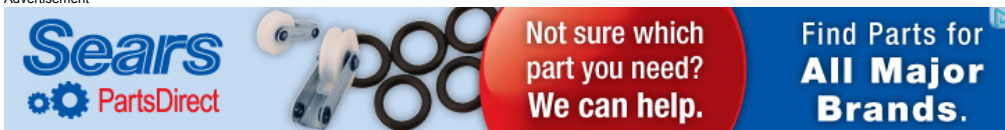


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Published: September 19, 2011 3:00 a.m.

Reverend urges faithful to help feed the hungry

Angela Mapes Turner | The Journal Gazette

To the Rev. David Beckmann, the imperative to "feed the hungry" fits as naturally with religious life as breathing.

Beckmann is president of Bread for the World, a Christian organization whose interfaith members urge national leaders to end hunger in the U.S. and around the world, through letter and email writing campaigns, phone calls and personal meetings.

Beckmann spoke Sunday during services at Trinity

Local

- **City widens Winterval to more locales**
To accommodate increasing demand, the Fort Wayne parks department will expand its Winterval festival this year to include multiple venues and events. Today 9:29 am
- **Drowning in Noble probed**
Conservation officers are investigating what they are calling a possible drowning in Noble County. Larry Slusher, 61, of Rome City was found lying motionless in their swimming pool by his wife when she returned home about 4 p. Today 3:00 am
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Plymouth resident Rick Cooper regularly stops at the Plaza Drive Lassus Handy Dandy in Warsaw to buy a Monopoly scratch-off ticket. Today 3:00 am

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Cathie Rowand | The Journal Gazette
The Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, talks to parishioners Sunday at Trinity English Lutheran Church.

English Lutheran Church and at a social ministry conference Saturday at Life Bridge Church. His visit was promoted by a newly formed local chapter of Bread for the World.

An economist and Lutheran pastor, Beckmann received the 2010 World Food Prize, which recognizes advocates for the hungry. He has been president of Bread for the World since 1991.

During his Sunday sermon, Beckmann said he believes the Bible lays out a moral imperative for attention and support of programs aimed at ending hunger.

“God of the Bible cares how we care for poor people,” he said. “God cares about laws and nations, and not only how we behave privately.”

He hoped to pair his words with actions. Outside the church were sample emails urging Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., to protect poverty-focused assistance from cuts during the appropriations process this week.

On Sunday, Beckmann said for all the food drives and pantries operated by faith-based organizations, only about 6 percent of food provided for needy people comes from those sources. The remaining 94 percent comes from government resources – what are commonly known as food stamps, the federal school lunch program and WIC, a health and nutrition program for women, infants and children.

More than 13 percent of Hoosiers rely on food stamps, according to July statistics from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. The agency administers the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in the state.

Trinity English Lutheran Church’s Care Ministries

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- **Angel Food Ministries is out of business**

More information

- To learn more about Bread for the World and the local chapter, go to www.bread.org or call Jeff Kachmar at 482-6268.

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organized a bazaar to coincide with Beckmann's appearance; in the church's gathering area, local social-service agencies and ministries shared their missions.

Care Ministries coordinator Janet Altmeyer said the gathering was planned to show how the church's membership can attend to the physical and spiritual needs of the area's poor. As a downtown church, Altmeyer said, Trinity English Lutheran welcomes people daily who are seeking help.

Beckmann said organizations such as his need to collaborate with local efforts, which he called "tremendously important" as Congress considers drastic cuts to government programs that help people in need. But he urged the community to pair the local efforts with an equal concern for how its government treats the poor.

"Government programs and policies have a huge impact on hungry and poor people around the world," he said. "Those of us who have been called by the Lord need to pay attention."

Retiree David Goodman manned a booth for Wellspring Interfaith Social Services, where he has volunteered for about three years.

The experience has opened his eyes to people falling through the cracks. The bulk of them are working-class people who are having trouble making ends meet, he said.

Nearby, Shirley Jordan stood behind a table advertising local ministry Meals with a Mission. Jordan said she appreciated Beckmann's message because it showed her how her contributions can help when the big picture seems overwhelming.

"It's a very small portion, but it has to begin with one," she said. "Each of us has a responsibility as a citizen to be aware of the needs of our state and country."

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