



Lutheran
Social
Services
of
Central
Ohio

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES RECOGNIZES HUNGER AWARENESS MONTH

COLUMBUS, Ohio – June is National Hunger Awareness Month, a message that strikes to the core of the Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio (LSS) mission of helping people in need.

The month's theme could not be more applicable to the four food LSS pantries in Columbus, Lancaster and Caldwell, as they have seen a dramatic rise in the number of meals served. To help combat the escalating need throughout Ohio, LSS launched its mobile food pantry in February to assist Appalachian Ohio residents in Lawrence and Gallia counties. Since last July, the five pantries have served a collective 1,380,125 meals, a 23-percent increase from the 1,121,274 meals served at the same time last year.

“Hunger is something we are aware of on a daily basis. As unemployment continues to rise, more and more people are worrying about putting food on the table,” said Barb Packer, director of food pantry services. “Families come in every day concerned they will not have enough food to make it through the month. We hope people take the time to consider the importance of the month.”

The LSS food pantry at 1460 S. Champion Ave. has kicked off a brown-bag lunch program to offer healthy meals to children throughout the summer months. The donations-supported program gives an additional supplement to pantry clients for their children's lunches. Nonperishable food donations, including raisins, baked chips, crackers, fruit snacks and juice boxes, are currently being collected at the food pantry.

The Faith Mission kitchens have also made strides in helping to alleviate hunger, as they have provided 226,423 meals since July 2008. A kitchen garden was planted last April at the shelter on Eighth Avenue to potentially grow an additional 4,000 pounds of fresh produce for the kitchens.



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“Our community kitchen on Sixth Street is the only one in the area that serves three meals a day, and that requires a great deal of support from the local community,” said Executive Director Sue Villilo. “The battle against hunger is an ongoing struggle, and we want to provide food for as many people as we can.”

With its regional divisions of Lutheran Social Services of Southern Ohio and Lutheran Social Services of Northern Ohio, Lutheran Social Services of Central Ohio serves thousands of people each day by focusing on the core societal issues of hunger, housing, healing and hope. LSS provides food pantries, homeless shelters, senior living, affordable housing communities and other programs and services that uplift families and strengthen communities. LSS is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognized by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and a charter member of Lutheran Social Services in America.