



LOVE STORIES

NEWS + UPDATES

FALL/WINTER 2025



We were blessed to be surrounded by another beautiful fall, with crisp nights to watch hometown football games and clear days to see the combines busy in the fields. Growing up here I have always felt it is such a blessing to see how the earth provides for us. The cycle of planting in the fields, and relying on God and having faith that the weather will provide what is needed for those seeds to grow and produce the bounty for harvest.

But what happens when the bounty is not there, when there is not enough to make ends meet? One of the greatest challenges today in communities is hunger, or food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as when people don't have enough to eat and don't know where their next meal will come from. In South Dakota, 115,000 people, or 12.4% of the population are food insecure and rising, the highest rate in more than a decade. In the United States, neighbors experiencing food insecurity tell us that the high cost of food and other essentials is one of the top reasons why it's increasingly difficult to afford and access the food they need to live. The cost of essentials like food, housing, health care, utilities and child and dependent care can stretch already tight budgets, making it harder to get by.

Research tells us that children that are hungry have a harder time concentrating in school which leads to disruptions in learning that can continue throughout their lifetime. When anyone cannot access nutritious food their health suffers, and conditions like diabetes, heart failure, hypertension, and chronic kidney disease are more likely to develop. Food insecurity is a health issue, a moral issue, a community issue, and a ministry issue.

At Love INC requests for food is one of the most common requests for assistance that we receive from neighbors in need. We meet this need in a variety of ways in collaboration with our Partner Churches and agencies. When we receive the initial request for food assistance, we complete the intake to see what other resources we may be able to assist them with. We may be able to help them qualify for other resources that will offset other money that they can use to help them purchase food. We then help them utilize the food pantries in Lennox or Parker, and give them resources for the food give-a-ways if that is appropriate too. We also have two Partner Churches that offer Gap Ministries of cleaning and hygiene products, which we can also offer them to offset more money to help them purchase food items. If there is an emergency need for food, we have yet another Partner Church that provides gift cards to Sunshine to meet those emergency needs. Love INC and our Partner Churches are able to bless our neighbors in need fighting hunger and hopelessness in our local communities through support and Christ's love.

Your Servant In Christ,

Michelle Paulson

Executive Director



New Board Members for Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ is blessed to be entering into a new season. The prior board worked for almost seven years to be able to bring a Love INC affiliate to our area, with COVID slowing that progress for about two of those seven years. Thankfully they persevered to be able to bring us the ministry we have today.

We are now ready to transition some of our historical board members off of our board and bring on new members to grow our vision and mission. We are thankful for the service and dedication of Rev. Gary Hegstad, Sharese Ihnen, Jan Weaver, and Bret Wynia as they move off of our board. We are excited about our new members' willingness to serve, and they are Patti Thomas, Kim Kruger, Michelle Scott and Rev. Ethan Sayler.

The board held their first annual strategic planning meeting, laying out their plans for growth and service over the next year and beyond. Areas of future growth include growing our footprint and serving more churches, individuals, and families throughout Turner County, as well as beginning our Transitional Ministries in 2026. These programs provide classes, mentoring and spiritual growth and will be available to everyone. We are also prayerful to add more volunteers and Partner Churches to join our ministry to help us meet the growing needs in our communities.

As we look forward, Love INC remains committed to adapting and expanding our services to meet the evolving needs of our communities. We encourage community members to reach out if they or someone they know is facing hardship, financially, spiritually, or relationally, as our team is ready to offer support and connect individuals with helpful resources. Together, through collaboration and compassion, we can continue to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve.

The Added Burdens of Winter Weather

Winter weather is right around the corner as we all know, and with the start of cooler temperatures comes added burdens that some of us may not realize. At Love In the Name of Christ of greater Lennox and Turner County, we have already received calls for assistance with one household with no working heat: calls that we receive every year. If you are fortunate enough to have a working furnace, paying your heat bill can be a burden as well. If you are homeless winter adds many layers of challenges and fear.

But that is not the only burden. There are winter coats, hats, boots, and gloves to buy, especially if you have children. They often outgrow their coats almost ever year requiring the purchase of a new one. Inadequate winter clothing can lead to illness, skin problems, even frostbite. If you are someone that has been getting by with sub-standard tires on a car to get back and forth to work, it could be a challenge on snow-packed roads. This could lead to the expense of replacing your tires, or worse, having a tow bill when you end up in the ditch if you don't.

There is also the illness that is present each winter. Whether you become ill or your children, it can easily lead to time missed from work. Many work at jobs with no benefits, meaning time missed from work means no pay. No benefits also means no health insurance. Still others choose to take no insurance because of the cost, so any trips to the doctor will be self-pay if you have no coverage - and it all adds up.

These are just a handful of the challenges that winter thrusts upon those that are already struggling to manage in their day to day lives. Though Education, Advocacy, Mentoring, and Sharing God's plan for them we hope to transform lives by offering them the peace that God has to offer.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Love In the Name of Christ of Greater Lennox and Turner County is ready for YOU! Are you ready to make an impact in the lives of others? We seek those who want to provide compassion to anyone and everyone the way Jesus Christ modeled love to us...unconditionally. Lives and communities change when the hopeless have hope, when the fearful live by faith and when every person feels like they belong. Love INC cannot exist without volunteers - we exist only together by serving those in need in the name of Jesus Christ.

We are in continuous need of volunteers to keep our office open and to meet our ever-growing needs. It takes just a commitment of 2 hours a month to make a difference in the lives of others. Please contact Michelle Paulson at 605.681.6550 or MichellePLoveINC@gmail.org.

ANSWERING HIS CALL....

Love INC did feel a call to answer a need for food insecurity, as we were receiving more and more calls for food assistance even before the SNAP food program was put on hold. The Lennox Food Pantry at the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in Lennox was also feeling the effects with shelves that were in very low supply.

Working together with the Lennox Food Pantry, Love INC let area churches know of the shortage which increased donations. Love INC is also working with our GAP Ministries at Partner Churches to supply non-food supplies for the food pantry.

A Food Give-Away was held in conjunction with Faith Presbyterian Church, Kitchen Kindness and Love INC on November 16, where over 50 individuals/families were able to come and receive food supplies. Additionally, an anonymous donor made it possible for Love INC to be able to donate a Holiday Meal basket, containing either a ham or turkey and all the additional dinner foods to be donated to each of our Partner Churches. Each Partner Church is then able to gift a family of their choice with the Holiday Meal basket for Thanksgiving.

By working together, in our communities with our Partner Churches and with our volunteers, we continue to answer the call of Christ.

If you feel called to answer His call, please know there are many ways to be of service. You may want to be on our prayer chain when we are asked to pray for someone on our website or Facebook page, or you may be interested in helping with our classes that will be started soon, or becoming a mentor. Perhaps you feel called to write thank yous' or make a pan of bars. Or God might be calling you to see the change that Love INC is making here in our local communities, and has put on your heart to invest in that change. If God is calling you in any way, feel free to reach out using any of the contacts below and we would love to visit with you.



CONTACT US

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God's Calling...

WILL YOU ANSWER HIM?

Greetings Friends in Christ,

Throughout this year, our ministry has witnessed remarkable moments of hope, healing and transformation. We have experienced significant growth in the individuals and families we have been blessed to serve, increasing from an average of five requests per month last year to over twenty requests a month this year. As we look to the future, the needs within our communities remain great, and the opportunities to make a meaningful impact are greater than ever.

We are excited to announce plans to expand Love INC's ministry in Greater Lennox and Turner County by launching Transformational Ministries in 2026. These programs will be open not only to those we serve, but to all members of our communities. Our goal is to provide educational opportunities that foster spiritual growth, strengthen relationships, and build more resilient communities rooted in faith.

At this time, we invite you to prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to bring light into the darkness, feed the hungry, and share the love of Christ with those who need it most. Your support is vital to the continuation and expansion of our mission. A giving heart is something that God values highly. He wants us to be like Him in this way, and He will bless us when we give generously. *You will be enriched in every way, so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.*
2 Corinthians 9:10-11 (NIV)

We trust that God will guide your heart as you consider this request. If you feel led to give, please know that your support will be stewarded with integrity and will have a significant impact on your community and on the lives of those who we serve.

Thank you for listening to God's call. May He bless you abundantly for your generosity and faithfulness.

With gratitude and hope,

Michelle Paulson
Michelle Paulson
Executive Director
605-681-6550

Pastor Marc
Pastor Marc <+>
[Rev. D. Marc de Waard
Chairman, Governing Board

PLEASE MAIL GIFTS TO:

Love In the Name of Christ of Greater
Lennox and Turner County
PO Box 75
Lennox SD 57039

OR ELECTRONICALLY SEND TO:

