



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

"Connecting with God, Connecting with Others, Connecting others with God"

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LET'S RESTART THE COMMUNITY MEAL!

During a Sunday School class in May, there was a discussion about how Zion might be able to help the local community. This discussion led to the successful food drive for the Hempfield Food Pantry in July. We then began to explore how we could restart the weekly community meal. Randy Miller took on the task of obtaining a certificate from the PA Department of Agriculture and subsequent inspection of the kitchen. This certificate will allow us to provide meals on a take-out basis. Our proposal for a weekly take-out meal was also approved by our Church Council.

After a group of us involved in the initial conversations about this met to begin planning, we realized that Zion would need to provide the first 4-6 weekly meals. If successful, we would reach out to the other churches and groups who partnered with Zion previously. We have selected meals to prepare and Corrie Stream calculated ingredients and costs to feed 75 people per weekly meal.

We know that we will need volunteers and the funds to make this mission a reality. A few of our members are willing to apply for grants from Thrivent which will help with funding. We will need volunteers to obtain supplies, prepare food, pack food, and assist with the drive-thru take-out process. This would mean about 10-15 volunteer slots per week. Preparing homemade pre-wrapped cookies or brownies would also be a great way to help. We will be following CDC and Dept. of Agriculture guidelines-masks, gloves, and temperature checks for anyone directly involved with the meal. We would limit the number of people in the kitchen to six at a time.

You may wonder if there is a need for this in our community. In the recent past, our community meal was attended by people who may have needed a social outlet even more than just a meal. Since the pandemic, we may have a completely different group of people who are really in need of a free meal right now. Recently, a Hempfield Food Pantry client asked if the community meal would be happening again. We plan to advertise via flyers to the food pantry clients, the senior apartments, and in the post office and local businesses.

There has been quite a bit of planning already accomplished. What is needed now is a group of committed volunteers. We need those of you who have helped with the meal in the past. We need "rookies" as well! Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." Let's do this for our community...Let's do this together!

We would like to have the first meal in October. If you feel called to help with this important mission-even for just one meal- please contact Mary Hetrick at 717-333-6173 or psuocn92@comcast.net. We need to have a group of volunteers by September 15th to proceed.

Please pray for this mission to our community and how you can help!

On behalf of the Community Meal Take-Out Planning Team,
Mary Hetrick