

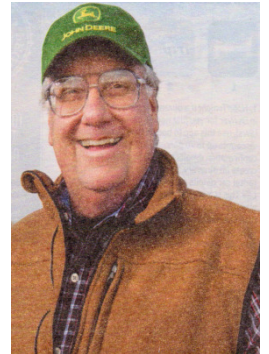
# Feed My Sheep John 21:18

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

May-June, 2013

## PUTTING HUNGER OUT OF BUSINESS IN AMERICA\*

He'd been fighting hunger and giving away tens of millions of dollars annually to impoverished communities around the world for over 10 years. But now Howard G. Buffett, millionaire son of billionaire Warren Buffett, is turning his sights on improving living standards in America. Working with **Feeding America** through his foundation, **The Howard G. Buffett Foundation**, the working farmer says he is turning his attention to the growing problem of food insecurity in the United States. He states that until recently, because of his attention to poverty in other areas, he never realized how things were getting worse in this country. "Before, I never understood how difficult things were in this country, and how they were getting worse. In America, hunger is hidden; people are ashamed of it. We've got to do something about it."



Howard G. Buffett

In the past year and a half, the Buffett Foundation has funded **three projects** with Feeding America that will better help people understand the problem. America must be educated about the problem and how significant it is. **Map the Meal Gap**, is a program which provides evidence for what hunger actually looks like in America, including how many kids are food insecure and what it would take to feed them. The 2014 **Hunger in America study** will take that analysis even further so when he talks to a congressperson about the big picture of hunger in the U.S. he can say, "Let me show you what hunger looks like in your district, and what it would take to fill that gap." The third program he is underwriting is called **Invest an Acre** ([investment.org](http://investment.org)) which is enlisting U.S. farmers to donate the proceeds from one or more acres to feed needy people in their own communities.

As for growing more food? Buffet says that's not the problem. Farmers produce more food today that they did 5 years ago; in 5 years they'll produce even more. People are hungry not because there aren't enough farmers or food, but because they don't have access to it or can't afford it. There's an estimated \$3 billion worth of food wasted every year because farmers either can't get the labor to harvest it or it doesn't look perfect enough for store shelves. He states, "There are some great programs that collect produce that isn't acceptable for the supermarket and get it into food banks. That's next on my list---making that system work better."

And one last thing, Buffett says. "Volunteer, or support a volunteer, who works in a food pantry or soup kitchen, and most important, take the kids to volunteer. Education is important. Once everyone becomes aware of how significant this problem is, no one will tolerate it."

In a land of plenty, there is no good reason why 50 million Americans, including one in five children, don't always know where their next meal is coming from. That's unacceptable. Change won't come quickly, but it will come, perhaps just one person at a time. But as American Anthropologist Margaret Mead once stated, "*Never doubt a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has.*"

\*Portions of this article taken from an interview written by Joe Kita for **Parade Magazine**, 12/2/12. Photo by Jennifer Silverberg.

## SOUPER BOWL, WALMART BENEFIT LSS OF CENTRAL OHIO

Results of the Souper Bowl of Caring Initiative for 2013 are in, and **Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio** has garnered \$37,519.30. The money was raised by area churches, which includes a matching gift from the Logan/Union County Chapter of **Thrivent Financial Services for Lutherans** which matched monies raised at St. John's, Marysville. The news was reported by Brad Draper, Corporate Director of Food Pantry Services, LSS. Mr. Draper reports this amount was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest amount ever received by LSS and gets the agency back on track after a dip in 2012. This indicates that more congregations are becoming involved in the campaign.



Since 2000, the year Souper Bowl of Caring began, congregations in the area served by LSS have generated \$299,086.38. The single largest amount raised for LSS was in 2011 when over \$40,000 was donated.

More good news came to LSS this month when results from the Walmart Facebook Hunger Campaign were announced. LSS will receive a grant of \$20,000 from Walmart. LSS was ranked 30<sup>th</sup> in the nation after receiving 2,340 votes because people in the area visited the Facebook site and elected LSS.

Five food pantries were nominated by Mid-Ohio Food Bank to participate in this project; three received grants and were listed among the top 60 agencies. WARM, Westerville, and Broad Street Presbyterian Church, each received \$20,000 while the Mid-Ohio Food Bank will receive \$40,000. This means that Walmart is donating a total of \$100,000 to central Ohio food pantries.

## NEW HUNGER INITIATIVE IN GUERNSEY AND NOBLE COUNTIES.

The Mid-Ohio Food Bank recently held a series of five community conversations on hunger in Cambridge. Linda Hall, Director of the Pleasant City Food Pantry, and a member of the SOS Hunger Task Force, participated in those discussions, which focused on identifying individual and collective definitions of hunger in the community, the resources currently available, pinpointing underserved areas in the two counties, what more needs to be done, and how best to achieve a greater level of help to those experiencing food insecurity. The outcome of the five sessions was an agreement to form the Guernsey-Noble Hunger Coalition. This group will meet monthly to develop strategies for greater service, sharing of resources and knowledge, and aligning those agencies which currently have pantries, community feeding programs and social service initiatives in place.

Linda also reports an update on the hunger ministry at the Pleasant City Food Pantry. She shares that the agency is now incorporated in the State of Ohio and is moving forward by completing the IRS 501(c) 3 application.

The Pantry, one of four area food banks, was also the recipient of food staples from a recent all-area service club food drive, with the support of Riesbeck's Food Markets and Wal-Mart. During the drive, customers purchased \$5 and \$10 grocery sacks filled with non-perishable boxed and canned food. Volunteers from the service clubs, Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis, loaded the bags into the vans for delivery to the four recipient agencies.

On another happy note, the Pantry will be supported monthly with \$200 from the Guernsey County Community Development Corporation. While the agency continues to operate on little money, the Lord is providing help in many ways to enable it to continue to serve about 200 households each month in Guernsey and Noble counties. The agency plans on submitting a 2014 grant application to the ELCA before the coming deadline. Deadlines for 2014 have not yet been established.

## A PLACE AT THE TABLE: A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT HUNGER

Recently, The Rev. David Rift, the ELCA's Director of World Hunger, stated the ELCA's partners in overcoming hunger, have released a new documentary, **"A Place at the Table,"** which highlights the human faces of the continuing challenge of hunger in America. When reviewing the movie, Jon Stewart of Comedy Central's popular "Daily Show" made a quip about curling up with your box of Junior Mints to watch a documentary about hunger. Few laughed.

When forty-nine million people in America don't know where their next meal is coming from and one in four American children is food insecure, it isn't funny. This documentary, directed by Kristi Jacobson and Lori Silverbush, puts faces on those facts and also profiles citizens and activist groups who are working to end hunger in America.

These include "Top Chef's" Tom Colicchio, who has lobbied in Washington for an increase in funds for child nutrition programs; David Beckmann, an ELCA pastor and head of Bread for the World, who probes the connections between faith and feeding the hungry; Bill Shore, founder and director of Share Our Strength, who discusses the idea that children lack access to food programs; and pastor Bob Wilson and teacher Leslie Nichols, who tell their stories of distributing food to those in need in a small Colorado town.

A companion book, *A Place at the Table: The Crisis of 49 Million Hungry Americans and How to Solve It* by Peter Pringle is also available from Public Affairs and Participant Media ([Magnolia Pictures](#), PG).

Rift continues: Talking about the reality of hunger is a meaningful and sometimes painful experience, all jokes aside. Despite great progress over the last fifty years, the reality of hunger remains startling. Yet we are a people who live in hope.

Our story about hunger is about more than stark statistics and challenges. It is the story of a Savior who stands on the words of the prophets and brings "good news to the poor," and of our vow to follow that same mission. Especially powerful is the opportunity to join in hope springing up in communities with a vision of ways out of hunger and poverty. As some would say, "Jesus told us where to find God's good news. He said it was bringing it to the poor."

The documentary is currently being shown in theaters around the country. Check for listings in your community. It is also available On Demand. Pastor Henry Zorn, Resurrection, Cincinnati, gathered the Hunger Task Force and Outreach Committees from his congregation for a home viewing followed by discussion.

## LWR FORMS NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR QUILT DISTRIBUTUION

Through a new partnership with the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), Lutheran World Relief plans to position Quilts and Kits near disaster-prone areas for timely distribution following an emergency.

The UNHRD brings together United Nations and international governmental and non-governmental organizations to stockpile material resources like LWR's Quilts and Kits in strategically located hubs around the world.

Pre-stocking of LWR resources in a Philippines warehouse has allowed for quick dispersal following recent emergencies in Southeast Asia. Through the UNHRD network, LWR would be able to store materials in up to five additional UNHRD hubs located in Italy, Malaysia, Ghana, the United Arab Emirates and Spain.

In addition, LWR will be connected to more than 50 member agencies in the UNHRD network for additional resources when needed. Conversely, LWR's material resources will be listed in the same database for fellow UNHRD agencies to see and request as needed, further expanding the reach of these gifts of love from Lutherans in the U.S.



The UNHRD was established by the United Nations in 2000 to meet its goal of having the capacity to respond to concurrent disasters around the world. The hubs are managed by the World Food Program.

LWR accepts donations of Quilts and Kits in the U.S. year-round. Quilt and Kit donations help to stock LWR's own warehouses, and now also UNHRD hubs, to respond to emergencies while still fulfilling ongoing requests from our global partners. In 2013, LWR is challenging Lutherans across the U.S. to donate 500,000 Quilts to send around the world to people in need.

To learn more about donating Quilts and Kits, please visit [lwr.org/getinvolved](http://lwr.org/getinvolved).



## SENATOR SHERROD BROWN SHARES IDEAS ON GLOBAL POVERTY

The Rev. Donald Moeser, a member of the SOS Hunger Task Force, sent an inquiry about Global Poverty to Senator Brown, a member of a Lutheran congregation. He received this response:

Dear Donald Moeser,

*Ending hunger and poverty is not simply a matter of feeding enough people. The conditions that keep more than a quarter of the world population in absolute poverty — living on less than the equivalent buying power of one U.S. dollar a day — must be addressed. Sadly, many developing nations have the resources they need to feed their populations, yet they are burdened with foreign debt. Many of these countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, spend nearly 40 percent of their annual budget repaying foreign debt — money that could be used to build schools, hospitals, and other public works projects. In fact, the high rate of interest on foreign loans virtually ensures they will never be fully repaid, thus locking future generations into a cycle of poverty.*

*Since my election to Congress, I have supported debt relief for these nations and I have worked to alleviate global poverty by assisting developing nations in their efforts to become self-sufficient. I have also supported crucial anti-poverty initiatives in the area of global health. Major global health threats such as tuberculosis undermine the social and economic structures of entire communities in developing nations, killing working-age adults and draining scarce public resources.*

*Finally, the U.S. International Affairs budget allocates funds to the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and a variety of foreign assistance programs such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Peace Corps. Foreign assistance funding supports agencies and programs that work to cure life-threatening diseases, secure troubled regions, establish trade and economic opportunities abroad, and support democracy-building initiatives. With this funding, basic necessities such as vaccinations, food, water, education, and shelter are provided for millions of people who would otherwise go without. Not only do these initiatives support our humanitarian and democratic values, but they ultimately contribute to our national security and economic prosperity.*

*As the Senate considers relevant legislation, I will continue to support foreign aid as an integral part of our international diplomacy and national security efforts. Thank you again for getting in touch with me.*

*Sincerely,  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator*

**VISIT THE HUNGER TASK FORCE DISPLAY AT SYNODFEST**

**Hunger Task Force Members:** Rev. Henry Zorn, chair; Nicholas Bates; Rev. Glen Bengson; David Drumm; 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