



The TACO Times

Celebrating 31 Years of Bread Day

Volume 4, Issue 3

August 2007

Mel's Summer Fruit Salad

3 to 4 cups nectarines, mango, honeydew, blueberries, or other fresh summer fruit

Syrup:

1 cup juice plus 1 Tbsp. lime zest

1-inch piece ginger, minced
1/4 cup sugar and pinch of salt
1 Tbsp. lemon juice.

Make syrup: Simmer lime juice, sugar and salt in a small, heavy bottomed-saucepan until a honey-colored syrup forms, about 15 mins. Off heat, add lime zest, ginger and lemon juice. Strain and toss with fruit.

Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Melanie Novak is editor of The TACO Times

TACO Wish List

- Donate an item, craft item or gift card to the TACO Autumn Soiree & Silent Auction.
- Join us for a wonderful evening at the Autumn Soiree & Silent Auction!

Got Tickets? TACO Autumn Soiree is September 22

Tickets are on sale now for Third Avenue Charitable Organization's annual fundraiser, the **Autumn Soiree and Silent Auction**.

The event is set for **5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 22** in the Grand Foyer of beautiful **Copley Symphony Hall**, 1245 Seventh Ave. in downtown San Diego.

A creative abundance of donations have been pouring in to auction committee headquarters— here are just a few:

- Autographed baseballs (including Trevor Hoffman and Jake Peavey)
- Ballet, symphony, museum and theater tickets
- One of a kind art
- Pet pampering
- Dining and entertainment

- Yoga lessons

Dinner will be provided by a host of caterers, including Stella's on Third (carving and pasta stations) and beer from Karl Strauss Brewery, one of our sponsors.

Guitarist Eric Foster will provide the live entertainment.. Eric is on the music faculty at Mira Costa College.

New this year is a Wine Auction, which includes an exciting collection of vintages from Oregon and Dave Fischer. Deb Hoistad is organizing wine donations— consider donating a favorite of your own! There will also be a variety of themed gift baskets, organized by Francie Montgomery.

We have been overwhelmed with the generosity of our major sponsors, including Carl Friedemann and Ameriprise Financial, Karl Strauss Brewery,



Minuteman Press, Craig Spruce, Washington Mutual Bank and San Diego National Bank. Many other sponsors have provided financial donations both large and small.

Last year's Autumn Soiree—our first— raised more than \$18,000 for TACO's range of social programs.

Auction committee co-chairs are Lois Case and Rosemary Spruce. For tickets or to make a donation, call the

TACO office at (619.235.9445, extension 124), and check out www.sdtaco.org for more information.

Director's Report: A TACO Family

Each week that we are here I am amazed at the stories that I hear.

Recently I spoke with a woman who's family has been helped at TACO. Her husband has many severe medical issues and he is currently in the hospital in Escondido.

Twice a month for over 3 years,

the two of them would drive down to the church here to receive medical care. While here they would wait for 4 to 5 hours to receive life-saving medication for diabetes and hypertension.

Sometimes they would bring their 3 teenage children but mostly it would just be the two of them as the children needed

to study for school. The oldest was regularly on the honor roll.

While her husband has been in the hospital, it has been difficult for her to work. She was able to secure a part-time position at a retail store but has not been able to work while being with her husband.



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Simon's Walk: Balance in Being Present

By Nance Lovell
Simon's Walk Coordinator

I am often asked, "How is the new program going?" What I'm finding is that many who ask the question want to hear that all is wonderful and successful. When my response indicates anything beyond this, eyes wander and body language becomes restless. I suppose that Death and Dying isn't everyday conversation for most people. Also, I'm not sure that many people know what Simon's Walk is really about. I'd like to share how Simon's Walk is after our first year of a two-year pilot project.

I must say that it is truly wonderful and successful, yet those are relative terms and it goes much deeper. Our full Simon's Walk team includes a Director, a Social Worker, a Simon's Walk Coordinator, and Simon Ministers. Since our inception we have trained three Simon's Walk Ministers. Each month we meet twice for supervision, support, and continued training. During these meetings we review the personal status of each client as well as each Simon Minister. The Simon Ministers have been active for the past six months and it has not been easy for any of us.

Death and Dying is a subject that the average person avoids. We may toy with thoughts of our own mortality, but seldom engage in conversations about death - certainly not with any regularity. Several people have passed through our clinics, street outreach and offices who may be terminally ill and living on the streets - yet only a handful have chosen to share their last days with Simon's Walk. The exact reasoning is

uncertain, but we suspect that in addition to the average persons' taboos about Death and Dying, there are layers of tragedy that keep the distance.

At this time, we have two active clients. One has been seen 1-3 times a week for the past ten months. This person continues to live on the street, enduring many adverse effects on health and spirit. Serious disease and illness make each day a struggle with body limitations, chronic pain, despair, and difficulty with basic needs and hygiene. Our Simon team has been diligent with visits and support, building a caring, loving relationship. Our lives have been changed and enriched through the relationship and we may hope this is a reciprocal process.

Another client has been seen for a little over a month and is building trust with more frequent visits. This person prefers living on the street for the freedom it offers. The inevitability of death is becoming more real and present, which brings a new awareness of end-of-life needs. Past resistance to medical treatment and estranged family relations are being re-examined. Our Simon team has been sensitive to the unique needs of each client and allows the client dignity in taking the lead in all facets of care and relationship.

This brief description is likened to a shiny veneer that covers what we are doing, the actual work is much more gritty. The Simon's Walk team does not know what they will be walking into when they go on a visit. Our clients have been victims of violence, crime, disrespect, abuse, unsanitary conditions,

substance abuse, medical neglect, and rejection. Being terminally ill and on the street also makes one susceptible to possible medical emergencies, incarceration, and abrupt changes. The Simon's Walk team may help with medical care, housing, legal assistance, transportation, family contact, advocacy and support.

The core of Simon Ministers' work is simply to "be present with". Simon Ministers care for active alcoholics, assist changing adult diapers, cry with people who are crying, hear stories 3, 7, 10 times over, pray with people at their request, have visits amongst the raw elements of the street or hospitals, and may have unexpected visitors and/or moments. The caring and dignity they give may be in allowing the client to share their current dilemma or emotional saga without stepping in with advice or trying to fix the problem. Healing takes place by being present and sitting with another who is sharing their life.

The Simon Ministers may tell you of their own personal experience...how this ministry saturates their whole being. It is very soul-full work, being invited to be present with someone in his or her last days. Our lives become entwined and our spirits moved. The relationships bring up emotions that may have been deeply buried or undiscovered. Yet the Simon Ministers have remained committed to be present with, to be compassionate, they experience God's presence, they are finding an inner work to be done, and they are building meaningful relationships with people who are more similar than not.

Simon's Walk, continued

The genuine, simple, gritty human exchanges in Simon Ministry stay with us, stretches our compassion for humanity, opens our ability to be merciful, and deepens our faith in ways never before imagined. ... The balance is found in being present with one another.

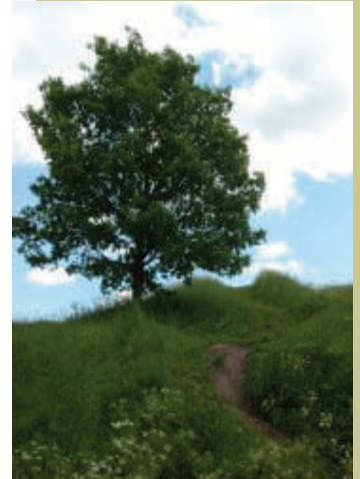
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**This October we will begin a new training group** for

interested volunteers. During August and September we will be available to meet and interview potential Simon Ministers.

Simon Ministers will be required to commit to two years of service, be available to meet with clients 2-4 hours each week during daytime hours, attend supervision/support meetings twice a month, and Interdisciplinary Team Meetings

as needed.

*Nance Lovell is the coordinator of the Simon's Walk Coming Home project . To find out how you can support this program, or to inquire about the new volunteer training, call the TACO office at 619-235-9445, ext. 120 [nance.taco@firstlutheransd.org](mailto:nance.taco@firstlutheransd.org)*



## Director's Report, continued

She was able to secure a part-time position at a retail store but has not been able to work while being with her husband.

She has borrowed a friend's cell phone to contact us as she had to cancel their home phone due to a lack of funds.

She was calling to thank TACO for all the support she has received and for the food we had given to the family, for the presents at Christmas for her children and for the counseling she had received for her depression and grief over the medical issues with her husband.

Though he is currently unable to see due to complications with his diabetic retinopathy, Her husband thanks and asks for blessings upon our work here.

This is a family who is not on the street. They still have a home while many do not. They still have electricity and their children are in school which is not always true for many who come here. They feel fortunate for the care of our UCSD partners, the acupuncture care from Pacific College, and the help of TACO and its volunteers.

When you support TACO, you support families like this. Working families without insurance, whose children want to graduate from high school and be productive members of the community.

Families struck and hindered by illness and poverty and lack of access to care. Families needing help to stay off of the streets and to provide support to their own community.

Thank You for your support.

Peace,  
*Jim Lovell*

***“When you support TACO, you support families like this.”***

## Amanda

After three months of working at TACO it is clear that there is no “typical” day. At first I expected to “shadow” Jim for a month, but found myself eager to jump in and work with people and situations.

From the beginning it’s been a whirlwind and flurry of activity. The busiest time is Monday night, when we serve a meal and host four clinics. There are often several people at one time waiting to talk to me or ask me questions. While on a slow weekday I might only see four clients, on Monday I may interact at different levels with over fifteen.

My week is divided into meal times, clinic times, outreach, and days for drop-in visits and counseling appointments. Each part has a different focus, and calls for different social work skills. I love that I get to do many different kinds of jobs, including wiping tables and setting up chairs.

I am challenged by exploring a variety of issues in more depth as clients present them. Many times the issues are the same – basic needs for food, clothing, transportation to doctor ap-

pointments and job interviews, identification - but even something seemingly simple can become complex. Try getting a copy of a birth certificate from Minnesota without ID, for example.

I am often a problem solver and information seeker, often an advocate. I need to think creatively. Clinical issues that I have encountered at TACO include substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, histories of childhood physical and sexual abuse, and family conflict.

Social issues have included homelessness, unemployment and underemployment, undocumented immigration status, and problems with health insurance.

My best days have happened when I am present in the moment. Then I am most open to “being with” a client, and often find myself seeing and responding to their inner spirit, their unique beauty and individuality.

It creates a loving attitude, fostering an atmosphere of respect and regard that can help a client begin to heal old wounds and move forward with their life. When I can embrace that state of

love and connection, this work is a joy and a blessing.

At moments I’ve been overwhelmed with all the needs and seemingly intractable problems. How can I help? There is only so much of me, and not enough resources. I try to learn to set limits, present choices, and respect myself too. Like my clients, I am pushed to grow and change.

After three months of working at TACO, I can say that it’s not so much what you do, but how you do it that matters. TACO is in a unique position, by not taking government funds, to act in accordance with its mission.

The staff, working from a grounding in faith, embrace what is best of the Christian tradition, but never impose their beliefs on those receiving services. Jim and the other staff bring wonderful and unique contributions to TACO. I feel incredibly lucky to have found First Lutheran and been deemed worthy to join the staff of TACO in serving those in need.

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## Christmas in July—and August—Halfway to Goal

Christmas in July is in full swing! We have raised almost half (\$2,200) of the \$5,000 needed to purchase our goal of 250 sleeping bags along with heavy duty rain tarps to give to our guests during the holidays.

This fundraiser is an annual tradition that’s much anticipated by volunteers and guests alike. Sleeping bags and tarps will be wrapped and distributed at the meal closest to Christmas Eve.

Call the TACO office for information or to make a donation: TACO office at (619.235.9445, extension 124. You can also pick up brochures about the project at First Lutheran to distribute to friends.

## Bread Day Dish from Lisa Seiler

Summer has been quite busy. We have welcomed many new faces to our hot meal program.

Since the beginning of June we have fed over 3,900 people more than 5,550 meals. Our volunteers have dedicated over 2,272 hours the past two months to make this all possible, representing a value of over \$43,100!

TACO hosted a County of San Diego authorized Food Safety Handler's class on Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.

We had ten of our volunteers including front line workers Paul Moorman, Gregg Rayo and myself attend. We also had some restaurant workers from outside TACO join us. We all learned a great deal and also had some fun! The instructor was quite entertaining!

We had a fabulous Baptist youth choir group (48 total!) join us on Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. They were delightful young people and they put on an incredible concert for our guests. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely and the youth said they were very touched by our guests' appreciation.

That very same Friday, TACO hosted an adult ministry group led by one of our loyal volunteers, Chris Justice. We gave both the youth and adult groups an orientation filled with TACO's history and philosophy.

Jim led a reflection time with the adult group after the meal in which they shared their experience at TACO and reflected on the impact it might have on their own ministry.

And, last but not least, we had our very first TACO baby!! Allena Joel Slevcove was born a few weeks earlier than expected to Joe & Beth Slevcove, both of whom are very loyal TACO supporters and volunteers. Congratulations!!

### Some Fun Bread Day Facts:

From June through August, we have served our guests more than:

- 190 pounds of cheese
- 850 dozen doughnuts
- 350 gallons of juice
- 98 jars of peanut butter
- 300 heads of lettuce
- 55 very large pots of soup!

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## Heartfelt thanks to ....

- The young men from Commander Swehla's Submarine group for volunteering their time, brawn and smiles at several of our Monday meals!
- The talented and gracious music interns from Re-Sounding Joy who lead a music program for our guests two Fridays every month.
- Bombay Coast Restaurant in Clairemont Mesa for once again hosting a delicious Indian dinner at one of our Monday meals in July.
- The TACO Board of Directors for taking a group of 35 to the Padres game in August!
- All of our wonderful volunteers who have tirelessly helped with all of our Soiree mailings this summer.
- Our regular volunteers from Calvary Lutheran, Bethlehem, Carlton Hills, St. Andrew's and St. Luke's.



**Caption describing picture or graphic.**



# A place where healing of body, mind and spirit can happen for any and all who come.”

The TACO Times  
Third Avenue Charitable  
Organization, Inc.  
First Lutheran Church  
1420 Third Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92101-3193

## Board of Directors

**President** Lois Case, First Lutheran Church

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First Lutheran Church  
**First Lutheran Council Liaison**

Rosemary Spruce

**Member** Pastor Wilk Miller,  
First Lutheran Church

## Join us

- Preparing and serving meals
- Set-up and cleanup
- Driving, shopping and picking up food
- Gathering other supplies and donations

## Sponsor us

- Urge your company or corporation to contribute
- Organize your church or youth group
- Make an individual financial contribution

## Support us

- With your prayers and voice of advocacy for the people we serve

**Are you a medical professional?** Consider donating your time and services to our medical, dental and acupuncture clinics.

## Contact us

We can not close our eyes to the realities of our community, and we will not close our doors when outside there are people in need.

## Jim Lovell

Project Coordinator

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## Lisa Seiler

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