

Church Partnerships and Volunteerism Team

OF LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICE OF MINNESOTA



Greetings! We are the Church Partnerships and Volunteerism 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 65 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 to engage with us 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 Volunteerism Team



Rev. Kathryn Tiede

Associate Vice President
of Philanthropy

Pastor 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 and 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.

Contact Information:

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651.925.6082



Rev. Amanda Simons

Director of Church Partnerships
and Volunteerism

Pastor Amanda Simons 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 in Bloomington, Minnesota. She was called to Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in Saint Paul as associate pastor in 2013, where she faithfully served for over nine years. During her tenure, Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church adopted a new mission statement and strategic plan, opened its facility to Merrick Community Services, and deepened its partnerships with LSS, Every Meal and other East Side organizations.

In addition to her pastoral work, she currently serves as secretary of the Saint Paul Area Synod and is active in her local school district's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). She lives in Edina, Minnesota with her spouse and children.

She is deeply passionate about the mission and ministry of LSS and is excited to be a part of this important work of loving our neighbors through acts of service that are life-giving and build community.

Contact Information:

Amanda.Simons@lssmn.org
651.969.2359



Rev. Jennifer "Jenn" Luong

Church Partnerships
Ministry Specialist

Pastor Jenn Luong grew up in North Saint Paul and currently serves as the Church Partnerships Ministry Specialist at LSS as well as a pastor at St. Mark Lutheran Church on West 7th Street, near downtown Saint Paul. Jenn is a second-career pastor who studied chemistry in undergrad and received her seminary education at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and Luther Seminary.

Ordained in January 2023, Jenn is passionate about inter-religious dialogue, the Church in the world and asking the big questions. Outside of ministry, Jenn loves Elton John, fast cars, tacos and her "niblets" (nieces and nephews).

Contact Information:

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763.464.5951



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. Most recently Malyn has led efforts to rebuild and rethink volunteering in the wake of the pandemic. 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 studied Spanish as well. 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.

Contact Information:

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651.969.2259

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.

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 Visiting Team members, 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 three-to-five-minute introduction and/or update of 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 our clergy and deacons in taking sabbath time by serving as a worship officiant.

Worship Resources

"God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday Sept. 10, 2023

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the ELCA's *"God's work. Our hands." Sunday*, during which 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 temple talk 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 whom 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 Volunteerism 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 guides: *Safe and Healthy Relationships* and *My Neighbor is Not for Sale*.

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 employee.

Congregational and Bible Studies

LSS offers multi-session studies on several topics. These studies were written by leading experts in their field and are designed to be led by lay or rostered leaders. Please contact congregations@lssmn.org to learn more about available studies.

LSS is also pleased to offer the following Bible studies for congregations:

[Advent Bible Study: Rebuilding Bethany](#)

[Adoption Month Study](#)



Summer Programming

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

We would love to join your congregation for VBS! Whether collecting “noisy” offering for LSS Meals, making blankets for Camp Noah, preparing blizzard boxes for older adults 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).

Service

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. To learn more about volunteering with LSS, contact volunteers@lssmn.org.

LEARN + SERVE + GIVE EVENTS

Learn + Serve + Give events provide your congregation with an opportunity to learn about a societal issue impacting our neighbors, serve through a hands-on project and give a financial gift to sustain your commitment to our neighbors. These one-time events are tailored to fit your congregation's interests and group size. They may be utilized for small group ministries, a congregation-wide event, adult forums, and children and youth ministries.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

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 16, 2023 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 12-1 p.m. All are welcome to join in this opportunity for community building! Email info@communitybridgempls.org for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Statewide

LSS Caregiver and Companion Services:

Caregiver Support & Respite: Volunteers, ages 18 and older, provide friendly visits with an older adult a few hours each week so their family caregiver can take a break. Contact caregiverservices@lssmn.org or 866.787.9802 to learn more.

Neighbor to Neighbor: Neighbor to Neighbor Companion volunteers, ages 18 and older, visit older adults in their home a few hours each week to provide friendship, non-medical assistance and transportation to community activities. Contact neighbortoneighbor@lssmn.org or 877.540.9443 to learn more.

Senior Companion: Volunteers, ages 55 and older, visit older adults at least 10 hours each week and offer friendship, support at their homes and transportation to community activities. Volunteers receive a non-taxable stipend. Contact americorpsseniors@lssmn.org or 888.205.3770 to learn more.

Foster Grandparents: Volunteers, ages 55 and older, positively influence children and youth through one-to-one mentoring in a variety of community settings, including elementary schools, preschools, and child care centers. Contact americorpsseniors@lssmn.org.

LSS Meals on Wheels: Volunteers assist with portioning hot food, assembling shelf-stable emergency meals and delivering meals in their local community (Monday – Friday). Contact meals@lssmn.org or 800.488.4146 to learn more.

Central Minnesota

St. Cloud Crisis Nursery: Volunteers provide crisis support over the phone by offering resources and arranging placements for children with licensed childcare providers. Contact Conni.Orth@lssmn.org or 320.654.1090 to learn more.

Pathways 4 Youth Resource Center: Volunteers support youth ages 16-24, who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, by staffing the front desk, maintaining the donations room, providing mentorship and preparing meals. Contact pathways4youth@lssmn.org or 320.316.1640 to learn more.

Northeast Minnesota

Duluth Crisis Nursery: Volunteers provide crisis support over the phone by offering resources and arranging placements for children with licensed childcare providers. Contact Hannah.Anderson@lssmn.org or 218.302.6879 to learn more.

Center for Changing Lives (CFCL) Duluth: The CFCL Duluth provides wellness services, life-skills training, educational support, youth groups, job skill development and short and long-term housing for youth and young adults. Call 218.529.2230 to inquire about volunteer opportunities.

Southeast Minnesota

Youth Resource Center-Rochester: Volunteers support youth, ages 16-24 who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, by staffing the front desk, maintaining the donations room, providing mentorship and preparing meals. Contact Rochester Youth & Family Services at rochesteryouthinfo@lssmn.org or 507.316.8273 to learn more.

Southwest Minnesota

Mankato Crisis Nursery: Volunteers provide crisis support over the phone by offering resources and arranging placements for children with licensed childcare providers. Contact Kate.Hengy-Gretz@lssmn.org or 507.995.925 to learn more.

The REACH Resource Center (Mankato): Volunteers support youth at-risk of or experiencing homelessness by assisting with employment needs, school enrollment, support services and housing. Contact mankatoyouth@lssmn.org or 507.381.6670 to learn more.

Willmar Youth Homelessness Services: LSS provides a variety of supportive services for youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness, are teen parents, or have been victims of sexual trafficking. Contact Angela.Mateski@lssmn.org or 320.231.7074 to inquire about current volunteer opportunities or in-kind donation needs.

Twin Cities Metro

Life Haven Transitional Housing and Safe House Emergency Shelter: Support teen moms and their children as well as youth experiencing homelessness by preparing hot meals that are shared among household members at Life Haven and Safe House. Contact MetroHomelessYouth@lssmn.org to learn more.

Center for Changing Lives (CFCL) Minneapolis: Assist in preparing food that is distributed for use at congregate nutrition sites and local schools. Contact Mary Lundquist at 612.321.1967 for more information.



Volunteer Opportunities

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 Homes: 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 Martika.Lowers@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 metrohomelessyouth@lssmn.org for more information.

Advocacy

The LSS Advocacy team 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.

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 Rev. Jenn Luong at Jennifer.Luong@lssmn.org to recommend an LSS ambassador for your congregation.





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lssmn.org