

LSS Faith Mission

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| Winter 2022

How Your Support for Reuban Will Impact Many

“ Things I’m
learning here
I can take back
to the kids. ”

Reuban

LSS Faith Mission client

LSS FAITH MISSION

When disaster fell on Reuban, he never complained. Last spring, his apartment caught fire, and he lost everything he owned and had nowhere to go. When he walked through the doors of LSS Faith Mission, seeking the help he needed to rebuild his life, he wasn’t sad or discouraged. He saw it as a golden opportunity.

“I was emotionally and physically abused as a kid,” says Reuban. “That had a big impact on me. As

I grew older, I wanted to help kids who are going through the same things I went through. So, when I retired last year, I started a little program to mentor these kids. “Instead of seeing homelessness as a bump in the road, I saw it as a chance to be a good example to the kids,” Reuban adds.

From day one at LSS Faith Mission, Reuban committed himself to work hard, to be a good example, showing the kids how to succeed in life.

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A Message of Hope from Rick Davis



“Your commitment and compassion are what Lutheran Social Services is all about.”

The holiday season is almost here. For most of us, it's a season spent with family and friends, a time rich with warm memories and joy. But for many people living on the margins—those struggling with homelessness, hunger, and domestic violence—the coming days promise only more worry, fear, hardship, and struggle.

Yet, when I think of those we serve, I'm optimistic—optimistic because friends and partners like you have not forgotten them. Over the past two and a half years, we've all faced stress and hardship, but through it all you have gone above and beyond through your support of LSS Faith Mission, LSS CHOICES, and the LSS Food Pantries, bringing hope to those who need it most.

This holiday season, your support will remind struggling women, men, and children that someone cares about them, that someone wants to hear their stories and help them get ahead, and that the Christmas Spirit still lives. Your commitment and compassion are what Lutheran Social Services is all about. Every gift you send tells someone in need they're loved.

This holiday season, I invite you to read and learn more about the difference you make in the lives of the men, women and children we serve.

With gratitude,

Rick Davis
Executive Vice President and COO

REUBAN'S STORY CONT.

“LSS Faith Mission helped me with clothing, food, and bus passes. They helped me get all my paperwork, birth certificate, things like that,” he says. “Now I'm starting to look for housing. LSS Faith Mission really opened my eyes to all the resources available to folks like me, which I never knew about. Things I'm learning here I can take back to the kids.”

Reuban's experience has also given him a new vision of what he wants to do when he leaves.

“I've received hundreds of letters from kids, telling me their own ideas of how to stop violence and burglaries,” he explains. “They're telling me what they need to improve their lives and their neighborhoods. So, when I leave, I want to start a little something like LSS Faith Mission, to help kids like LSS Faith Mission helped me.

“I want to thank the donors and LSS Faith Mission for all they did for me,” he adds. **“Thanks to you, I'll be able to impact a lot of other lives.”**

Peace Lutheran Church in Gahanna

For more than 17 years, members of Peace Lutheran Church in Gahanna, Ohio, have volunteered throughout the year at the LSS Food Pantries to serve our neighbors who are food insecure. But their biggest support comes at Thanksgiving, when members gather together to fill 500 bags of food, containing all the trimmings a family needs (except turkey). Food items include everything from potato mix to green beans to cranberries to desserts and more!

“I think it's a really great way for our church community, especially some of our younger people, to see the impact of providing 500 bags of food for struggling families,” says Doug Warburton, lead pastor.

“We have a very generous congregation that wants to do this kind of ministry,” adds Minda Bickley, the outreach director. “It feels good to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. Overall, this kind of service grows us as a faith community.”

LSS CHOICES

I'm alive because of you

Lauren's last husband promised to keep her safe. He made her feel like the love of his life. He made all the right promises. Yet, something was off—but Lauren didn't want to see it.

Lauren had a string of violent relationships ever since the age of 12, when she was sexually assaulted by an older boy she knew. He promised to kill her and her parents if she ever told anyone. For the rest of her life, she looked for safety from men, but found only cruelty and abuse.

"I always blamed myself," Lauren says. "I just accepted the abuse because I felt there must be something wrong with me that made them want to mistreat me. I thought I deserved it."

But her last husband surpassed them all. "There was pushing and shoving, choking, and sexual assault," she recalls. "He passed me around to his friends. Any time I tried to leave, he took my keys, my phone, and my credit cards. Literally, I had nothing and nowhere to go. Then it escalated even more. He threatened to kill me three times in 48 hours, and he went into another room and cocked a gun so I could hear it."

"I am 100% convinced that if I had not come here, I would not be alive right now."



Photo has been changed to protect privacy.

Shortly after, her parents helped her to escape and brought her to LSS CHOICES. "I am 100% convinced that if I had not come here, I would not be alive right now," Lauren says.

Through a lot of intense counseling, Lauren was able to unravel why she endured so much pain and suffering. More important, she has experienced healing she never thought possible.

"They empowered me to believe I'm good enough, to believe I don't need someone to make me safe. I can create my own safety," Lauren says. "I've learned to set boundaries,

to recognize what's acceptable and what's not, and I've learned to take care of myself.

"I want to thank the donors because they literally saved me," she adds. "There's not a day that goes by that I don't think about what they did for me. I hope they understand the impact they had."

LSS FOOD PANTRIES

The donors saved us



When Monica's daughter died unexpectedly, Monica was not only emotionally devastated, suddenly she had to step in and raise her two young grandchildren.

Her only income is disability. She relies on the LSS Food Pantry to keep her grandchildren fed and to make ends meet.

"Inflation has had a big impact on my family," Monica says. "I've actually had to choose between paying my rent or paying the electric bill, so coming to the food pantry has been a big help. It's a huge relief, so I don't have to worry so much."

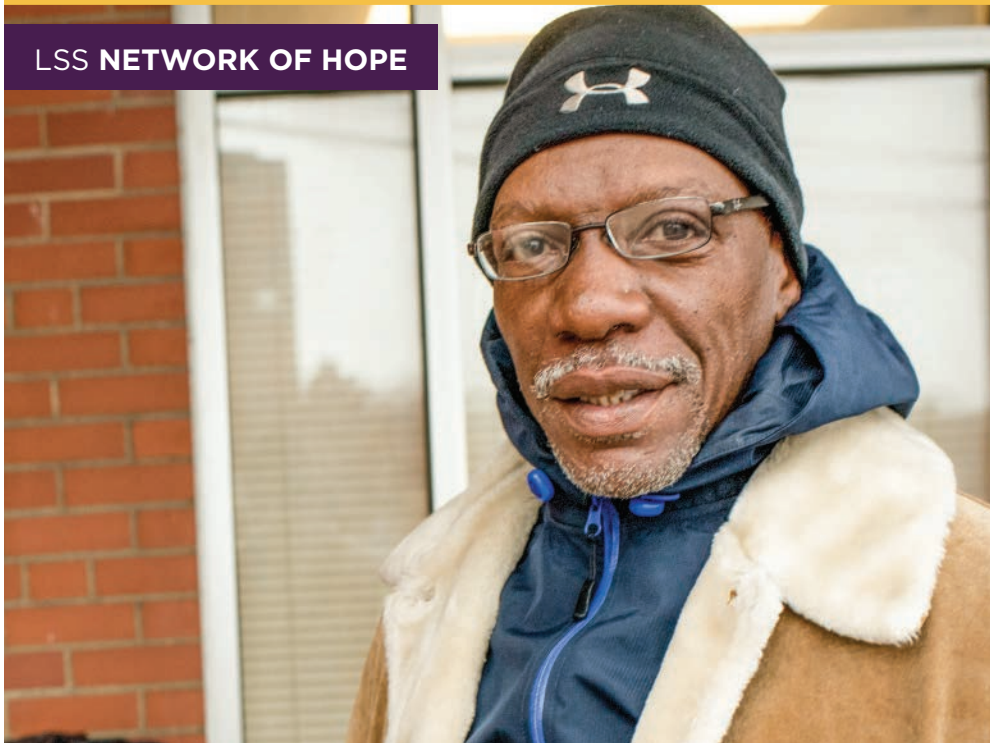
Monica especially appreciates that she can choose only the food she wants, and that the food pantry is extra generous in the amount they give her. But she receives more than food. "They also help with toilet paper and personal products, and they've helped connect me to other resources I didn't know were available.

"I guess I'd have to say the donors saved us," she adds.

"They took all that stress off, so now we can manage a little bit better."

Your donations and contributions enable the LSS Food Pantries to help individuals and families who are food insecure, in 11 counties around Ohio, by making nutritious food more readily available in a way that honors their dignity and offers hope.

LSS NETWORK OF HOPE



Give the gift of hope this Christmas season

This holiday season, so many of our neighbors continue to struggle with inflation, as well as high costs for food, fuel, and housing. Some are even falling into homelessness. Instead of joy this Christmas season, they face hunger, fear, and hopelessness.

Please give today to help provide meals, shelter and hope to the men and women who will spend the Christmas season at LSS Faith Mission and the men, women and children at LSS CHOICES.

Your gift of any amount will remind our neighbors in need that people like you care. Your compassion and mercy will not only help lessen the suffering of people across Ohio, you will also give many the chance for a better life.

Thank you for your generosity, prayers, and support for neighbors who need us most—at the holiday season and throughout the year.

We are hopeful we can meet the physical and emotional needs of every single person who comes through our doors. Please consider giving a gift today by going online to **Issnetworkofhope.org/HolidayNews** or send the enclosed reply slip with your gift. Thank you!

Your gift also offers healing and hope to people in need across Ohio. That means your support will help provide meals and shelter to homeless and hungry neighbors who come to LSS Faith Mission in both Franklin and Fairfield counties. You will ensure families struggling with hunger have access to nutritious food at the LSS Food Pantries. And you will bless women and men facing domestic violence with a safe, secure place to stay and heal through LSS CHOICES.

Leave a legacy

Many people who love supporting Lutheran Social Services are encouraged to learn that they can leave a legacy of support for years to come by including LSS in their estate plan or through a planned gift. You have many planned giving options, including Charitable Gift Annuities, Donor Advised Funds, Trusts, Gifts of Securities, and much more. Planned gifts can also benefit you in several ways, such as:

- Providing yourself with an income stream for you and your spouse's life;
- Avoiding or deferring capital gains taxes;
- Taking advantage of immediate tax deductions, among other benefits.

For more information about setting up an Estate Plan in support of LSS, please contact:

Isslegacy@Issnetworkofhope.org

Thank you to our funders



Stay connected!

