

## *A Series on Bread*

*Introduction for church leaders:*

### **Food Programs to Know & Appreciate**

*In 2012, July 29 through Aug 26 all have lectionary texts that mention bread.*

July 29, John 6:1-21 Feeding of 5000

Aug 5, John 6:24-35 People come looking for more bread - "I am bread of life"

Aug 12, John 6:35, 41-51 more on Bread of Life

Aug 19, John 6:51-58 The one who eats this bread will live forever

Aug 26, John 6:56-69 This is the bread that came down from heaven...

#### **What is this?**

Picking up on the bread theme, this series is offered to familiarize the public with programs that are helping with food needs and that deserve our appreciation and support.

#### **What to do with them?**

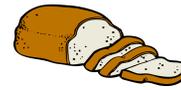
We hope you will use these half-page fliers for Sunday bulletin inserts or in church newsletters. (If they are posted online, a note in the bulletin could refer people to them.) They are designed for this summer, July 29-Aug 26, but could be used in the fall. If you wait too late, there is the chance that Congress may have already cut these programs.

#### **Why?**

Programs that help people who are poor and hungry are often maligned. We know this hurts. It puts both participants and programs in a bad light, increasing stigma and discouraging some people from getting the help they need, especially the elderly. But we know that Jesus' habit was to lift up those who were put down by society. Perhaps by appreciating these programs, we can help improve perceptions, protect nutrition programs, and help people who need food on the table.

Consider strengthening your advocacy for hungry people by joining Bread for the World: [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)

CC Brechtelsbauer for Bread for the World -SD  
605-335-6222, [ryebread@breadrising.org](mailto:ryebread@breadrising.org)



*1<sup>st</sup> of 5*

*Let None be Hungry*

### **Food Programs to Know & Appreciate**

#### **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

- Plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for many low-income families
- Helps to provide healthy meals and snacks at 982 day care centers and 875 home day cares in South Dakota, and healthy snacks at 41 afterschool programs in South Dakota
- Federal funds, administered by the state
- Sherri says her child would have been a latchkey child, but with the afterschool program, now he not only has a safe place to go, but also a healthy snack.

#### **WIC (Supplemental Nutrition for Women, Infants & Children)**

- Monitors children's health; Education on nutrition and eating habits; Referrals to other health resources; Education and support for breast-feeding; Coupons for specified foods that now include fruits and vegetables
- Saves lives and improves the health of nutritionally at-risk women, infants and children: Fewer premature births; Fewer infant deaths; Every WIC dollar saves from \$1.77 to \$3.13 in health care costs in the first 60 days after birth.
- Average monthly participation in South Dakota: 4555 pregnant and new moms, 4917 infants, 11,418 children ages 1 to 5
- Federal funds, administered by the state
- Ask if your pastor knew fellow seminarians and grad students who needed WIC for babies that came along before studies were complete. Did WIC help them finish their programs, so they could move on to benefit society and become taxpaying citizens?

#### **You can help:**

- Ask Congress to make a circle of protection around programs that provide for life's basic needs.
- Ask South Dakota's governor and state legislators to adopt the feature of WIC that has extra coupons for food at farmers markets.
- To call about WIC, 800-738-2301

Bread for the World-SD, 7/12

**Food Programs to Know & Appreciate****Meals on Wheels and Senior Congregate Meals**

- Provide well over one million meals a day to seniors in the U.S., including 5,539 a day average in South Dakota
- Some meals are served at congregate sites, like senior centers and senior housing. Other meals are delivered to the homes of those with limited mobility.
- The program depends on volunteers, sometimes called “the largest volunteer army in the nation”.
- Funded by federal and state dollars, local donations, and the amounts the seniors themselves are able to give for the meals
- Gerald and Erma Allen (married 69 years) both have significant health problems, but they feel most fortunate to continue living in their home. They count on Meals on Wheels to help them meet their nutritional needs.

**Commodity Senior Food Program (CSFP)**

- Supplemental food boxes are packed for low-income senior citizens each month in this federal farm support program.
- These boxes, worth about \$35-\$40 retail, are in great demand. South Dakota is allocated enough for 4,231 participants, although over 20,000 seniors would qualify by age and income.
- Western Community Action Program in Rapid City and Feeding South Dakota distribute this nutritious food to over 60 local agencies that get the food to the seniors.
- Like many others, Mrs. W. says, “I don't know what I would do without this box.”

**You can help:**

- Ask Congress to make a circle of protection around programs like these that provide for life's basic needs.
- Ask our governor and state legislators to adopt the Senior Farmers Market Program, which gives coupons to seniors for food at farmers markets.
- Volunteer to drive a Meals on Wheels route in your city.

**Food Programs to Know & Appreciate****Free- and Reduced-Price School Meals**

- Congress created the National School Lunch Program as a “measure of national security” after many young men were rejected in the World War II draft. Research found a connection between physical deficiencies and childhood malnutrition.
- Because of low incomes in South Dakota, 42.7% of school-age children are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
- School breakfast helps raise math and reading scores. Kids do better on standardized tests when they eat closer to test time, better than those who ate no breakfast or who ate it at home.
- Over 100 South Dakota schools are participating in the new federal Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program that provides a wide variety of fruit and vegetable snacks in elementary schools.
- “I can tell within the first 30 minutes of the day which students have not had a solid breakfast, and that start continues to effect the rest of their day. Having enough to eat and access to nutritious food should not be a privilege.” -3rd grade teacher

**Summer Lunch**

- “Open sites” (most of them) offer lunch to all children, regardless of income - in order to reduce paperwork and stigma.
- If enough students nearby qualify for free or reduced-price meals in the school year, a school or non-profit may sponsor a site.
- 329,791 meals were served at 69 sites in South Dakota in 2011.
- Federal reimbursement covers most of the cost.
- A lack transportation causes many children to miss out.
- Host Pastor Cheryl says, “Some parents are at work, and children wouldn't get the meals they would get during the school year.”

**You can help:**

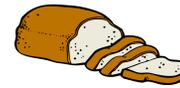
- Ask Congress to protect funds for school meals and summer too.
- Find out if you are in or near a place that needs a summer lunch site. (605-773-3110) If so, get the ball rolling for next summer.
- Help children with transportation to the summer lunch sites.

**Food Programs to Know & Appreciate****The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, often still called Food Stamps)**

- SNAP (Food Stamps) is the nation's #1 defense against hunger. It supports farmers and the nation's health. It gets food to all who qualify and currently helps about 1 in 8 South Dakotans, including 47,000 children, plus the elderly, people with disabilities, and people simply unable to find work or find enough work.
- Benefits phase out as participants get back on their feet. The benefit is based on income and can be as little as \$16 a month.
- The average stay on the program is 9 months.
- A critical feature is the program's ability to adjust to the need. Enrollment goes up and down with the economy. Thus, SNAP is an "automatic stabilizer" for both households and communities. Each \$5 in the benefits (federally-funded) generates approximately \$9.20 in total community spending.
- The past decade's increase is due to the economic downturn, lower incomes of households, the increased cost of food, and the temporary stimulus benefit boost now being phased out.
- SNAP boasts one of the highest accuracy rates. SNAP fraud is now at a historic and enviable low level, less than 1%.
- Mr. A. says, "I need work, but I need help while I'm looking for work." Mr. S. says, "... We have medical expenses, about \$10,000. We are trying to get some sort of financial assistance but it is taking a while. If you cut food stamps, we could starve."

**You can help:**

- Ask Congress not to allow cuts in SNAP, the most important of all the food programs in helping people meet their basic needs.
- Help reduce the stigma. Say good things about SNAP. It will be "good news to the poor", lifting the spirits of the participants, giving courage to those who need to apply. If you see a need, urge people to find out if they qualify. (877-999-5421)
- Resist passing on negative stories. If you see fraud, report it (800-765-STOP), and help keep from giving SNAP a bad name.

**Food Programs to Know & Appreciate****Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR, unofficially known as commodities)**

- In SD this USDA food is distributed by local tribal organizations.
- It is an option, instead of food stamps, used by 7,700 people in South Dakota on reservations or in certain areas near a reservation. Eligibility is based on federal income and resource criteria.
- Participants receive a food package each month. Some pick up the food, but it is delivered to people who are elderly or disabled.
- The quality of the available food has improved over the years, less starchy and salty, better meat, more produce. The amount of food does not vary according to income of the recipient.
- Nutrition education is provided. Ms. Menard, nutritionist on the Rosebud reservation, uses foods from the package in her popular cooking demonstrations and includes diabetic recipes.

**The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**

- TEFAP began in 1981 to reduce inventory and storage costs of surplus USDA foods. Now, in addition to surpluses, USDA buys some food specifically for TEFAP. It is not designed to be a primary food source, but it may supplement other sources. Available foods vary, depending on market conditions.
- Food through TEFAP is not always available. When it is, a state agency oversees distribution to local food pantries and soup kitchens to help families in need.
- Households receiving food for use at home are subject to the eligibility criteria set by the state.

**You can help:**

- Ask Congress to make a circle of protection around programs like these that provide for life's basic needs.
- Explore *River of Recipes, Native American Recipes Using Commodity Foods*. It includes "buffaloaf", although, sorry to say, bison meat is not in the food package at the current time. [www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/recipes/hhp/fdpir-cookbk\\_river1.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/recipes/hhp/fdpir-cookbk_river1.pdf)