

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota's Resource Catalog for Faith Communities



Greetings! We are the Church Partnerships and Volunteer Services Team of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS).

LSS is the social service ministry of the six ELCA synods of Minnesota. Through more than 25 lines of service, we reach 1 in 63 Minnesotans annually and provide services in each of Minnesota's 87 counties. Our work is grounded in two principles—God loves all people unconditionally and God yearns for us to love our neighbors. These principles call us to assure that:

- Children and families will have safe, stable homes and the opportunity to thrive in community.
- People with disabilities will have access to social services and the opportunity to contribute to community life.
- Older adults will have choice in the services they receive and opportunities to participate in community life.

Congregations are a critical partner in helping support LSS' work in these areas. Likewise, we want to be a valued partner to you, helping to extend the reach of your social ministries. We are excited to provide this resource catalog to your congregation as a guide for ways we can partner to serve our neighbors. We have grouped our offerings into three main categories:

- Worship
- Faith formation
- Service

We look forward to working with you in the coming months and we are excited about the meaningful ways that together, we can express the love of Christ for all people through service that inspires hope, changes lives and builds community.

Worship

Faith Formation

Service

Meet Our Team | Church Partnerships and Volunteer Services Team



Rev. Kathryn Tiede

Associate Vice President
of Philanthropy

Rev. Kathryn A. Tiede serves as the Associate Vice President for Philanthropy at Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, under a call to special service through the Saint Paul Area Synod.

Kathryn moved from parish ministry to serving at LSS in 2015. She has served congregations of the ELCA and The Episcopal Church, ministering in both English and Spanish. She holds degrees from Macalester College, Harvard Divinity School and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Kathryn finds that her ecumenical and interreligious education serves her well in her role at LSS.

Kathryn has served on the ELCA Church Council, the Saint Paul Area Synod Council, the Advisory Council of Southern Seminary and the Board of Lutheran Campus Ministry of the Twin Cities. Her husband, Gary Guptill, serves as the senior pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Mora, Minnesota. The couple is busily raising a brood of teen and young adult children, and loves serving Jesus through the church.

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Rev. Amanda Simons

Director of Church Partnerships
and Volunteerism

Rev. Amanda Simons serves as Director of Church Partnerships and Volunteerism with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

She is a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. As a part of her seminary education, she completed a four-unit Clinical Pastoral Education residency with HealthEast Bethesda Hospital and a parish internship at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bloomington. She served as associate pastor at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Saint Paul, from 2013 to 2023.

Currently, she is serving as a Board of Trustees member with Gustavus Adolphus College for a one-year appointment term. She recently completed eight years of volunteer service in the elected officer role of secretary for the Saint Paul Area Synod. She lives in Edina, Minnesota with her spouse and children. She volunteers for her local school district's PTO activities and occasionally coaches soccer.

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Erin Gonzalez-Bardzinski

Volunteer Services Manager

Erin Gonzalez-Bardzinski serves as the Volunteer Services Manager at LSS. Prior to joining the Church Partnerships and Volunteer Services team, Erin worked with LSS Companion Services where she managed a grant program focused on providing comprehensive dementia training for volunteers serving older adults.

Erin received her Bachelor of Science degree from Middle Tennessee State University and her Master's degree in Nonprofit Management from Hamline University. She loves connecting people with volunteer opportunities that spark their passion, make a difference in their community and advance social justice initiatives.

When Erin is not working, she can be found on soccer or ultimate frisbee fields, cheering on her children. She loves reading, scrapbooking and going to concerts with her husband.

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651.310.9427



Malyn Kuntz

Volunteer Services Specialist

Malyn Kuntz has significant experience working with volunteer services, both at LSS and at other nonprofits. She is deeply passionate about connecting community members with ways they can serve their neighbors. Her role at LSS includes hosting trainings, providing resources and creating new volunteer opportunities in collaboration with many lines of service at LSS.

She has a degree in political science from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where she also studied Spanish. Malyn served with the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission in Argentina from 2016-2017, during which time she had the great honor of accompanying a congregation in Patagonia and doing volunteer work with them.

Malyn lives in Saint Paul and enjoys reading and going for walks along the Mississippi.

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Worship Involvement

LSS leaders and volunteers are available to participate in the worship life of your congregation in a variety of ways, outlined below.

Please contact congregations@lssmn.org for scheduling inquiries.

Guest Preaching

Guest preachers focus on the gospel of Jesus Christ and weave in LSS-related stories that reflect our shared mission to express the love of *Christ for all people through service that inspires hope, changes lives and builds community.*

Guest preachers will use the scripture texts from the congregation's preferred lectionary or sermon series. For volunteers serving on LSS' Visiting Team, we request a pulpit supply be gifted to them directly in accordance with the guidelines of your congregational synod. For our Church Partnerships Team, the congregation may choose to make a gift in honorarium directly to LSS.

Ministry Moment

Guest speakers will provide a 3-5-minute introduction and/or update on the partnership between the congregation and LSS. In consultation with congregational leadership, guest speakers may provide a general introduction to the mission and ministries of LSS, introduce and emphasize a particular ministry, or provide an update on a ministry in which the congregation is currently involved. We also use this opportunity to recognize your congregation's partnership and generosity.

Worship Officiant

Our team is well-equipped to officiate worship services. LSS is happy to support clergy and deacons in taking sabbath time by serving as a worship officiant.

Worship Resources

"God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday: Sept. 9, 2024.

During *"God's Work. Our Hands."* Sunday, ELCA congregations commit to opportunities to serve and love our neighbors. Consider incorporating LSS into your worship life, faith formation opportunities and service celebration for this year's *"God's Work. Our Hands."*

Resources can be found at lssmn.org/GWOH.

LSS Sunday

Consider choosing a Sunday within the life of your congregation to designate as *LSS Sunday*, a day of celebration and commitment to our shared partnership.

An LSS Sunday could include:

- Inviting a member of our Church Partnerships and Volunteerism Team to preach, provide a ministry moment and/or lead an adult forum about an LSS service.
- Self-facilitating or requesting an LSS employee to facilitate a Learn + Serve + Give event at your campus.
- Designating a special offering to LSS.
- Including LSS and the people we serve into the prayers of your congregation.
- Sharing information about LSS, including our volunteering opportunities and in-kind donation needs, in your congregation's print and/or digital publications.

Prayers of the People

Please consider praying for LSS and all whom we serve. Many congregations pray regularly for their local and global mission partners, just as we pray for you and the mission and ministries of your congregation.

If you would like LSS to provide options for petitions that can be incorporated into your congregational Prayers of the People, also known as the Prayers of Intercession, please contact us at

congregations@lssmn.org.

Faith Formation

We value occasions to engage people's hearts and minds through educational opportunities that connect your congregation's interests and the mission of LSS. Please contact congregations@lssmn.org for scheduling inquiries or for more information on the opportunities noted below.

LSS Presentations

We offer in-person or pre-recorded interactive presentations suitable for all ages and intergenerational educational opportunities. Presenters may be members of the Church Partnerships and Volunteer Services Team and/or an LSS employee whose expertise aligns with a congregation's interests. We are happy to tailor our presentations to fit your group's needs.

Cherish All Children

Cherish All Children is a ministry of LSS that partners with churches and communities to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking through education. Cherish All Children offers presentations, resources and tools for youth and adults that promote healthy and safe relationships, guided by our Christian values.

Please contact Joy McElroy, Director of Cherish All Children, at info@cherishallchildren.org for more information or visit cherishallchildren.org for our downloadable guide: *Safe and Healthy Relationships*.

Empathy Building Exercises

LSS empathy building group exercises are designed to help participants put themselves in situations outside their comfort zone and social location to better understand the needs and experiences of our neighbors. These exercises may be facilitated by a congregational leader or by an LSS team member. Exercises may be completed as a stand-alone activity or incorporated into a Learn + Serve + Give event (see page 7).

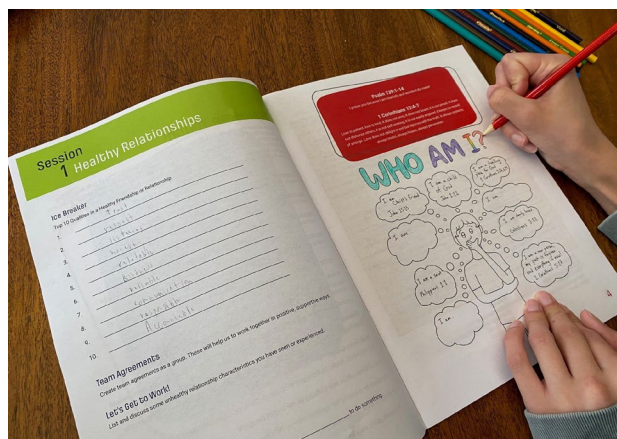
Vacation Bible School (VBS)

We would love to join your congregation for VBS! Whether collecting a "noisy" offering for LSS Meals, making blankets for Camp Noah, preparing birthday bags for youth experiencing foster care or enjoying story time with an age and theme appropriate children's book, possibilities to partner with LSS abound!

Please contact us at congregations@lssmn.org to discuss ideas and options.

Youth Ministry

As you plan youth ministry summer programming, please reserve time in your calendar for a Learn + Serve + Give event with LSS. These events offer a flexible learning and service opportunity for youth and can be held at your site, an LSS site or wherever your programming occurs. [Learn more at lssmn.org](http://lssmn.org).





Learn + Serve + Give

Expand the reach of your social ministry in partnership with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Learn + Serve + Give events provide your congregation with the opportunity to learn about a societal issue impacting our neighbors, serve through a hands-on project, and give via volunteerism, in-kind donations or financial gifts.



LEARN how Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS) supports our neighbors in living full and abundant lives.

Select a programmatic focus that aligns with your group's interests. LSS will provide a corresponding presentation and empathy building exercise to enhance learning.

Camp Noah is a nationally acclaimed program where children in communities impacted by disaster can experience the power of hope and healing through a proven resiliency curriculum.

LSS Youth and Family Services help keep youth and children safe and supported by providing early intervention and prevention services, supportive shelters and housing options for youth experiencing homelessness, and services to restore and strengthen families.

LSS Community Residential Homes for individuals with disabilities are designed to help each person live as independently as possible, while still providing a safe environment and the connection of a shared living experience.

The Adoption Programs of Children's Home Society of Minnesota and LSS help children thrive while strengthening and sustaining individual, family and community life through adoption, foster care and post adoption services.



SERVE our neighbors by selecting a hands-on activity for your group to complete.

LSS will provide your group with supply lists, project instructions and information for delivering completed projects.

Tie Blankets for Camp Noah and LSS Youth and Family Services: Assemble fleece tie blankets for children living in disaster impacted communities served by Camp Noah as well as for young people served through LSS Youth and Family Services.

Hygiene Kits for LSS Youth Services: Assemble kits containing culturally appropriate hygiene products for highly mobile and low-income youth served by LSS.

Hygiene Kits for Community Residential Homes: Assemble kits containing hygiene products for residents of Community Residential Homes, many of whom live on small stipends and may be unable to purchase necessities.

Birthday Bags for Youth Experiencing Foster Care: Assemble birthday celebration bags for youth experiencing foster care, so that they can enjoy a festive birthday party!



GIVE via volunteerism, in-kind donations or financial gifts to advance LSS' mission to express the love of Christ for all people through services that inspire hope, build community and change lives.

Please contact congregations@lssmn.org to learn more.

2024 Servant of Christ Award Recipients

The work of LSS is a mosaic of amazing acts of caring and courage in communities everywhere. The Servant of Christ Award is one of the ways that LSS honors those amazing acts. Annually, LSS recognizes one or more congregations in each of Minnesota's six ELCA synods that are leaders in social ministry. LSS was pleased to recognize the following congregations with the 2024 Servant of Christ Award:



Calvary Lutheran Church
Park Rapids
Northwestern Minnesota Synod

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, ELCA

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Brainerd | Northeast Minnesota Synod



All Saints Lutheran Church
Eagan
Saint Paul Area Synod



Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
New Prague | Minneapolis Area Synod



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Redwood Falls
Southwest Minnesota Synod



St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Red Wing | Southeast Minnesota Synod

Get Involved

LSS is an organization made up of neighbors helping neighbors. From service projects and event attendance to donation drives and volunteerism, LSS offers many ways for your congregation to serve our neighbors.

Volunteer Opportunities

LSS offers a variety of ongoing volunteer opportunities (detailed below) as well as variable, direct service opportunities. Find current opportunities available in your community at lssmn.org/volunteer.

The LSS Visiting Team

The LSS Visiting Team is a dedicated volunteer group of lay and rostered leaders who work alongside our Church Partnerships and Volunteer Services employees. The Visiting Team represents LSS to our congregational partners by preaching and teaching the gospel, sharing the impactful work of LSS and engaging with faith communities to explore new ways we can serve our neighbors.

If you are interested in being a part of the LSS Visiting Team, please contact Amanda.Simons@lssmn.org for more information.

Congregational Ambassadors

Congregational Ambassadors are volunteers who serve as a liaison between their home congregation and LSS. Ambassadors work with LSS employees to help facilitate service opportunities, share relevant LSS communications, participate in fundraising efforts, and join in advocacy efforts.

The LSS Church Partnerships team supports congregational ambassadors through quarterly gatherings that are held in-person and/or online. Please contact congregations@lss.org to recommend an LSS ambassador for your congregation.

Advocate

The LSS Advocacy Office focuses on legislative issues that impact the communities and neighbors served by LSS. The advocacy team provides training sessions in how to be an effective advocate with your elected officials. Contact advocacy@lssmn.org to inquire about these sessions.

Ways to Give

Your gifts to LSS support our neighbors in tangible ways while advancing our mission to inspire hope, change lives and build community.

Financial Gifts

Your generous support of LSS touches the lives of more than 91,000 Minnesotans every year. Learn more about ways to give by visiting lssmn.org/donate.

In-Kind Donations

Make a difference by donating needed items to an LSS service. Our services benefit most from donations of specific, requested items and cash donations. Current needs are noted at lssmn.org/donate.

Holiday Giving Opportunities

LSS Community Residential Services: Consider brightening the holidays for individuals with disabilities by planning holidays, festivities or purchasing gifts. Please contact volunteers@lssmn.org to be partnered with a Community Residential Home for the holidays.

LSS Housing Services Adopt-A-Family: LSS Housing Services collects holiday gifts for families across Minnesota who are supported by our services. Please contact volunteers@lssmn.org for more details.

Twin Cities Metro Youth Homelessness Services: Gifts received during the holidays allow youth experiencing homelessness to celebrate, feel recognized and loved at a time when they may be disconnected from their families and in need of extra support. Contact volunteers@lssmn.org for more information.

Community Events

Share your passion and support for the statewide work of LSS by attending one of our fundraising or community events. Visit lssmn.org/events to stay up-to-date on events happening near you!

Blanket Drive

During the months of January and February, LSS Behavioral Health in the Twin Cities hosts a blanket drive to support neighbors served by LSS and our community partners. Contact Macey Lee at 612.879.5347 or Macey.Lee@lssmn.org for more information.

Benefit for Youth Events

Each May we celebrate and support the ways that LSS Youth & Family Services are helping empower children, youth and families across Minnesota. Congregations are invited to join us at events held in Rochester, Duluth and the Twin Cities. Email congregations@lssmn.org for details.



Cherish All Children Walk/Run

Cherish All Children hosts a 5K walk/run each June to raise awareness and funds to help prevent sexual trafficking and the exploitation of children and youth. Contact Joy.Mcelroy@cherishallchildren.org to learn how your congregation can participate.

Celebration for Changing Lives

On Saturday, September 14, 2024 LSS will host its annual Celebration for Changing Lives gala. This festive evening highlights the powerful ways that together, we are helping all people live and work in community with full and abundant lives. Email congregations@lssmn.org for details.

Community Meals

Get to know your neighbors over a shared meal provided by our partners at Community Bridge. Community Meals are held every Thursday at the Center for Changing Lives Minneapolis from noon-1 p.m. All are welcome to join in this opportunity for community building! Email info@communitybridgempls.org for more information.



Camp Knutson's Night Under the Stars & Quilt Auction

Camp Knutson is a supportive, medically-sound camp for individuals with disabilities, medical conditions and other identified needs. Each summer, the community is invited to support camp at two premier fundraising events: Night Under the Stars (July) and the Quilt Auction (August). Visit campknutson.org for details.



Mission

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota expresses the love of Christ for all people through service that inspires hope, changes lives and builds community.



Vision

All people have the opportunity to live and work in community with full and abundant lives.



**Lutheran
Social Service**
of Minnesota

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