

Community Christmas Dinner 2011

In September of 2011 the planning committee for the Community Table and Double Portion in Neenah and Menasha, WI, gathered to plan the 3rd Annual Community Christmas Dinner Party.

For those who aren't aware, both the Community Table and Double Portion are two volunteer organizations that serve two weekly meals each to the lonely, hungry and the needy. Double Portion operates and serves out of St. Thomas Episcopal Church and Community Table serves out of St. Paul Lutheran Neenah. We combined as one to make a great Christmas party for all.

The Planning Team is a wonderful group of people who together worked as a team. The churches involved were St. Patrick's Catholic Church, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Our Saviors Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church all of Neenah and Menasha. This year we were glad to have included St. Timothy's to the planning team. Together we were able to plan a meal that included a menu selection that served over 230 people! It was first class. We had tenderloin, chicken, ham and all the condiments to make for a great Christmas feast second to none. We were also able to secure funds from Thrivent, the ELCA Appleton Conference of Churches, and all of our churches to help pay for this meal. To add to this, we were able to send home with every attendee, a gift bag of very needy items that all the congregations and SCA papers contributed to make this event complete. This year we even provided entertainment . . . Pastor Martin Ruge's tap dancing team who also volunteered their time and talents as they helped lead the group in Christmas Carols.

The part that was most heart-warming is seeing this group of volunteers who came to cook, serve and clean and the feeling you could see in their hearts **that the gift is in the giving and serving of those who need it most.** Say nothing of the smiles, laughter and appreciation of those who attended this as our guests. In short we saw a diverse community of churches who can find common ground in working together **in mission** and enjoying every minute of it. Both young and "THE EXPERIENCED" all making a difference in our local community that day. It makes hearts warm and shows that when we pull together God's work is truly visible and at work in our community, our churches and in our hearts.

