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The TACO Times

Celebrating 35 Years of Bread Day

Volume 8, Issue 5

November 2011



Christmas in July

Every year for the past seven years, TACO and First Lutheran have joined for our Christmas in July fundraiser. Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to give approximately 250 brightly wrapped Christmas gifts each year—sleeping bags, duffel bags, backpacks—whatever is needed for the community of downtown San Diego.

Our 8th annual Christmas in July fundraiser: \$25 buys a sleeping bag, tarp and essentials for one of our homeless neighbors

We hope to buy 250 sleeping bags by the first week of December, but we don't yet have the funds to cover the cost—so we're turning to our donors to get us to our target by then!

As the days get shorter and the nights get colder, those living on the street are at risk from exposure even in San Diego. A warm sleeping bag could be one of the best Christmas gifts you give this year.

Bread Upon the Waters

A lovely evening was had by all 113 people who came out in support of TACO at "Bread Upon the Waters" the 24th of September. Many thanks to the friends and members of First Lutheran for supporting such a wonderful event. TACO supporters gathered to have dinner, bid on auction items, and enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Southwestern Yacht Club. Thank you to John and Suzanne Pew for sponsoring this event at the yacht club as well as providing one of the most successful live auction items, a harbor cruise and brunch!

Joe Slevcove was again our wonderful Live Auction host and he created great energy and competition. Between his live auction skills and Nance Lovell's silent auction baskets this was the most successful auction yet, bringing in nearly \$12,000!



Instant Karma Photography by JONWON@hotmail.com

Thank you to everyone who made this a successful event! Special thanks to Co-chairs Pastor Andy Taylor & Joey Ager, Ladonna Piper, Kathleen Sorahan, Frank DeLouise & Chuck Leib, and Nance Lovell.

We're pleased to report that we were able to raise \$23,300 total! It's thanks to the hard work of our donors and volunteers that an event like this can be successful. For pictures from this year's fundraiser, see page three.

TACO Receives \$5,000 Economic Bridge Grant: Thrivent will match your donations dollar-for-dollar—up to a total of \$10,000!

We're pleased to report that TACO has recently received a \$5,000 "Lutheran Community Economic Outreach Bridge Grant" from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans foundation.

TACO is one of 81 Lutheran organizations and congregations selected to receive funding as part of the final phase of this pilot program. Organizations receiving the grant are also eligible to participate in an additional \$10,000 challenge grant – in which funds raised by the organization will be matched by the Thrivent Foundation dollar

for dollar. To date, this grant has provided support to 217 ministries resulting in approximately 2.0 million dollars in grants and funds raised!

To ensure we make the most of this opportunity, this week's issue comes with a remittance envelope enclosed. Your entire donation will be matched dollar for dollar by the Thrivent Foundation up to a total of \$10,000 – money that goes towards TACO's mission of serving the homeless and working poor of downtown San Diego.

"Difficult economic conditions and high unemployment rates have caused many Americans to seek support for basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter from local nonprofits," says Kathy Larson, grants program manager for the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. "This grant pilot was designed to help effective organizations maintain their financial stability in the face of increased demand on their resources."

Continued on page two

Volunteer Update: The Edge of the Pool *by Rachel Line*

A few weeks ago, one of our patio guests was chatting with some of the volunteers preparing the Friday morning meal. We'll call him "Jake." Jake was talking about some of the issues he's been dealing with: court hearings, illegal lodging tickets, and other life issues. Then Jake said, "You know, TACO is sort of like the edge of the pool." I wasn't quite following his metaphor, so I asked him to say more. He said something like this: "For most of the time, we're in the deep end of the pool, trying to survive. And occasionally,

you just need to grab on to the edge of the pool and catch your breath."

Our volunteers have worked hard to create this edge of the pool. In October alone, TACO served 2,164 meals to 1,472 people. We thank our regularly scheduled groups from Carlton Hills Lutheran, SDSU's Agape House, St Peter's by the Sea Lutheran, Bethlehem Lutheran, First Baptist of Clairemont, Calvary Lutheran, and St. Luke's Lutheran. Volunteers also come weekly

from St. Andrew's Lutheran, Clairemont Lutheran, College Lutheran, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran, Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, and of course, First Lutheran. Thank you also to groups from Resurrection Lutheran, Del Mar Montessori School, Community Covenant Church, and multiple Girl Scout and Brownie Troops. Taco is truly blessed by the multitude of volunteers who work hard to create a safe environment that can be considered "the edge of the pool." God's grace abounds!

TACO Receives \$5,000 Economic Bridge Grant *continued from page one*

About the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation

Founded in 1982, the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation is a private foundation that operates exclusively for charitable, educational and religious purposes. It supports the health and vitality of the Lutheran community, the Fox Cities of Wisconsin and the Twin Cities of Minnesota. Grants are provided for

projects and missions that reflect Thrivent Financial for Lutherans' charitable interests. The primary charitable interest of the foundation is assisting nonprofit organizations and those they serve in achieving economic security and sustainability. To learn more about the foundation and its programs, visit: www.thrivent.com/foundations.

About Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit, Fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping approximately 2.6 million members achieve financial security and give back to their communities. You can find us on Facebook (www.thrivent.com/facebook) and Twitter (twitter.com/thrivent).

Going Home Update: All Saint's Day *by Nance Lovell*

I'm writing this on the eve of All Saint's Day. I am reminded of the many saints that Going Home has been privileged to know and care for through the past 5 years. Yes, for 5 years Going Home has been serving men and women who are on the street and dying of a terminal illness. Our clients have shared their lives and their wisdom with us and we have grown in compassion and understanding of humanity and mortality.

I know that the saints we have buried will be awaiting my arrival at the gates of heaven when my time comes. It is a humbling reminder to me that we are all in this life and death and life together. TACO joined the annual vigil on Nov. 6 to honor and remember the homeless men and women who have died on San Diego streets over the past year.

This has been a year of change for Simon's Walk, our volunteer portion of Going Home. We are grateful to Marge Hersom and Michelle Matson for their volunteer service over the past few months. Each has had to end their service for personal family and health mat-

ters. We also give many thanks to LaVerne Neuman, our seasoned Simon's Walk volunteer who continues to serve with us for almost 4 years. She has "walked" with 4 terminally ill clients and served endless meals! Over the next couple months we will be evaluating and planning for a new training of Simon's Walk volunteers in the early part of next year.

We have continued to serve a steady stream of 5-8 clients during the past year. Some clients have had the ability and desire to gain housing; others have chosen to remain on the street. The intensive care and laborious service is demanding much of the time. This is due to the time involved with individualized care, the depth of what death and dying entails, and the human element of its effects on our own mortality. Our program is currently operating on a social work position of only 12 hours per week! Please join us in prayer as we seek God's will for the future of Going Home. This has been a ministry shaped by the guidance of many, the prayers of its leaders and volunteers, and most of all by the

clients whom we serve. We look to the next 5 years with great hope and anticipation.

As we approach the coming holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas, please remember those who live without family, without basic needs, without access to care, and who may be in failing or terminal illness. Perhaps you might consider serving them as a volunteer with our meal program or as a Simon's Walk volunteer. As you will read in other sections, from now through January 2012 we are benefit to a matching contribution campaign with Thrivent Financial as well, should you feel so inclined.

For more information regarding the Simon's Walk volunteer component, please contact Nance Lovell at 619-235-9445 ext. 110 or at nance.taco@firstlutheransd.org. An application and interview will be part of the screening process. All volunteers will be provided approximately 30 hours of training and mentoring.

Bread Upon the Waters 2011—thanks to our donors, volunteers and guests!



This Month in the TACO Times:

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- **TACO Receives Matching Grant** (page 1)
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Items most needed by TACO!

- Men's socks (white, crew)
- Disposable razors
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Small size deodorant
- Travel size sunscreen
- Travel size shampoo/conditioner
- Jackets
- Blankets

***“...gathering as a community in service with
the most vulnerable among us...”***