



NEWS RELEASE

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LSS SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK SERVES AS A PROBLEM-SOLVER FOR THE NEEDY IN PUTNAM COUNTY

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA (Oct. 31, 2007) - The mission of the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank is to distribute food and grocery products to hungry Americans and to educate the public about the causes and possible solutions to problems of domestic hunger. This past summer, the Food Bank proved it could serve a much greater purpose.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church is nestled in rural Putnam County in the small town of Interlachen, Fla. The majority of West Putnam County, where the church is located, consists mostly of a low-income and indigent community. In 1999, over 20 percent of Putnam County residents were below the poverty line. The entire staff at St. Andrew's is all unpaid, including its vicar, Diane Reeves. Nevertheless, the church has consistently reached out to its community to provide food and assistance wherever it could. With only a small budget and minimal other social service providers in the area, there was not much that could be done to help feed the less fortunate families in Interlachen. Diane remembers several times having to turn people away.

Still, there was hope. St. Andrew's Episcopal Church contacted the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation to see how they could help more people in their community. Immediately, the Foundation thought of the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank for food assistance. However, the Jessie Ball duPont Religious, Charitable and Educational Fund was designed to benefit any institution that had been a recipient of Mrs. duPont's gifts between Jan. 1, 1960 and Dec. 31, 1964, for which the Food Bank did not qualify. Therefore, the Food Bank could not apply for a grant to get food to Interlachen. But St. Andrew's Episcopal Church could. Between 1960 and 1964, Jessie Ball duPont had given to the small church, thus qualifying St. Andrew's to receive aid from the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation, which her will established after her death in 1970.

Representatives from the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation and the Food Bank met with Vicar Diane Reeves at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church to discuss a plan of action to help the hungry in Putnam County. With funds received from the Foundation and with the Food Bank able to deliver food at 14 cents per pound, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church has been able to reach out to their community like never before.

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On Friday, Aug. 24, 2007, a Food for Families Mobile Pantry was held at the church. Food Bank trucks were loaded with over 27,000 pounds of food that included 500 family boxes, perishable items and learning books and flash cards for children. Food Bank trucks and staff arrived at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and set up and distributed food to over 1,000 people in Putnam County. St. Vincent's Mobile Health Unit, Putnam County Health Department, Legal Aid and SHINE for Elder Affairs were also on-site to provide their services. Clothes and bread were also distributed. Vicar Diane Reeves could not have been happier with the day's outcome.

"The distribution was awesome," she said. "We have never given out such quality food. In addition, LSS brought boxes of learning materials for preschool through 5th grade children. Many of these children have never had their own books or flashcards. What a blessing."

An agreement was reached among the three organizations that will allow the Food Bank to deliver 10,000 pounds of food each month to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Thus, with the aid of the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation and the problem-solving attitude of the LSS Second Harvest Food Bank, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church has turned into a savior of sorts for a small and rural community in need.

It's partnerships like these that provide hope to the idea that, if people work together, we can find the solution to hunger problems in America.

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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