

The Caring Place General Information Sheet

The Caring Place is a community wide manifestation of the Christian principle of caring for one another. The purpose of *The Caring Place* is to provide hot meals for those in need. No questions are asked of those who seek the sustenance, nor is response of any kind owed by the recipients. Support for *The Caring Place* is provided by Churches, organizations and individuals who wish to share their God-given abundance with those in need. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Xenia, 287 W. Main St (opposite the west end of the Xenia Towne Square) is where the meals are served. The following information is designed to assist you in your participation. If you have additional questions about the program, please contact First Evangelical Lutheran Church at 937-372-7421.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MEALS

1. Prepare a main dish such as a casserole, meat stew, pasta, or meat dish such as ham, chicken, or meatloaf.
2. A vegetable dish, salad, or both.
3. Rolls or bread (unless they are part of the main dish). Margarine will be supplied, but special spreads, such as jam or honey, will be your responsibility.
4. Dessert, such as cookies, fruit crisp, pie, cake or something similar. (Children also greatly appreciate fresh fruit such as apples or bananas.)
5. Coffee & water will be provided, but bring milk and a fruit punch or lemonade.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS MEAL WILL LIKELY BE THE ONLY MEAL OF THE DAY FOR MANY OF THE PEOPLE BEING SERVED, AND MAY BE THE ONLY HOT MEAL OF THE DAY. PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

As the host church of *The Caring Place* program, First Lutheran Church assumes the responsibility for providing plates, cups, napkins, silverware, salt, pepper, coffee, tea, sugar, margarine and powdered creamer. Disposable plastic gloves are also furnished. (Any special table settings, decorations, or condiments are your responsibility.) To help defray the cost of these items, a donation of \$10.00 is requested each time you serve. Checks are to be made out to First Lutheran Church designated for *The Caring Place* (there is a separate account set up specifically for this purpose.)

Please feel free to contact First Lutheran, at 372-7421, about any questions you may have about this program.

PREPARATION, SERVING AND CLEANUP

1. Plan to prepare the meal and then bring it to the church. If you wish, you may use the church's kitchen for preparation. In general, however, we have found things work better if the food preparation is done elsewhere and the kitchen facilities are used for warming food (or preparation of hot rolls, etc.) rather than for the primary task of cooking.

2. Serving time is 6:00pm until 7:00pm on Thursday evening. Accordingly, plan so serving can begin promptly. There often are "early birds" who arrive before 6:00pm and a surge of people arrive promptly at starting time, so be prepared to serve a number of meals very quickly. (Starting before 6:00pm is not encouraged but this is up to you.) Holiday meals, served on the Thursday nearest the holiday, are a joint effort between all participating churches & organizations.

3. When you arrive, there will be members of *The Caring Place* Coordinating Committee available to show you where everything is, to answer questions, and to provide general assistance as required. Among other things, they will provide plates, napkins, disposable plastic gloves for food-handlers, etc.

4. People arrive throughout the serving time and are served as they arrive (there is no "opening" and people leave when they wish.) Groups as well as individuals attend, so be prepared for both surges as well as some slack time.

5. Prepare enough food for about **170+** generous servings. Many participants have "seconds" or even "thirds". "Takeout" meals and "doggie bags" are not permitted; however, if fresh fruit is served, individuals may take a piece with them.

6. Leftovers may be delivered to volunteers at the Fire House. Once again, *The Caring Place* Coordinating Committee can help with this - or you may dispose of leftovers as you see fit.

7. Tables and chairs are usually already set up, however you may be asked to assist on occasion. (Tables and chairs may be put away after the meal, but this varies. *The Caring Place* Coordinating Committee will provide guidance and assistance.) Salt, pepper, etc. will be placed on the tables. Each place will be set with plastic tableware wrapped in a napkin and a placemat is on the table.

8. INDIVIDUALS WILL BE SERVED AT THEIR PLACES. We found that having a "buffet" type line simply does not work well. Accordingly, when people come in they are

to sit at the tables; your servers will then serve them with the filled plates and drinks. We suggest you use "portion control," that is, serving an appropriate amount of food for the individual needs. A child's portion need not be as large as that of an adult. Additional servings are considered usual and are part of the calculated number of servings. If anyone desires "seconds", this will be requested of the server(s) and a fresh plate will be prepared. The used plate will be discarded.

9. Please be sure to clean the kitchen and dining area after the meal is over - once again, *The Caring Place* Coordinating Committee will be available to help. Leave any used dish towels on top of the kitchen counter - so they may be washed (please do not fold them or put them away.)