

# **Souper Bowl and eBay auction raise money for needy: Innovative events successful for social ministry funds**

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Souper Bowl of Caring, the ecumenically promoted antihunger campaign that plays off the name of the annual professional football championship game, has collected \$4.8 million, with donations still not fully reported as of last month.

Inspired by a prayer from Presbyterian pastor Brad Smith on Super Bowl Sunday in 1989, the collection of \$921,616 by 2,387 Presbyterian churches as of June 8, was a record high for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Overall, more than 11,664 organizations and congregations from a variety of American denominations have reported collecting \$4,844,466, said Souper Bowl officials. Presbyterian donations made up 19 percent of the total—second only to the contributions of the Catholic Church. The PCUSA had the second-highest number of churches participating, behind the United Methodist Church.

In another innovative way to raise social ministry funds, Lutheran Services in America recently reported that it took in \$61,840 in its first annual online auction on eBay this year.

Under the tagline “Trading Graces,” the “labor intensive” auction from February 26 to March 8 of 2,100 items—ranging from an 11-foot wooden giraffe to a bat used in the 1987 World Series—sold about 45 percent of its listed items.

John B. Carter, LSA’s online auction event manager, called the event “a tremendous success” that also raised news media awareness for Lutheran health and human service organizations.