



**Arms Outstretched 2011-12**

Arms Outstretched members support TACO by donating \$365 or more over the course of a year.

- Alan and Joyce Comstock
- Anonymous (3)
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- Brenda Johnson
- Carol Harris
- Charles Leib and Frank DeLouise
- Charlotte Pettus
- Charlotte Collins
- Christine McKown
- David and Lois Case
- Diana Randall
- Dianna Little
- Donald Line
- Donald Snowden
- Frank Jessie
- George Nakashima
- George Bassett, M.D.
- Harmony and Health Foundation
- James and Ruth Gibbons
- Jeannie Oestreicher
- Jack and Donna Adler
- John and Katherine Adler
- John and Marjorie Wahlsten
- John and Mickey Lester
- John and Suzanne Pew
- John Wilbur
- Kathleen and Dan Sorahan
- Kathleen Harrington
- Kevin Gannon
- Ladonna Piper
- Laverne Neuman
- Leslie Atkins
- Linda Bright and Kristin Westerman
- Lori Cook
- Marjorie and Dan Wilkens
- Mark and Laure Reynolds
- Mary Erlenborn
- Matthew Boomhower
- Mickey and Stephanie Wade
- Molina Healthcare, Inc.
- Navy Federal Credit Union
- Pastor Andrew Taylor
- Pastor Bill and Martha Radatz
- Pastor Brian Hooper
- Pastor Harvey and Ruthann Peters
- Pastor Laurie Line
- Pastor Noel and Gretchen Estergren
- Pastor Ted and Marietta Johns
- Paul Engel
- Peggy and Carl Ross
- Rachel Line
- Richard Hostin
- Richard Phillips
- Robert and Donamay King
- Robert and Gretchen Ravenscroft
- Robert Anderson
- Steven and Carol Hassett
- Steven Moreen
- Sue and Merv Rettenmund
- Victoria Wilson
- William and Barbara Henderson

# The TACO Times

## Celebrating 36 Years of Bread Day

Volume 9, Issue 3

July 2012

### Director's Report by Jim Lovell

It's late, 10:30pm. I am in the sanctuary and the lights are almost completely off. There is just a small light emitting from the ceiling down on the green fabrics on the altar. The light from the Everlasting Candle, or Christ Candle on the other side of the altar shines brightest in the room, creating a cross-shaped shadow on the wall surrounding. The night's quiet is shattered by the sounds of an ambulance siren blaring through the intersection at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Ash, headed to care for someone out on the street. I turn off the last of the electric lights left on by an acupuncture student who treated the man in the wheelchair next to the baptismal pool an hour ago, and head upstairs.

This image maybe best describes TACO and First Lutheran



Church's work in downtown. It is powerful, it is shattering, it is disturbing, and it is filled with holiness in an amazing way. This same Monday night, a patient of the UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic had a seizure while in the midst of checking in to be seen. The medical students were imme-

diately with her and her family member, right there on the floor, assisting and comforting. One of the physicians, Dr. Sunny Smith the medical co-director, came seemingly from nowhere and provided her healing touch while teaching her students at the same time.

*continued on page 2*

### Empty Bowls Raises over \$17,000—plus \$20,000 more from the Parker Foundation

TACO is pleased to announce another record haul from our annual Empty Bowls fundraiser, held on Saturday, May 12th at La Jolla United Methodist Church—this time with an assist from two of our partners in the fight for the homeless and working poor of downtown San Diego.

First, guests at the fundraiser itself gave their fellowship and support, picking from a selection of handmade bowls donated by local potters, enjoying delicious food donated by local restaurants, and enjoying the music of the Gone Tomorrow Bluegrass band. They also showed their great



generosity by donating over \$15,000 on the day of the fundraiser.

Next, our friends at St. Peter's by the Sea Lutheran Church held their own Empty Bowls fundraiser, raising over \$1,600—with an additional \$600 match expected from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Finally, the Parker Foundation pledged \$20,000 in matching funds for whatever we raised for Empty Bowls, and now they've provided the entire \$20,000.

*continued on page 2*

## Director's Report *continued from page one*

This all happens while more than 60 people fill all areas of the church building meeting with students and professionals from 6 different disciplines to receive healing that so far has been out of their reach. This part is the usual for a Monday night. It too is a miracle unto itself. Oh, and did I mention the 195 persons who earlier in the afternoon, at 4pm, came to eat?

Oftentimes I feel like we come to you, our donors, our volunteers, and our supporters too often asking for money. Asking for your gifts to keep our doors open and to continue our daily work here. I don't feel that today. I am exuberantly thankful. I am glad that we can count you all as partners in this work. It is your work too, your prayers, your gifts, your work that makes it possible that we continue to do this work according to our mission statement:

"Following Christ's example, TACO gathers as a community in service with the most vulnerable among us, offering meals, healing, and care to any and all who come." (2011)



### Simon's Walk Welcomes its New Volunteers

(from left to right: Barbara D'Aversa, Christine Habib, Nance Lovell, LaVerne Neuman, Paulette Jansen, Debby Hays)

On Sunday, July 15th at the 9am service First Lutheran Church will bless them as they begin their service. All are invited to show their support and appreciation for the work done by Simon's Walk and Going Home.

## Thanks to our Sponsors and Contributors!

### Restaurants

Albertson's  
Beaumont's  
Bernini's Bistro  
Brigantine Seafood  
Dinner A-Go-Go  
El Indio Mexican Restaurant & Bakery  
George's at the Cove  
Hard Rock Café  
Maria's Catering  
Miguel's Cucina Meximan Food  
Pacifica Del Mar  
Point Loma Seafoods  
Sammy's Woodfired Pizza  
San Diego Yacht Club  
Souplantation  
The Cottage  
The Fishery  
The French Gourmet  
Three Squares  
Von's  
Waters Catering  
Whisknadle  
Whole Foods Market

### Bakeries

Bread & Cie  
Champagne French Bakery  
Charlie's Best Bread  
Einstein's  
Girard Gourmet  
Julian Bakery  
Village Mill Bread Company

### Potters

Bishop's School  
CASD Members  
Clay Associates  
El Cajon Valley High School  
Francis Parker High School  
Get Centered  
Plum Pottery  
SDSU  
SDPG  
UC Craft Center

### Sponsors

Aardvark Clay & Supplies  
St. Peter's by the Sea  
La Jolla United Methodist Church

### Music

Gone Tomorrow Bluegrass Band

## Empty Bowls (from page one)

Of course, none of this would be possible without the effort and talent of all the people who made it happen. TACO would especially like to thank:

Lynn Render and all the San Diego potters who donated their time and skills—it wouldn't be Empty Bowls without the bowls!

Frank DeLouise and Jennifer Siverts-McGrady, our board members who organized the event and coordinated our volunteers.

Those same volunteers, who helped set up, collect and serve the food and bowls, and cleaned up afterwards.

Giovanna Iaffaldano, who managed publicity and took the pictures you can see on the insert.

All the restaurants, bakeries, potters and sponsors listed to the left, as well as the Gone Tomorrow Bluegrass Band

Gerald T. and Inez Grant Parker of the Parker Foundation, who provided \$20,000 in matching funds.

## The Burden of Joy *by Nance Lovell*

Isn't this an oxymoron? We often reference serving the poor as if we are serving Jesus. "...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" Matt. 25:40. It is a spiritual humbling and a good motto for serving others. Yet when we serve as a way of life, the poetic and romantic notions may take on additional meanings and feelings. There are times like now, when I certainly feel the ebb and flow more distinctly.

What do you do if someone threatens to physically assault you? Perhaps, even drawing back their arm with clenched fist, fiery eyes, and shrieking obscenities. How about if someone uses racial slurs and blames you for their lifelong demise? Then there is the occasion when someone is shouting and spewing endless profanities at the world and refuses to stop. Of course we cannot leave out when you get a surprise pile of human waste at your car door or office patio. How is it to spend an hour in an enclosed room with odors of sweat, smoke and stale alcohol permeating every inch of oxygen? How would you face violent and sexual offenders - finding service with "the least of these" to trigger an unfolding of your hidden prejudices and fears? TACO employees often encounter

such dilemmas, more often than you might imagine. In fact, this describes my previous week at work.

At our recent Church Synod Assembly (an annual meeting of Southern California Lutheran churches) TACO hosted an organization table with a banner reading, "Joy in Service." It was adorned with balloons and numerous 8 x 10 photos of staff and volunteers joyously serving our "patio parishioners" and/or clients. I desire to connect with and revisit that joy in my service.

When I reflect on my past week of work, I'm finding it humorous at best - and quite honestly, lacking joy in any amount. Or am I? After experiencing and re-experiencing the harshness of violence, anger, and severe mental illness, it can take its toll. I know Joy is that deeper sense of God's presence within - I'm not feeling any abandonment or absence. It's that link between joy and contentment. They are varying, yet there is a commonality as well. My contentment and equanimity have been shaken.

It is in this work, this service to our neighbors, that we feel the grit. It is hard on the spirit and heavy on the soul. One recent morning I arrived at work and one

of my clients quietly came into the patio. After a while, I learned that a car had hit him the previous night. Police had taken him to the hospital by force and he chose to leave before being treated (most likely due to shock). As we talked, it became obvious that gentle guidance might allow him to consider returning to the hospital ER to examine and treat apparent injuries.

As I brought him to the ER and sat with him while doctors and nurses began to assess and treat, he shared the deeper stories of life and trust and hope. Simply said, "there is no trust on the street, no friends, just a couple associates. I can come to you and Jim and others upstairs, that's it." What a privilege, what a disturbing and humbling moment to know how important this service is. I am regaining my senses and efforts for Joy in service. This restores balance to some of my shaken equanimity.

Joy in Service, this extends beyond an emotional "feel good - do good." Joy in service includes the good, the bad, and the ugly. Joy in service extends us beyond our comfort zones. Joy in service envelops us in all of humanity.

## Volunteer Update *by Rachel Line*

TACO has been blessed to have a variety of groups help serve the meals these past months. Thank you to Calvary Lutheran in Solana Beach, St. Peter's by the Sea Lutheran in Ocean Beach, St. Luke's Lutheran in La Mesa, Carlton Hills Lutheran in Santee, First Baptist of Clairemont, Community Covenant Church in El Cajon, several boy and girl scout troops, Bethlehem Lutheran in Encinitas, several homeschool groups, St. Timothy's Lutheran in San Diego, the Del Mar Montessori School, and Lutheran Church of the Incarnation in Poway.

In conjunction with the Homeless Advocacy Team, all the candidates for San Diego City Council and San Diego mayor were invited to serve one of our meals. Of those invited, we had Dempsey McGiboney, Rik Hauptfeld, Tobiah Pettus, Todd Gloria, and his senior policy advisor Stephen Hill. Having those who desire to serve their city serve those who live on



*San Diego City Councilmember Todd Gloria and his senior staff advisor Stephen Hill help serve coffee with TACO volunteer Jan Neuhaus.*

the streets on San Diego was a wonderful experience for those candidates.

In the past few months, TACO's volunteers have really stepped up. In the midst of transition and occasional chaos, they have shown great flexibility and consistency. I am

truly in their debt as they have been so instrumental in keeping our meals running smoothly. Many thanks to you all for your extra work, extra hours, and extra patience. Since January 1, 2012, you have served over 13,000 meals to almost 9,000 people. Thank you all.

**This Month in the TACO Times:**

- **Empty Bowls raised over \$17,000 (page one)**
- **New Simon's Walk Volunteers (page two)**
- **The Burden of Joy (page three)**
- **Volunteer Update (page three)**

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

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**Frank DeLouise, Vice President,** First Lutheran Church  
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**Randy Engel,** St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
**John Pew,** First Lutheran Church  
**Jennifer Siverts-McGrady,** First Lutheran Church

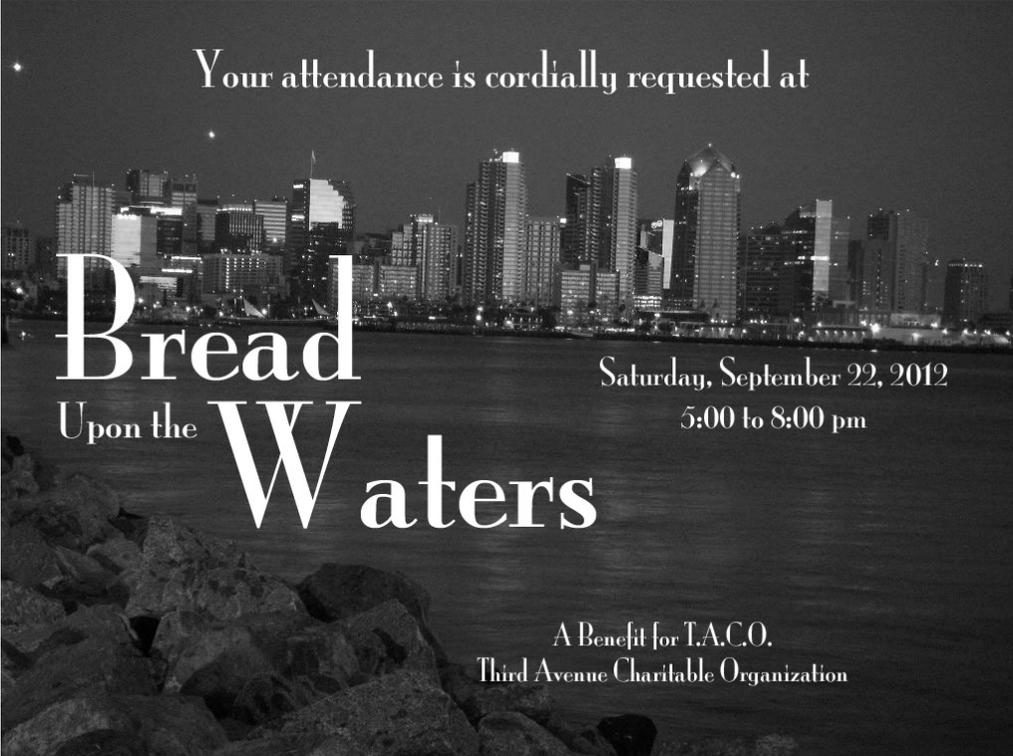
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First Lutheran Church  
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Upon the **W**aters

Saturday, September 22, 2012  
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**“...gathering as a community in service with  
the most vulnerable among us...”**