



Week Long Senior Nutrition Program for Vacation Bible School

Thank you for choosing to participate in the ongoing support of Lutheran Social Services' Senior Nutrition Program! The following materials support a one-week program centered around Senior Nutrition. Additional materials needed for each week's project can be found immediately following the project explanation.

Senior Nutrition provides nutritious meals, social contact and support for individuals 60 years of age and older at Senior Dining Centers, Diners' Clubs and with home-delivered meals.

Monetary donations are an immediate need for Senior Nutrition in order to ensure that older adults around the state of Minnesota are able to receive a nutritious meal through Meals on Wheels. The recipients of these meals are asked to help cover the cost, but often times cannot afford to do so. Regardless of one's ability to pay for these meals, no one is turned away from receiving them. By sponsoring a meal, it ensures that older adults around the states are guaranteed a healthy meal each day regardless of their ability to pay for it.

To learn more about our Senior Nutrition Program, see the [Annual Report](http://www.lssmn.org/oa/about/) (visit <http://www.lssmn.org/oa/about/> and click on "Annual Report" under Senior Nutrition)

LSS Senior Nutrition Glossary of Terms

Blizzard Boxes: a meal consisting of non-perishable food items such as canned fruit/vegetables, meat such as tuna, crackers, and pudding to be used when Meals on Wheels cannot deliver due to inclement weather.

Meals on Wheels: a program that delivers meals to individuals ages 60 and older who are not able to purchase or prepare nutritious meals on their own. Those under 60 years may qualify if they are disabled or meet income requirements.

Senior Dining Center (Congregate Dining Site): offers well-balanced, great tasting and affordable meals in a friendly, community atmosphere. There are over 165 senior dining centers in MN!

Senior Nutrition: a program that provides nutritious meals, social contact and support for individuals 60 years of age and older at Senior Dining Centers, Diners' Clubs and with home-delivered meals.

Diner's Clubs: Local restaurants that offer senior dining meals throughout the day.

Day 1: M&M Tubes and Video

Consider showing this [video](http://www.lssmn.org/nutrition/) as an introduction to Senior Nutrition (<http://www.lssmn.org/nutrition/>)

LSS Senior Dining and Meals on Wheels seeks to enable persons aged 60 and older to live healthier, more active and independent lives. We take the work out of eating healthy!

Menus and meal selections are prepared by a licensed, registered dietitian to ensure that meals are healthy and nutritious. Meals are available for individuals with special dietary needs, such as diabetic, low salt and low fat/low cholesterol diets.

A standard meal from Meals on Wheels costs between \$4-\$7 per person. Recipients of Meals on Wheels are asked to give a suggested donation of \$4 to cover the cost of their meal. Often times, older adults cannot afford this, and depending on their age, may or may not receive government assistance to cover the cost of these meals. **Regardless of one's ability to pay, no one is turned down.** To help offset the costs of meals that are delivered without receiving a donation, individuals can sponsor a meal for \$5 to help cover the costs for those who can't.

An easy way to encourage children to donate spare change is by handing out **mini M&M tubes** at the end of the first day. When filled with quarters, each M&M tube holds \$14. Coins or paper bills of any denomination can be included in these M&M tubes. Encourage the kids to fill their M&M tubes and return them throughout the course of the week. Consider adding a label to the M&M tubes that explains the objective of the project.

Consider creating an offering goal and giving the children an incentive if they reach it (and even an extra incentive if they surpass their goal!)

- Ex: a goal of \$200 met results in a church staff member being 'slimed.'

Two great things come out of this project – the kids get M&Ms, and your VBS is supporting older adults in need!

Materials Needed:

- Mini M&M tubes
- LSS Senior Nutrition Video



All donations can be sent to:

LSS State Center
Attn: Development Department
2485 Como Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108

Day 2: Wall of Helping Hands activity

A great way to encourage children to participate in this project is to give them a visual aid. Discuss with the children what it means to be a good neighbor and how we serve others in the church or local area. In the craft zone or other designated time, have each child trace their hand on a colored piece of paper and cut it out. Have each child write how they have been a “helping hand” to a neighbor or friend in need, or how they will help someone out in the future.



A great way to get others involved is by asking for volunteers to help oversee this event- this could be older siblings, parents, grandparents, or those in the congregation who want to contribute to the project. Consider inviting everyone in the congregation to fill out a ‘helping hand’ for the wall. The wall of Helping Hands should be hung in a common location so both the youth and adults in the church can see them.

If there are members of the church who benefit from or volunteer with services (such as Meals on Wheels), consider hanging their pictures throughout the wall of helping hands. This will give kids a visual of those they are helping out- members of their very own church! Consider inviting these individuals in (volunteers or meal recipients) to VBS to talk with the children about what this program means to them. If images are not easily accessible, they can be found at the bottom of this document to be printed out and hung up.

Materials Needed:

- Colored paper
- Writing utensils (markers, crayons)
- Scissors



Day 3: Comfort Items for Blizzard Boxes

Many older adults struggle with isolation as they are not able to leave their house on their own terms or without the help of family or friends. A friendly note, or homemade placemat is all it could take to brighten their day! Create a station where kids can make a placemat, card or write a note for older adults. After cards have been created, collect them. If your church is assembling and collecting Blizzard Boxes, items can be placed in each one. If this is not a program your congregation is participating in, all items can be delivered LSS.

Contact Kristen Schurrer, Sr. Director of Sr. Nutrition at Kristin.Schurrer@lssmn.org or 651-255-2456 to determine the best way to get these materials back to LSS.

Materials Needed:

- Cards
- Colored paper (for cards or placemats)
- Writing utensils (markers, crayons)
- Other comfort items ((adult coloring books, crossword puzzle books, playing cards, etc.)

Day 4/5: Continuation of Cards and Donation Collection

Based on the length of VBS, these activities can occur on either or both days.

If there are some children (or adults) who were not able to make a card/placemat for older adults in your local area, consider a second day of this activity. A table or station may be set up in the Narthex (or other common area) for individuals to make cards at their leisure (before or after VBS activities).

Encourage the children to return their M&M tubes and donations on the final day of VBS. These can be brought in throughout the course of the week, but a big push for donation collection on the final day serves as a great reminder. Consider carrying out the incentive for reaching their offering goal at the end of the day.

Final Blessing:

A final blessing may be said over the monetary donations (and food donations if applicable):

Abundant giver, in response to our hunger you provide our daily bread. Bless these gifts of nourishing food and financial resources, which we have now gathered. May they nourish the lives of seniors who need your extra care and love. Give life and strength to those who are hungry, and fill us all with a hunger for justice, through Christ our Lord. Amen (Prayer courtesy of the ELCA).

We thank you for the time and commitment you have given to serve those around you and your partnership with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Thank you for supporting LSS and Senior Nutrition. We appreciate the dedication of your time and talents to do the Lord's work. We look forward to continued partnerships with your congregation in the future!



Any further questions about Senior Nutrition can be directed to:

Kristen Schurrer, Sr. Director of Sr. Nutrition

Kristin.Schurrer@lssmn.org

651-255-2456

For any other questions about how your church can partner with LSS, contact:

Pastor Kathryn Tiede

Sr. Director of Church Partnerships & Philanthropy

Kathryn.Teide@lssmn.org

651-969-2579