



NEWS RELEASE

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JOIN US AS WE KICK OFF THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH THE 23rd ANNUAL EMPTY BOWLS LUNCHEON

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA (Nov. 5, 2007) - Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida is pleased to present the 23rd Annual Empty Bowls Luncheon benefiting the Second Harvest Food Bank. The luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2007, from noon – 1 p.m., at the Prime Osborn Convention Center.

The Empty Bowls Luncheon draws participation historically from city and community leaders including Mayor John Peyton and Delores Barr Weaver. Last year's luncheon broke all previous records – nearly 900 people attended and the event raised \$36,000 for the Food Bank.

The Empty Bowls Luncheon is one of our most recognizable events for raising support and awareness of the issue of hunger in Northeast Florida. Uniquely individual ceramic bowls created by area students and local potters are displayed prominently at the event. Artists' bowls signed by celebrities such as Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, Billy Idol, and Kenny Chesney are included in a silent auction during the luncheon. Local school groups and other community groups perform during the heartfelt program.

During the event, attendees are served a simple meal of bread, soup, and fruit served up by local celebrities, symbolic of the meals served by soup kitchens to which the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank distributes food throughout the year.

Each year, the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank distributes millions of pounds of food to over 500 member agencies feeding hungry people in an 18-county area. In Jacksonville, the majority of the people served by the Food Bank are children and senior citizens. The common misconception is that hunger is experienced only by the homeless; however, this population comprises less than five to 10 percent of the people helped by the Food Bank. Furthermore, for every dollar donated, the Food Bank can rescue \$53 worth of food.

In an effort to meet growing needs in our community, special events like the Empty Bowls Luncheon help to promote hunger awareness, raise much-needed funds, and show support for one of the nation's most solvable social issues – food insecurity.

The Empty Bowls Luncheon has become a traditional kick-off for Northeast Florida's holiday season. Individual tickets are \$25 and can be purchased by calling 904.739.7074 or visiting www.lssjax.org. Table sponsorships are also available for purchase.

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Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida was founded in 1979 by area Lutherans and community leaders to serve people in need. The agency currently operates four programs: LSS Second Harvest Food Bank (the only Lutheran food bank as part of America's Second Harvest food network in Florida), Refugee and Immigration Services [resettling 90% of all refugees coming to Jacksonville through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), and Church World Service, AIDS Care and Education Program, and Representative Payee Services.

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