

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

by Catherine Ausperk

“The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt.” (Leviticus 19:34)

Times were hard and there were a lot of hungry people living around our church. We didn't know them though, they just lived in the neighborhood. Still, we wanted to serve them, so we decided to introduce a monthly, free meal. Often, the Hunger Center located in the back of our Fellowship Hall was busiest on the last Thursday of the month, because by then most of their food stamps were already used up. So we decided that would be the night! But, we also knew their need was for more than just food. Because of that, we decided our menu would include respect and companionship. We wanted them to feel special, so we had volunteer “waiters” serve them at their tables, which were set with real plates and real silverware. We wanted them to experience the joy of helping others, so we made sure there were take-out meals available that they could share. And, most important-

ly, we wanted them to know we valued them as people, so we called our ministry the “Meet the Neighbors” meal and we included ourselves in our hospitality. Members of our congregation not only came to the meals to eat but, once there, sat with strangers and guests and turned them into friends.

DEAR LORD, PLEASE HELP US TO REMEMBER THAT FOOD ISN'T THE ONLY NOURISHMENT NEEDED BY THE SOUL. HELP US TO SHARE OURSELVES AS WELL AS OUR FOOD, GIFTS, AND TREASURES, IN ORDER TO TRULY SPREAD YOUR LOVE TO ALL.