



PATRON

Easter 2024

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, you did provide for the Holy Family. We commit to your protection all our crops and farm industries. Intercede in our behalf with Almighty God, Who rules the seasons, so that our fields being safe from pests and favored by the weather may yield abundant crops that will allow us to supply the wants of life. Thus freed from earthly worries may we after your example apply all our thoughts to eternal life.



Food Market-Lincoln

No matter the gift, it matters

Some of my favorite experiences at CSS are the encounters I'm blessed to have with our clients. One particular encounter I had late last fall really struck me. I was assisting a gentleman in our client choice Food Market in Lincoln. As we walked through the shelves that were filled with a variety of fruits and vegetables including fresh produce, as well as grains and a wide variety of proteins, I learned that he is a single dad of three struggling to make ends meet. For personal care items, he loaded up on kleenex and toilet paper. His kids had begged him over the weekend to play outside in the flurries and he relented. The house they live in is small and with three young and active kids, it's hard to keep them inside. They now each have running noses but were able to make memories playing ball at a park near their home.



As we finished shopping, the Dad was so thankful for the three bags and two boxes of food that CSS provided him. The amount of food available and the choice that CSS is able to provide our clients is a true blessing. It's a

blessing that we owe to the many schools, churches, Knights Councils, and individuals who respond so generously to the list of our most needed items.

As I helped push the cart of food to his car parked along the side of the building, he shared with me that he was struggling to pay his mortgage that month. He reached out to a few friends seeing if anybody could help him get by. He said that being able to come to CSS for food relieved a lot of the pressure that he was feeling. It removed some of the anxiety knowing that he now had food to give his children.

It's an important reminder, I think, for when you assist us in our work, to remember that no act of service goes unappreciated, no monetary gift goes unnoticed and no prayer goes unheard. Our communities are filled with people in need and people with the capacity to give, and whether you are able to give a few cans of food or an entire cart full of food, it all matters to the person who needs it most.

*-Katie Patrick
Executive Director*

Inside:

What to do... make muffins!



Facing the challenges of bringing hope



Little Blessings: Let the children come to Me



Hope in the Good Life

What to do... make muffins!

Katie Patrick
Executive Director

At Catholic Social Services, we look for various ways to alleviate the struggles that our clients are going through and sometimes it's by making life a little easier in the kitchen.

Susan Kelly, our Food Market Program Assistant, along with our food market volunteers, made note of the leftover canned pumpkin from the holidays. We were keeping it available to our client shoppers, but it just wasn't moving off the shelves. Elliana Wyllie, our Food Market Program Coordinator, had ordered several boxes of canned applesauce, a client favorite, from the Food Bank of Lincoln. We also had on the shelves many bags of raisins. What to do, what to do...

Susan came to me with a Pumpkin Muffin recipe that substitutes applesauce for sugar, which was great since we're always on the lookout for ways we

can offer healthier options to our clients. Susan and several of our volunteers tested the recipe... delicious!

Susan printed the recipe on little note cards to hand out to our clients along with a prepared bag of the ingredients to include a can of pumpkin puree, a can of applesauce, and a bag of raisins. When clients came by to shop that week, they also received a freshly baked sample!

The client choice food market in Lincoln provides our clients the opportunity to shop for items that meet their nutritional needs while also taking into consideration

any dietary or cultural restrictions. We are thankful to our many donors who help make it possible through their giving of gluten-free muffin mix, halal chicken, dried beans, and more! We are also truly grateful for the staff and volunteers who invest their creativity and kindness into each and every encounter!!

Please remember our food markets in Lincoln, Auburn, and Hastings this summer. Since most food drives run through the holidays and school year, our shelves can get pretty bare. We keep a list of most needed items on our website at csshope.org. Check it out and

make your donation anytime, at any of our locations. Thank you!



The Best Easy Pumpkin Muffins



SERVINGS: 12 | PREP TIME: 10 MIN | COOKING TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree
- ⅓ cup applesauce
- ⅓ cup milk

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and grease a 12-cup muffin tin.
2. In a large mixing bowl, add the eggs, and beat slightly.
3. Add the remaining ingredients, and use a hand mixer to blend together until smooth. Batter may have some small lumps, but don't overmix.
4. Fill muffin cups almost to the tops with batter, then bake for 20 minutes, or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean.
5. Remove from oven, and allow to cool slightly, then remove from muffin tin, and serve.

Recipe from <https://www.meatloafandmelodrama.com/best-easy-pumpkin-muffins>

Facing the challenges of bringing hope

John McDonald

Hastings Regional Director

Each day, folks in and around the Hastings area reach out to us for help. Some are in need of a food pantry or a gas voucher, others need help with unexpected medical bills or assistance with utility bills. Their situations vary, but at the heart of it, they all are searching for hope. The ways we try to help are as varied as the situations they find themselves.

Recently Susan Janda, our client relations specialist, received a phone call from a client in desperate need of food. The woman was not able to come to our location to get a food box because she never leaves her apartment. She told Susan that she suffers from agoraphobia, an intense fear of places or situations that cause panic and feelings of helplessness. This disorder is often the result of suffering a traumatic event. Although we don't normally deliver food to clients' homes, Susan felt that she should take her a food box. Not long after arriving at the woman's apartment Susan said, "She showed me a scar where a male attacker had tried to cut her throat and she explained that's when the agoraphobia started. I told her that as Catholics we believe that Jesus came to set us free from all fear and he wants to give us freedom. I then asked her if she would like for me to pray with her. She said 'yes'. After the prayer I told her that if she needed anything else to let us know."

Later that afternoon the woman called our office and asked for a rosary and a prayer book. Thanks to our thrift store and a generous coworker, we put together a basket of Catholic items for her along with a bouquet of

flowers that happened to come in as a donation from Sam's Club. After work Susan delivered the items to her. She was extremely grateful. Although she appreciated the flowers, her first glance was towards the rosary and devotional books. This is a wonderful example of one of our staff taking the initiative to go the extra mile to help a client find hope, and many of our staff pitching in to help. In fact, our staff continues to pray that God will work in her life and give her the graces needed to overcome her past trauma.



There are also times when we collaborate with other groups or organizations in the community to help our neighbors.

A woman reached out to CSS just over three weeks after giving birth to twins. She explained that she and her family were going through an incredibly challenging period. She and her husband were dealing with the loss of one of the twins, while the other remained in the NICU, and their two other children remained at home. Adding to their difficulties, their vehicle broke down at the most inconvenient time. Despite her husband having a stable job, the financial strain from medical bills prevented them from affording the necessary car repairs. CSS stepped in, contributing \$1,000, and collaborated with Faith Lutheran Church to cover the remaining costs. This support ensured the mother could bring her newborn home safely in a reliable vehicle, and the whole family would be together again.

Please pray for those we serve, and for our staff and those we work with to help bring hope in the good life.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES		FISCAL 2023 IMPACT		
\$2.23	233	50,581	15,554	159
MILLION DOLLARS	TONS OF FOOD	MEALS SERVED	NIGHTS OF LODGING	TONS RECYCLED
In hand-ups: rent, utilities, gas vouchers, and more	Distributed across 24,000 square miles of Nebraska	Nutritious breakfast burritos & sack lunches	Safety provided through our St. Gianna Program	Sustaining & funding Hope in the Good Life

Let the children come to Me

Elaine Simpson
Childcare Director

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them. (Mark 10:14-16)

The Catholic Social Services regional site in Lincoln looks forward to "having the children come", just as Jesus invited them in this gospel passage. As part of the renovation of the Lincoln office, two child care rooms and a playground were added. Little Blessings, CSS Child Care Center will begin to serve the children of our employees once the center license has been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services and the fire inspector. By offering on-site child care, we are supporting those parents who are working in our community to offer Hope in the Good Life to others.

Little Blessings will provide on-site care for children 6 weeks-5 years of age and will be only the second Catholic child care center in Lincoln. The goal of the center will be to partner with parents, a child's first and most important teachers, to encourage physical, cognitive, and spiritual growth. Children will learn and grow through play and



developmentally appropriate experiences that extend the child's natural interests and curiosity. As a center based in the Catholic faith, children will have daily opportunities to pray, visit Jesus in the chapel, sing bible songs, read bible stories, and practice Christian values.

Another blessing of this child care center will be the diversity of race, culture and language that it will provide children! We have employees from various racial and cultural backgrounds who speak eight different languages, which means the children who are coming to child care will provide a similar level of diversity. Little Blessings, CSS Child Care embraces the uniqueness of each child and the rich experiences this diversity will produce.

We all look forward to the joy that the children's beautiful faces and laughter will bring to our clients and our employees as they walk hand-in-hand through the building to go to the chapel or head to the playground! What an amazing opportunity for moms and dads to come visit their children during the work day, to have lunch or a snuggle with them, or to be able to nurse them without even having to leave the building! We thank God for these "little blessings" and for the blessing He is giving us by allowing us to open this new child care center.

State announces new Child Care Tax Credit for donors

The opening of the Little Blessings, Child Care Center really is a "win-win-win" situation for all involved. For CSS, it's a "win" to offer an unique benefit that attracts and retains quality staff. For the employees who use the day care center, it's a "win" to have their children onsite receiving excellent Catholic-based care. And thanks to a new tax law, it's a "win" for those who would like to financially support this important program.

The Nebraska Department of Revenue just released information on an important tax credit relevant to Catholic schools or organizations that operate child care programs/facilities. It is called the Child Care Tax Credit Act. Similar to the scholarship tax credit law, it allows taxpayers to receive a tax credit for certain contributions

made to a child care provider or facility or program. There are a total of \$2.5 million in tax credits for this program. If you would like to make a gift to our Little Blessing, Child Care Center, write "Little Blessing Child Care Center" in the memo field of your check, and return it to us in the enclosed envelope. You may also scan the QR code at the right and make your gift on our website. Click on "Specific Designation" then select "Little Blessings, Child Care

Center" from the menu. Tax credits for the Child Care Tax Credit Act will be distributed tax credits on a first come, first serve basis, so it is critical for anyone looking to get a contribution to move quickly. Visit the Nebraska Department of Revenue website for more details.



Hope in the Good Life

Consider using a beneficiary designation to help bring hope

John Soukup
Development Officer

What exactly is a beneficiary designation, and how can it help Catholic Social Services? To help us explain this concept more clearly, let's look at a hypothetical situation involving two people we will call Laura and Jim.

Laura and her late husband Jim were dedicated supporters of CSS for many years. Recently, Laura's children advised her to revise her estate plan, a suggestion she warmly embraced. In fact, she had already been contemplating consulting her attorney to explore avenues for making a substantial contribution to support CSS's efforts.



Laura expressed her deep connection to CSS's mission of providing "Hope in the Good Life" to those in need, a cause she and Jim actively supported through volunteering. Following Jim's passing, Laura was eager to make a contribution that would honor his memory.

During her consultation with her attorney, Laura outlined her objectives and detailed her assets, including an IRA she had inherited from Jim, which, when combined with her own, ensured her retirement security. Laura even had sufficient funds for leisurely vacations and indulgent gifts for her grandchildren.

Initially considering leaving her IRA to her children and other assets to charity, Laura's attorney proposed an alternative strategy. He explained that leaving the IRA to her children would incur estate taxes and income tax liabilities. Instead, gifting the IRA to charity and other assets to her children would provide them with a substantial inheritance while entirely avoiding income and estate taxes.

Acting upon her attorney's advice, Laura opted to gift her IRA to CSS. The process was straightforward; she contacted her IRA custodian, who promptly sent her a beneficiary designation form. After completing the form

and naming Catholic Social Services as the primary beneficiary, Laura returned it to the custodian. She also informed CSS about her generous gift, evoking heartfelt gratitude. Laura was certain Jim would have been pleased. Importantly, she retained the ability to utilize her IRA during her lifetime, knowing that upon her passing, it would benefit charity.

If you possess a qualified retirement plan, such as an IRA, 401(k), or 403(b), and wish to make a charitable contribution, updating your beneficiary designation form to include our organization could potentially benefit

(Continued on back)



CSS Sustainability Initiative

ECHO Collective, CSS launch new sustainability bin

Catholic Social Services and ECHO Collective have collaborated to launch a textile collection bin at Turbine Flats, located at 2124 Y Street in Lincoln. The bin sits on the southwest corner of the Turbine Flats parking lot. The public is encouraged to drop off new or used clothing, towels, shoes, belts and fabric scraps, no matter their condition. The donated clothing and textile items are then processed by the CSS Sustainability Team.

This partnership between CSS, ECHO Collective, Turbine Flats and OMT! Divine Women's Resale will help divert donations based on the best use for items, and keep them out of the landfill. Funds raised from this partnership will help support the work of CSS and ECHO Collective in our community.



PO Box 30425
Lincoln NE 68503-0425

#HopeintheGoodLife

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
LINCOLN, NE
PERMIT No 976



(S.A.G.)

Hope in the Good Life

Easter 2024

Consider a beneficiary designation to help bring hope *(Continued from page 6)*

your family or estate. Such gifts may enable your heirs to avoid income tax on specific inherited assets and could assist your estate in circumventing estate taxes.

Please note that as the advantages of each gift may vary, it is advisable to seek guidance from your legal, tax, or financial advisor.

Should you have inquiries regarding making a beneficiary designation gift, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to collaborate with you and address any queries you may have. For more information, you may reach me at jsoukup@csshope.org. Thank you for helping us bring hope in the good life!



SAVE THE NEW DAY!

'24 CSS MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC

MONDAY | 8.5.24 | HILLCREST CC LINCOLN

New day of the week,
same **HOPE IN THE GOOD LIFE** support!

MORE SOON AT CSSHOPE.ORG