

HOW WE SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED

SOTV's Benevolence Leadership Team allocates money to help those in need.

SOTV has developed strong partnerships over the years, combining service and financial gifts to make a difference in our local and global community. Besides the money that we allocate from the General Fund, people can designate financial gifts or donate requested items to show their support.

360 Communities: Dakota County nonprofit which has a close partnership with Dakota County Social Services. 360 Communities provides food shelf oversight for SOTV, Lewis House Women's Shelter, Armful of Love holiday gift giving, family resource centers (including Rosemount), and many programs for individuals and families in need. They help low income men, women, children, and families, plus battered women and their children.

Birthday Bags: Once a year, SOTV volunteers pack bags of birthday party items to give to kids in need. These bags are given to 360 Communities, All Nations Indian Church, People Incorporated, and more. The bags consist of cake mix, frosting, plates, napkins, cups, balloons, candles, and party favors.

Camp Wapo (Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp in Amery, WI; includes Wapo, Ox Lake, & Wilderness Canoe Base locations): SOTV has been a member congregation of Camp Wapo Corporation since the 1980's. The camp is open to adults and children of faith.

Christmas Gift Giving: SOTV members shop for families and individuals from Dakota Woodlands, Southside Family Nurturing Center, Wingspan Life Resource Center, Armful of Love (360 Communities), and LSS Homeless Youth Program. We also ask for financial gifts for various organizations such as Tanzania (orphanage), Kids N Kinship, and more. This program benefits families who are homeless, families working on breaking cycles of violence, homeless teens, individuals with disabilities, and more (depending on who we support financially for the year).

Dakota Woodlands: This program supports families experiencing homelessness.

Disaster Relief: Supports families living in areas that have been affected by disasters (hurricanes, tornado damage, flooding, and more).

Easter Baskets: SOTV members who have had a difficult year (grief, medical, shut-in) receive a card from an SOTV pastor, coffee/tea, and cookies.

Easter Dinners: Provides Easter meals for low income families (All Nations Indian Church in Minneapolis).

Emergency Shelter Initiative (ran by Matrix Housing Services): Dakota County emergency homeless shelter that serves low income and homeless individuals.

Every Meal (formerly Sheridan Story): Supports community hunger in many ways. Their main program is providing additional food to kids to support them through the weekend. SOTV sends volunteers to Falcon Ridge Middle School to put weekend food in backpacks.

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC): Works with organizations around the world to ensure that everyone, especially kids, are fed. SOTV has taken several groups of volunteers to FMSC sites.

Food Shelf: In partnership with 360 Communities, we have an on-site food shelf that is available for anyone in our local area to use. We serve 30-40 individuals/families each week that are struggling with food insecurity.

FUNraiser (previously Golf, Gears, & Gutters for the Good): This event provides support to our school supply ministry. The fundraiser portion collects school supplies requested from local schools and agencies. Funds are used to purchase school supplies such as backpacks, calculators, notebooks, etc. Along with a meal and silent auction, people can participate in walking, bowling, golfing, or bike riding.

Gas Vouchers: Working through the school district (social workers, etc.), we provide gas cards to parents who are struggling to provide transportation to their kids' appointments, school, and after school activities.

Habitat for Humanity (Twin-City area branch of the international organization): Provides independent housing ownership through building and rehabilitating homes. SOTV provides at least one week each summer of volunteers. This program benefits low income families in need of a home.

Habitat for Humanity (Food): Lunch and beverages are supplied daily to volunteers and any other workers/Habitat crew onsite during the SOTV Habitat for Humanity work week.

Hygiene Kits: During our school supply drive, we collect items such as shampoo, combs, and deodorant to create hygiene kits for local homeless youth shelters.

Kids-n-Kinship: A mentorship program for kids in our area. This program provides extensive training to mentors to ensure a positive outcome.

Local Hunger: Supports the SOTV Food Shelf and funds are used to support other organizations working on food insecurity for low income families and individuals. Some of those include: Every Meal, DARTS, CORE Drop in Center (the Link), and more.

Local Needs: Used for one time situations that arise in our congregation or community. Examples: house fire, loss of job, medical issue, etc. These funds are used at the discretion of the pastors and in consultation with the Benevolence Team.

Lutheran Campus Ministries (at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campuses): A worshiping community for college aged students.

Lutheran Social Services Minnesota (LSS): One of the largest social service agencies in Minnesota that offers multiple programs for individuals and families in need: homeless youth, pregnancy, financial counseling, therapy programs, disabilities support, disaster recovery, camps for disadvantaged, housing assistance, employment counseling, etc. This organization benefits low income men, women, and children, people with disabilities, homeless youth, pregnant youth, and more.

Minnesota Teen and Adult Challenge: This group supports faith-based in-patient addiction and has treatment programs. They perform every other year at SOTV.

Prayer Shawls: Money is used to provide material to be used to create prayer shawls. These shawls are given to congregational members or others who are struggling with health issues, loss, or other difficulties.

Preschool Scholarships: A fund for the Director of the Shepherd of the Valley Preschool to use to assign partial scholarships to make tuition affordable to families in need.

Quilters: The "Shepherd Quilters" get together once a week at SOTV. The "Golden Stitchers" get together every other week. Quilts are made for low income families, people in hospitals, homeless shelters, people in transitional housing, those breaking free from abusive relationships, etc. Funds are used to supply quilters with the supplies needed to make quilts.

SALT (Seniors Learning Together): Seniors meet at Risen Savior Catholic Church in Burnsville to learn about topics related to aging.

School Partnership: At Falcon Ridge Middle School, we are in communication with the counselors and school nurses. SOTV provides assistance with granola bars, cough drops, and other items that are needed.

Shepherd Scholarships: This is open to congregation members who thoroughly complete an application, who are currently enrolled in or are planning to enroll in post-secondary education/training.

Seminarian Support: SOTV is committed to assisting congregation members in pursuing their call in ministry at Luther Seminaries.

Serve Together: This event provides an opportunity for people of all ages to serve and learn together. Organizations are chosen to donate items and volunteer hours, and service projects are set up along with a learning component. Organizations chosen have benefitted babies (families), animals, low income and homeless individuals/families, people with disabilities, and shut-ins.

Social Concerns: Funds buy things to help outreach ministries. They have been used for plastic uprights for advertising and silent auctions, tablecloths, volunteer appreciation, etc.

Southside Family Nurturing Center: Offers services to children and families in the heart of the Phillips neighborhood (Minneapolis). They provide holistic family interventions: early childhood education and family support with home visiting services. During Christmas, we provide gifts for their holiday store.

Synod General: The major area of benevolence giving of SOTV to our denominational affiliation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) with a process of funds being given to our local SPAS synod (Saint Paul Area Synod) which then forwards over 50% of those funds to support the mission and ministries of the national church body. These funds cover a wide variety of missions and ministries both locally and nationally.

Synod Hunger: Our congregation's contribution to the ELCA World Hunger Fund (which addresses multiple national and international church hunger projects such as emergency food relief, refugee services, water projects, and economic development) that supports low income people in a variety of countries.

Tanzania: Funds used to support scholarships, medical needs, water wells, and other needs that arise.

Tanzania Partnership: Funds for our congregation's contribution toward Tanzania SPAS staff salary and to cover costs of SOTV staff and representatives for annual travel to our Tanzania partner congregations. This benefits trip leaders and resources for our friends in Tanzania.

Wingspan Life Resources: Mission is to inspire community by empowering people impacted by disabilities to live their best life.

Women's Services: Funds are used for hug bags supplies and other areas women's ministries are supporting throughout the year.

World Hunger Association (part of the Synod): This is our congregation's contribution to the ELCA World Hunger Fund (which addresses multiple national and international church hunger projects such as emergency food relief, refugee services, water projects, and economic development).

QUESTIONS OR WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit the Benevolence webpage at www.sotv.org/benevolence. Contact us at communications@sotv.org if you have questions or want to learn more.