



Give thanks. Give life.

Inspiring Californians to Save Lives
as Organ and Tissue Donors



Fall 2009

Every year as summer dwindles and autumn unfolds, many faith communities prepare for important holidays and times of family. Moreover, all of us, no matter what our religious beliefs, anticipate the coming of a new year with a heart full of hope and the expectation of new beginnings.

Today, there are thousands of grateful people in the United States given new beginnings through the selfless gift of organ, eye and tissue donors. Thank to donors, the more than 28,000 people who receive organ transplants every year are given a new chance to live and hundreds of thousands enjoy restored mobility and sight. Unfortunately, many thousands more still wait for a chance at a normal life through organ and tissue transplants.

As a faith leader, you can help spread a message of hope by encouraging your congregation to consider the gift of donation. Each person moved by your inspiration and who takes action to become a donor, brings a message of hope to the nearly 101,000 people who wait for organ transplants today and the many that one day will benefit from eye or tissue transplants.

National Donor Sabbath, observed November 13-15, 2009, is an excellent time to provide information about organ, eye and tissue donation. Won't you help by including donation in your sermon during donor Sabbath weekend? We are also able to provide a staff member and/or a person touched by donation to share more about organ and tissue donation with your members.

In addition, you can share information by including the Donor Sabbath insert as part of your worship service? **Free copies are available by calling or emailing Lisa Stanley at lstanley@ctdn.org or 510-251-7010.**

As you know, the faith community has an opportunity to make a significant and lasting difference in the lives of a great many people. Your congregation has the power to Donate Life. We hope you will join us in sharing this important message in November.

Sincerely,

California Transplant Donor Network
1000 Broadway, Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94607
info@ctdn.org
510.251.7010
www.ctdn.org



Facts About Organ and Tissue Donation in California

The Basics

- There are currently more than 100,000 people on the UNOS National Organ Transplant Waiting List. More than 20,000, or 20% of the national total, are listed at California transplant centers.
- Of those waiting, one in three will die due to a shortage of organs.
- Nationwide, approximately 18 people die each day awaiting life-saving organ transplants, and a new name is added to the national waiting list every 13 minutes.
- One organ donor can save up to eight lives and one tissue donor can improve the lives of up to 50 others.
- Nationwide, in approximately 70% of the 13,500 cases each year where patients are pronounced brain dead and are medically suitable to be organ donors, the donor (via registry) or family authorize donation.

Needs in Minority Communities

- Nationwide, minorities represent 54% of organ transplant candidates and more than 60% of those awaiting kidney transplants.
- In California, Latinos make up 35% of those waiting for life-saving transplants, Asians/Pacific Islanders 16%, and African Americans another 14%.
- Nearly 75% of those waiting for kidney transplants are people of color.
- Nationwide, African Americans comprise 12% of the total population, but represent 35% of kidney transplant candidates. This high proportion is due to a higher incidence of diabetes and hypertension.

Biology

- Organs that may be donated (in order of frequency transplanted) include the kidneys, liver, heart, lungs, pancreas and small intestine.
- Tissues that may be donated include corneas/eyes, heart valves, skin, bone, tendons, cartilage and veins.
- In about 90% of instances, only patients who experience brain death – a medically, legally and morally accepted determination of death resulting from the complete lack of blood flow to the brain – may donate vital organs. This represents about one percent of all deaths in hospitals annually. Under rare and controlled circumstances involving major neurological trauma, organs may be donated after cardiac death.

Countering Misconceptions

- All major religions support or permit organ and tissue donation.
- Organs are allocated fairly and equitably based on medical criteria. Priority depends on medical factors such as urgency of need, length of time on the waiting list, blood type, and organ size compatibility. Race, gender, age, income and celebrity status are not considered when determining who receives an organ.
- There is no cost to the donor or his/her family for donation.
- There are no limitations on those who can sign up to be donors, even when past disease or certain chronic conditions may be present. Adults age 50+ represented 30% of organ donors and 70% tissue donors in 2007. Ultimately, the decision as to whether or not organs or tissue are suitable for transplantation will be made by medical specialists at the time of donation. The message: Don't rule yourself out! Sign up to give life: www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org



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Boundless Gratitude

“There’s nothing wrong with me. How could there be? I’m too young to be sick.” Years of such denial nearly killed me. Reality hit hard on December 10, 1989 at age 42. While directing the church choir, dizziness I’d ignored for years, finally had its way. I was rushed to the hospital. The diagnosis was cardiomyopathy, a progressive and irreversible weakening of the heart.

By June of 1992, I was suffering from end-stage heart failure, for which there is no cure. Without a heart transplant I would die. I was put on the transplant list and waited as my strength waned and physical lethargy set in. On September 23, as one family grieved the loss of their 14-year-old son, I received the precious gift of life, and his heart began to beat again in me.

My gratitude was boundless with no earthly language to express it.

Eleven years later, rejection put me on the transplant list again. This time the gift of life was from a woman in her forties.

Again my gratitude was boundless.

As a young adult, I denied my spiritual heart failure, for which there is no cure. “The heart is deceitful; beyond cure.” (Jeremiah 17:9) Symptoms included spiritual lethargy. “There’s nothing wrong with me. How could there be? I’m too good.” Such denial was killing me, spiritually. I needed a spiritual heart transplant. In Ezekiel 36:26, God tells us, “I will give you a new heart.” However, His Son, Jesus, had to die in order for me to live. Humbly, I received His precious gift of life.

My gratitude is boundless with no earthly language to express it.

By: Charlotte Parker, Heart Recipient



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National Donor Sabbath Bulletin Announcements

Thousands of Americans are in need of vital organs and tissues. For many, the chance to live a full life will not come unless more of us consider organ and tissue donation. Each one of us has the potential to save up to eight lives as an organ donor and touch another fifty as a tissue donor. To register as donor, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or check Yes! next time you renew your drivers license. For more information, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or call 1-888-570-9500.

Thinking of others is truly compassionate and selfless. Please consider the gift of organ and tissue donation. Our congregation supports organ and tissue donation in the spirit of love and generosity. To become a donor, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or check Yes! next time you renew your drivers license. For more information, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or call 1-888-570-9500.

After services, discuss organ and tissue donation with your family and friends. Let them know that you understand the critical need for organ and tissue donors and that you have decided to sign up in the Donate Life California Organ and Tissue Donor Registry. Eighteen people die every day waiting for an organ transplant. Remind them that there is no cost for donating life. All you need to do is say YES. For more information, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or call 1-888-570-9500.

November 13-15, 2009 is National Donor Sabbath Weekend. Our congregation supports organ and tissue donation as the gift of life and the expression of our highest humanitarian ideals. We ask that all members of the congregation consider becoming organ and tissue donors. For more information or to become a donor, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or call 1-888-570-9500.

Our congregation supports and encourages organ and tissue donation as the ultimate gift from one person to another. Donate Life - consider becoming donor. For more information, visit www.donateLIFecalifornia.org or call 1-888-570-9500.



Commitment to Participate

Yes! We will support National Donor Sabbath by:

- Dedicating the weekend of Nov. 13-15 to organ and tissue donation through presentations to our membership.
- Participating in a customized eCampaign to inform our members of the opportunity to save lives by registering as an organ and tissue donor. *Ask us how to get started with this easy, free and powerful way to reach out to your members.*
- Hosting a Donate Life California registration table.
- Including an insert in our bulletin regarding organ and tissue donation and the Donate Life California registry.

Organization _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Please fax or email this document to: Lisa Stanley at 510.273.1186 or lstanley@ctdn.org

Thank You!

