



UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

*United as Christ's disciples, we
Support one another and
Serve God in the world.*

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

27 October 2025

Starting October 16, SNAP benefits will not be paid until the federal government shutdown ends and funds are released to PA. (Pennsylvania SNAP website)

At this time, there will be no benefits issued November 01.d (USDA website)

Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. (Luke 6:21)

Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these [...], you did it to me. (Matthew 25:40)

They will hunger no more and thirst no more (Revelation 7:16)

Dear Friends,

I give thanks to God for the many ministries in our congregations addressing the needs of neighbors near and far. No matter their size or strength, nearly every congregation in this synod participates in some way in efforts to ensure everyone has what they need for life. I believe these ministries grow out of our Eucharist in which Christ Jesus feeds us with the Holy Spirit for service to one another and the world.

In only a few weeks, we will celebrate Thanksgiving. Many of us are already thinking about the feast we will share with family and friends. Some are also looking toward providing meals to their community, especially for those who might not have enough to eat. I have seen congregations collecting food in this harvest season to share through their own or a neighborhood food pantry. Food is very much on our minds.

Meanwhile, the headlines in the news include the devastating impact of our government shutdown on families and individuals who rely on food assistance, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and other government programs. The quotes above from both state and federal websites mean that over 40 million Americans, many of them children, could find themselves experiencing extreme hunger.

The Gospel tells us that the coming of Jesus means good news to the poor and hungry. Ezekiel (34:29) says about the Good Shepherd, "I will provide for them [...] so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger". Jesus had compassion on the crowds that came to see him in the wilderness and fed them; but not before he said to his disciples, "you give them something to eat."

Mail: PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837



100 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847



570-524-9778



info@uss-elca.org

Jesus calls his disciples—his church—to tend to those who need. To Peter on the shore of Galilee Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” We continue this ministry in our congregations through various programs, including partnerships with community and non-governmental organizations. Yet our efforts cannot match the ability of our government, state and federal, to impact many.

For this reason, I call on congregations and members to act on behalf of our neighbors in need. Continue to collect food for community food pantries; donate to organizations like [ELCA World Hunger](#), [Bread for the World](#), [Central Pennsylvania Food Bank](#), [Feeding America](#); take your turn to serve in a local soup kitchen.

But in this time of dire need, I urge you to also advocate with your representatives in Congress and in state legislature. Remind them of their responsibility to seek the good of those they represent, especially the most needy. Call on them to work for restoration of funds to feed the hungry. Tell them that the well-being of the poor should never become a political weapon. Go to this [ELCA Advocacy Action Alert](#) for a simple way to write to Senators Fetterman and McCormick and your congressperson to urge them to work for restoration of SNAP funds during this government shutdown.

I pray that by the time this letter reaches you the impasse in Congress will be overcome and full funding for SNAP and other food benefits will be restored. But we cannot look away from this crisis even after it has passed. We should thank our legislators for doing the hard work of negotiation and remind them again that people need not go hungry for the sake of political gain.

May God who provides for all creatures small and great satisfy your need abundantly, so that you may share with others from the bounty of grace showered on you.


Yours in Christ,


✠ Bishop Craig A. Miller

[Urge USDA to Release SNAP funds - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#)

Mail: PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837

 100 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847

 570-524-9778

 info@uss-elca.org