than 4600 people have learned how to prevent malaria in this region alone. Several clinics have been conducted for testing and immediate treatment for those who had the malaria parasite. Now parents take their children to the clinic as soon as symptoms appear, and if necessary the parents get treatment as well.

Also, before, the people were not interested in the mosquito nets, but now they take the initiative and ask for one.

Malaria education helped the people of Chambi improve their health and their lives. You made it possible with your gifts to the ELCA malaria campaign. The campaign continues to 2015. The work is not done.



Tom Hart, US Executive Director of ONE, a grassroots advocacy and campaigning organization that fights extreme poverty and preventable disease, requests help. He writes:

In seven weeks, funding to fight global AIDS, hunger and poverty will be slashed in an unprecedented way - unless our political leaders act.

Cutting these programs - which make up less than 1% of the US budget - won't make a dent in the deficit, but will put millions of lives at risk. We can't let this happen.

Tell Congress to protect these programs today. To read the petition and automatically add your name to the go to <http://act.one.org/go/847?t=2&akid=3486.1623752.yyupkX>.

RETHINKING HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING

Americans spent nearly \$471.5 billion last holiday season. In comparison, the United Nations estimates it would take \$300 billion to end world hunger.

Challenge you congregation to re-think traditional gift giving and host an **ELCA Good Gifts Fair**. An ELCA Good Gifts Fair allows people to honor their loved ones by choosing from over 50 life-changing gifts—everything from alpacas to water wells that support people in need all over the world.

To help you get started, an ELCA Good Gifts Fair planning guide is available. The guide has complete step-by-step instructions to help. A God's Global Barnyard

bulletin insert can help get members thinking about this new direction, and an interactive coin box would be perfect for teaching children and youth about how animals help in the fight against hunger and poverty. Finally, the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog offers many different ways to honor friends and loved ones with gifts that will make a difference in the world.



All these resources and more Good Gifts items are available from www.elca.org.worldhungerappeal.

For many families, November means sitting around a table filled with the abundance of the fall harvest. For 48 million Americans who struggle with food insecurity, November, like the rest of the year is worrying where their next meal is coming from.

ELCA World Hunger and the Southern Ohio Synod work not only globally, but locally as well with organizations that support soup kitchens, food pantries, homeless shelters and other ministries to assist people in getting back on their feet.

As part of giving thanks this Thanksgiving, share with others through gifts to World Hunger. Consider a special offering to support this work on Sunday, November 25. And in December, **be an Angel**; repeat the above. You will surely feel the Blessings of Christmas.



Hunger Task Force Members: Rev. Henry Zorn, chair; Rev. Glen Bengson; David Drumm; Rev. John Eilert; Rev. Joene Herr; Linda Hall; Rev. Donald Moeser; Rev. Mary Molnar; Rev. Mike Poole; Rev. Monte Stevens; Rev. Jeff Wick, synod staff; Susan Truchses, newsletter editor
