

Guidelines Regarding Food Sensitivities and Allergies

Background

Many people have food sensitivities and allergic reactions to foods and food ingredients. The severity and impact of these food sensitivities and allergies range from minor discomfort to severe and life threatening reactions. Generalized attempts to prohibit one or more of these foods at Lockport would likely be unsuccessful. It would not make it easier for the families involved as they still would need to remain vigilant. Therefore, Lockport is not recommending a generalized all-church avoidance of specific foods. However, in certain settings in which the sensitive persons will be present, a specific request may be communicated to the church for an item to be avoided. We hope that the church would be supportive of the individuals impacted and cooperate by not bringing this particular item.

General Guidelines for Food Brought to Lockport and Communication within our Congregation

1. When bringing food to be shared:
 - Persons who bring specialized food (e.g. gluten-free, non-dairy, sugar-free) are encouraged to label it as such.
 - If the food contains common allergens (e.g. all tree nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, coconut, coconut oil and peanut oil), the food should also be labeled.
 - Each food item should have its own serving utensil to avoid cross contamination with foods containing common allergens. Reaching hands from one container to another can also cause cross contamination.
 - When a specific request is communicated for foods and food ingredients to be avoided, these items should not be brought to that event.
2. Individuals or, in the case of a minor, a parent, should inform the Congregational Life Committee (and/or other committees) of a food related reaction.

Responsibility and Oversight

The Food Committee has oversight of events with food considered 'all-church' (e.g. potlucks) and will make the determination about which foods, if any, are to be avoided. Other committees may also make similar requests depending on the food related reactions of persons planning to attend the events.

Christian Education Committee has oversight when a person with a known severe reaction is an elementary aged child and will make the determination about which foods are to be avoided. If necessary the committee may recommend which classrooms/areas the foods are not to be brought. Assistance/delegation to other committees can be made if a child is preschool aged (e.g. Nursery Coordinators) or if a child is older (e.g. MYF Sponsors).