



A STRATEGY FOR RAISING AWARENESS — AND FUNDS — FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

Cents-Ability is a small first step in the battle against hunger and poverty. Congregations invite every member — of all ages — to contribute a few cents at every meal. This simple act is an expression of thanks for what we have received. It is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus' command "You give them something to eat." When members bring their offerings to church on the appointed Sunday, all of those coins "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" as they are received and dedicated.

These small acts of faithfulness can add up: a congregation of 100 persons can offer \$2,160 dollars a year. A 30,000-member presbytery has the potential of raising over \$1.6 million annually at a nickle a meal.

Cents-Ability originated in 1976 as "Two-Cents-A-Meal," a project inspired by Rosellyn Calvert in prayer and begun by Presbyterian Women to involve individuals and families in a corporate response to world hunger. Over the years, presbyteries have developed similar programs entitled Pennies for Hunger, Nickle-A-Meal, etc. Many of these programs benefit local hunger ministries as well as the national and international projects of the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP).

PHP has Cents-Ability resources to help presbyteries and congregations begin and expand hunger education and fund-raising programs. These include posters, labels for collection containers, prayer table tents, and a notebook with ideas and resources. Most resources are available for download, and you may print copies as needed.

"We will never see world peace until we wipe out hunger. Let's stick with what we started, doing it from the heart, remembering we are doing it because of the love our Christ has given to each of us, and letting this hunger action come from within and go out into all the world." —Rosellyn Calvert



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Starting a Cents-Ability Program

A Cents-Ability plan can be designed to engage every family in your congregation in a partnership of prayer, understanding, and gifts.

1. Share Cents-Ability information with your church session or mission committee and seek approval for your congregation to participate. If your presbytery already has a Cents-Ability program (two-cents-a-meal, a nickel a meal, etc.), be sure to coordinate your efforts.
2. Ask your church's session to formally covenant to participate in Cents-Ability. It is important for the church's leadership to lead by example. Ask the pastor to preach about the miracle of multiplication and to offer encouragement for participation in the program.
3. Designate a person to coordinate the Cents-Ability program, and prayerfully identify a Cents-Ability committee or team. Consider members who are sensitive to issues of hunger and poverty and who have creative energy – remember to include youth and young adults!
4. Work together (Cents-Ability team, session, mission team, etc.) to determine how funds raised through the program will be used.
 - If your presbytery has a Cents-Ability program, there may be recommended percentages of funds to be used for local, presbytery, national, & international projects. In this case, the church will need to decide how to use the local funds. If there is no presbytery program, the church will need to decide how all the funds will be used.
 - Please consider sharing at least 50% of the funds raised with the Presbyterian Hunger Program to support national and international hunger projects. Gifts for PHP can be sent through your normal PC(USA) mission giving channels and designated for *H000107-CentsAbility*. They can also be marked for *H000107-CentsAbility* and mailed to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700, or given online at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/H000107/>.
5. Have a Cents-Ability kick-off! Devote a worship service or fellowship supper to getting Cents-Ability off to a good start. Use special prayers, litanies, or sermons. Consider special times such as harvest, Advent, or Lent for a kick-off event.
6. Plan to keep your congregation informed:
 - Special presentations during worship, Sunday School, circles, youth groups, suppers, etc.
 - Bulletins, newsletters, bulletin boards, posters, etc.
7. Work with your pastor and worship committee to make the regular in-gathering of gifts a special time. Include prayer for those who are hungry, for local feeding and development projects, and for PHP projects. Ideas:
 - Minutes for Mission on how Cents-Ability funds are being used locally, nationally, and around the world
 - Items of interest or inspiration to serve as reminders of hunger ministry
 - Seasonal observances: World Food Day (October 16), One Great Hour of Sharing, etc.
8. Consider offering individual or family covenants to help your Cents-Ability program succeed.
9. For more ideas, contact your presbytery to see if they have a Hunger Action Advocate; contact a POINT partner in your presbytery or the presbytery's resource center to ask about available resources; or visit www.pcusa.org/centsability for resources.

Collecting Cents-Ability Contributions

HOUSEHOLDS

- ✦ The emphasis is daily participation by each member of the household, helping to build awareness that we all are capable of – and responsible for – helping. Cents-Ability gifts can become a daily expression of our walk with God.
- ✦ Ideally family members contribute a pre-determined amount (2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents) at each meal. They may wish to contribute the combined amount at dinner, or whenever the whole family is together.
- ✦ Pennies can be “recycled.” After counting and writing a check for the amount each month, the pennies can be reused. (Extra benefit: the same bowl of cleaned pennies can stay near the table!)
- ✦ When a month’s collections are counted, it can be a special time. Families may want to share thoughts/feelings about hunger, read Bible passages, or share prayers or table graces together.
- ✦ Consider/discuss “living more simply so that others may simply live.”
- ✦ Consider ways to make meals more earth friendly, such as serving less meat or using organic vegetables.
- ✦ Prayer table tents and customizable posters are available at www.pcusa.org/centsability.
- ✦ Table Graces & Prayers from Around the World (part of the Cents-Ability Guide) and the *Sharing is Caring* Calendar are available by emailing a request to php@pcusa.org.

CONGREGATIONS

- ✦ Designate a regular time (e.g. a Sunday each month) as collection day for Cents-Ability gifts.
- ✦ Include reminders a week before the offering: announcement, bulletin, newsletter, etc.
- ✦ Design special collection receptacles to pass around or place at the front of the church: boxes, milk jugs, bread baskets, barrels, pots or pans, etc. Hint: coins make a joyful noise when dropped into metal containers!
- ✦ Have a member of each family or each contributing person bring their gifts forward at a designated time. If children are excused from part of the service, be sure to collect Cents-Ability gifts while they are still present.
- ✦ Consider a special song to sing or play while the gifts are collected – possibly a song by the youth or children; and a prayer of thanksgiving for our many blessings and for the opportunity to share in Christ’s name and for Christ’s sake.
- ✦ The Cents-Ability collection is kept separate from the regular Sunday offering. Each congregation or presbytery determines the distribution of the funds.
- ✦ Helpful resources at www.pcusa.org/centsability: prayer table tents for use at church dinners (printable); posters (to order, free, from PDS.)
- ✦ Additional resources available by emailing php@pcusa.org: Table Graces & Prayers from Around the World – for use at church dinners or to include in the bulletin or newsletter each month (also available as part of the Cents-Ability Guide); hymns by Noelle Damico.
 - Prayer table tents for use at church dinners
 - Labels to make collection containers (icing containers work well)
 - Table Graces & Prayers from Around the World – for use at church dinners, or to include in the bulletin or newsletter each month.
 - Hymns by Noelle Damico
- ✦ Be creative!

Sustaining and Maintaining Cents-Ability

Ideas for keeping interest in and sustaining the partnership of prayer, understanding, and gifts.

- ✦ Keep your Cents-Ability team active and involved in creative brainstorming.
- ✦ Emphasize Cents-Ability often during worship services, children's sermons, etc. Include songs or worship resources.
- ✦ Make sure everyone receives a collection container, label, or offering envelope.
- ✦ Collect Cents-Ability at events: Bible School, family night suppers, youth meetings, weeknight activities, Sunday School classes, receptions, etc. The more often, the better!
- ✦ Have collection containers near drink, snack, or coffee machines and in the kitchen – wherever people gather for refreshments.
- ✦ Have a variety of groups in the church responsible for collecting the offering: women's circle, men's group, youth group, scouts, etc.
- ✦ Remember to introduce new members to Cents-Ability. Offer collection containers or labels during new member classes.
- ✦ Learn where gifts to PHP are being used, and share a story in your church newsletter or during a minute for mission. Find stories on the impact tab at www.pcusa.org/hunger.
- ✦ Share what you are doing with your Cents-Ability offering with your presbytery's mission committee. PHP would enjoy hearing from you as well!
- ✦ Invite someone to compile interesting statistics. How much could your church give if *everyone* participates? What if *half* participate? 2 cents versus a nickel per meal? Find hunger and poverty facts/statistics for your community, the U.S., and the world. (*See list of helpful links in the Cents-Ability guide.*)
- ✦ Consider acknowledging participation in Cents-Ability with certificates of appreciation or notes of encouragement.
- ✦ Use Variety in the ways the Cents-Ability offering is collected
 - Members bring their gifts to the communion table
 - Sunday School classes gather their offerings in glass jars
 - Children or other members wait at the exits with collection containers (a person with a basket in hand can be much more inviting than a can on a table.)
- ✦ Make Covenant Agreements
Remember, this is an awareness program. In the bulletin, include a slip, similar to the example:

Your Church Name

I, _____, agree to participate in the Cents-Ability program. I will make an effort to:

- Pray about hunger in the world.
- Give ____cents for each meal I eat.
- Bring my gifts on collection Sunday.
- Find ways to make a difference for people who are hungry in my community and/or around the world.

Name _____

Ideas for Promotion

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- Cents-Ability Poster with room for your congregation's information (call 800-524-2612 and ask for PDS#74360-01-324, or visit <https://www.pcusastore.com/>)
- Prayer Table Tents – printable from www.pcusa.org/centsability
- Labels to create collection containers (icing containers work well) – request printable labels by emailing php@pcusa.org.
- Stories of how gifts to PHP are being used – visit the impact tab at www.pcusa.org/hunger.

SET A GOAL AND SHARE PROGRESS

Set an annual or six-month goal for the collection, and create a way to report how it is progressing.

- One church stretched a wire across the room and a suspended airplane. The airplane was moved along the wire towards the goal.
- A thermometer poster can have color added as the “temperature rises.” Or a drawing of a coin can be filled in proportionally each month.
- Add fruit or vegetables to a Tree of Life or Garden display as the offering increases.
- Be creative!

COUNT THE COINS

At Coffee Hour, have people (young and older) sit at a table putting the Cents-Ability coins collected through a coin counter. This might help new members become aware of the program.

DISPLAY A HUNGER BANNER during Minute for Mission time or near the collection area.

PLAN A SKIT

Youngsters are clever at acting, and a two-minute skit at Minute for Mission time is a marvelous awareness vehicle. Consider a jingle writer, costuming, and people with a knack for acting.

HAVE A SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT “EMPTY YOUR POCKETS” DAY

Making it a fun activity at Coffee Hour, have youngsters circulate with gallon cans or metal bowls – coins will make a good sound when people drop in their change.

LOCK-IN

Host a Hunger Lock-In for middle or high schoolers; give the proceeds to Cents-Ability.

PENNY POWER

How much power does a penny have? Find out:

- How many pennies will provide a pound of food through your local food bank?
- How many pennies will buy a can of soup?
- How many pennies will provide a hot meal through a local feeding program?
- How many pennies will provide a bag of food for a family of four for 3 days?

Consider using Penny Power for a VBS mission project, or for a congregational project. Ideas:

- Set up a clear container (pickle jar, water bottle, etc.) for each class or group – who will fill their jar first? Or share a single large, clear container for the entire congregation.
- Line pennies up on an adding machine paper strip; mark segments showing what each segment filled with pennies can provide, or how far they would go. Fun fact: 84,480 pennies make a mile.
- Alternative: nickels, dimes, etc.
- Roll coins together (all ages), and remember to pray for the people your gifts will help.
- Remember to advertise which mission will benefit from the coins collected. Local? National or International through the Presbyterian Hunger Program?

Newsletter Quotes & Bits

- ✦ Cents-Ability comes not from our regular tithes and offerings, but from spending less on ourselves. As St. Paul says, “I am not trying to relieve others by putting a burden on you, but since you have plenty at this time, it is only fair that you should help those who are in need. Then, when you are in need and they have plenty, they will help you. In this way both are treated equally.” —II Corinthians 8:13-14 (GNB)
- ✦ Peasants harvest strawberries in Mexico, pineapple in the Philippines, and sugar cane in the Dominican Republic for meager wages. James has stern words, “And now, you rich people, listen to me! ... You have not paid any wages to those who work your fields. Listen to their complaints! The cries of those who gather in your crops have reached the ears of God, the Lord Almighty.”
—James 5:1, 4 (GNB) Have you considered the human cost it takes to get the food on your table?
- ✦ Summer is upon us, and we’re off to much anticipated R&R and carefree days. However, poverty never takes a holiday – so be sure to keep up your Cents-Ability contribution even while you are away. We have so much to give!
- ✦ “Can you imagine what it’s like, to own nothing? To see children hungry, to want to get food for them, and have no way? Can you possibly understand?” —a Dominican peasant woman
- ✦ “Find out how much God has given you, and from it, take what you need. The remainder which you do not need is needed by others. The superficialities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. Those who retain what is superfluous possess the goods of others.” —St. Augustine
- ✦ People in the United States consume an average of 57 pounds of added sugar each year, while sugar cane laborers in the Dominican Republic work long hours in the hot sun, hoping to make ends meet. Could your family give up a dessert in order to contribute to Cents-Ability?
- ✦ Eliminating “junk food” from your shopping list will save more than just a few cents – it might save your waistline too! How about giving those few cents to Cents-Ability?
- ✦ Think Cents-Ability when you are shopping. If we spend less on ourselves, won’t we have more to give to others?
- ✦ “To allow the hungry to remain hungry would be blasphemy against God and one’s neighbor, for what is nearest to God is precisely the need of one’s neighbor. It is for the love of Christ, which belongs as much to the hungry as to myself, that I share my bread with them and that I share my dwelling with the homeless. If the hungry do not attain to faith, then the fault falls on those who refused them bread. To provide the hungry with bread is to prepare the way for the coming of grace.” —Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- ✦ The Bishop of Assisi once said to St. Francis, “I think your life is too hard, too rough. You don’t possess anything in this world.” Francis replied, “My Lord, if we had possessions, we would need weapons to defend them.”
- ✦ The Bible tells us not to store up treasures that are perishable, but to store up treasures that cannot rot or be stolen. The people in Jesus’ day understood this heavenly treasure to mean caring for the needy. What kind of treasures are we storing up?
- ✦ Americans consume dozens of gallons of soft drinks each year. Giving up some (or all) soft drinks could result in 1) healthier bodies and 2) more money for Cents-Ability!

- ✦ “Jesus reminded us in a magnificent parable ... that a man went to hell because he didn’t see the poor. His name was Dives. Dives didn’t go to hell because he was rich, but because he passed by Lazarus every day and never really saw him.” — Martin Luther King, Jr.
- ✦ The ideal is for Cents-Ability gifts to come from money saved by buying less or less expensive food, by “making do” rather than “outdoing.” What could you do to lower your food costs in order to have more for Cents-Ability?
- ✦ Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy. — Proverbs 31:8-9, NRSV

The Cents-Ability effort may be only a whisper, but maybe if we all whispered at once it would become audible. Don't forget your offering next Sunday.

- ✦ Two cents a meal equals 6 cents a day, 42 cents a week, and \$1.68 a month – from one church member. (*Or use figures for a nickel a meal.*) If we multiply that by our membership and put it in the hands of our Presbytery’s Hunger Committee, then along with the offering from other churches, it can be shared with one of the projects or programs we support. Like the *loaves and fishes*, our gifts may help feed many people in our community and around our world in the name of Christ. It all begins with just a few coins at each meal.

Seasonal Ideas for Newsletters

- ✦ During the Christmas season, we get many requests for once-a-year donations to help the needy. Cents-Ability is available all year for people who would otherwise be hungry at all seasons. Please remember your Cents-Ability offering next Sunday.
- ✦ Hopefully we didn’t wait until Lent to start saving coins to help alleviate hunger in our community. Thank you on behalf of those who will eat better during Lent because of your caring and sharing through Cents-Ability.
- ✦ (Insert your congregation’s examples) Rally September, Montreat Retreat in October, Thanksgiving Breakfast in November, Christmas Eve Services in December – these are some high points of our life together as a church family. Cents-Ability is a small way we can acknowledge our membership in the family of humankind as we share our abundance with our brothers and sisters in the broader community. Don't forget your money next Sunday.
- ✦ We hope one of your New Year's resolutions was to remember to be thankful for each meal the Lord provides – at least a few cents' worth of thankfulness. A Happy New Year's wish to you, and thank you on behalf of those who benefit from your Cents-Ability offering.
- ✦ According to Maimonides, a 12th century Jewish philosopher and rabbi, “The highest form of charity is to help sustain a person before they become impoverished ...” Until that is accomplished, those who are hungry still need our Cents-Ability offering. Please remember to bring your money.
- ✦ Spring seems especially beautiful this year, making it harder than ever to believe that in some of the homes behind those flowers, there are hungry people. And with children at home during the summer missing their school lunches, there will be more mouths to feed and even more need for our Cents-Ability contributions. Please help by putting your Cents-Ability offering in the baskets.

Minutes for Mission

Use for Sunday worship, newsletter reminders, etc. *References to Cents-Ability can be changed to the name of your congregation or presbytery's effort (2 cents-a meal, 4 cents, a nickel, etc.)

A FEW CENTS

Problems like hunger are so immense – they may even seem unending. Hunger has so many roots and ramifications that it can be hard to determine where to begin. Relying on God's guidance, we can look for the “handle” which seems best to fit our hand. Using God's strength, we can begin to cut out the root that is nearest us.

With our Cents-Ability gifts, we can help root out hunger: _____% of the money will be used here in our region to minister to the needs of our neighbors; and _____% will be disbursed nationally and internationally to organizations evaluated and approved by the Advisory Committee of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Cents-Ability is about more than collecting coins; it encourages us to pray for guidance in our lives as we attempt to minister to the poor in God's name. It also calls for us to learn more about hunger and what we can do about it. By being faithful to the call of the gospel to feed the hungry and free the oppressed, we can make a BIG difference.

HOW IS YOUR HABIT GROWING?

Often, habits are things we'd rather not have - biting finger nails, eating too much, or piling clothes on a chair. BUT, putting coins into a bank at each meal is one habit we can encourage.

A few coins aren't much by themselves, but as the numbers of people who get the habit increase, so will the results. Here at (insert your church's name) we have collected \$_____ so far this year. Pretty impressive habit! Each time you eat, remember your Cents-Ability donation. And take time each day to thank God for your food and care, to remember those who don't have enough to eat, and to ask that God will reveal to you and your family ways which you and all of us can respond to the needs of the poor and hungry, here and around the world.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE NEWNESS WEARS OFF?

Many newlyweds face a dilemma when the “honeymoon” wears off. Others may experience fading excitement from challenges at home, school, or church. What about Cents-Ability? Sometimes it's exciting to participate in a new program or help in a new way, but what about later?

God doesn't intend our response to hunger to be something we do just for a while, or a seasonal performance. It is a priority that God builds into our lives – even if it seems inconvenient sometimes. God is trying to make us into a new people, fit to be co-workers in the gospel message, fit to be stewards of the planet, fit to share the earth's goodness with all our neighbors in a world God created.

When the newness wears off, may it be replaced with a firm resolve to be faithful to God's call and a long-term commitment to help others – including each day, at each meal, as we share our coins.

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT GIFT?

What will I get for the person who has everything? For the person who says not to bring a gift? For that special person I want to honor? Consider a contribution to Cents-Ability as an alternative way to recognize or honor someone, or as a memorial. Your gift can bless someone who shares your concern for those who struggle with hunger and poverty, while making a difference for families or communities in need.

(If sending an honor or memory gift directly to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, designate the gift for H000107-Cents-Ability and mail to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700, or give online at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/H000107/>. Be sure to include the recipient's name and address if you would like PHP to send a card acknowledging your gift.

Children's Sermon Starters

REMEMBERING

Introduce yourself. Talk about things you – or others – tend to forget. Talk briefly about Cents-Ability.

Ask children for ideas about how to remember when it's time to bring Cents-Ability gifts to church. (Put a note on the calendar, write the date on the collection container, wrap a string around your finger!)

Ask for ideas about how to remember to collect the pennies at each meal. (Put a bowl of clean pennies next to the container, assign a child to remember at each meal for a day, week, etc.)

Thank the children for their help. Close with prayer.

FEED MY LAMBS

Bring a dog or cat food dish. Tell who eats from the dish. Ask children about their pets – who feeds them?

Caring for a pet can be a lot of work. You need to be sure it has food and water. You have to clean a hamster cage, or wash a fish bowl, or clean a litter box. Some pets need to be taken for a walk and brushed or given a bath. If your pet gets sick, they have to go to the vet. Pets can be a lot of work, and it costs money to care for them. All pets need attention.

So why do you think people have pets? *(answers)* We take care of pets because we love them, don't we? When you love something or someone, you want to take care of them.

One day, after his resurrection, Jesus came to see the disciples. They had been busy fishing all night, and Jesus made breakfast for them. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter answered, "Yes, Lord. You know I love you." Then Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and Jesus cares for us, like a shepherd would care for lambs. When Jesus said, "Feed my lambs," Jesus was telling Peter to help take care of people. Since Peter loved Jesus, it was his responsibility and privilege to care for the people that Jesus loved. The same is true today, with us! Jesus asks people who love him to care for others.

One way we can care for others is to feed those who have no food. Our church helps do that.

When we eat, we put coins into a Cents-Ability container on the table. Then every month, we bring our coins to church and put them with everybody else's coins. It adds up to a lot of coins! We can use those coins to provide food for people who need it. We can help feed the lambs – or care for the people that Jesus cares for, too.

Tell how much was collected by the church this year, or since the congregation began participating in the Cents-Ability offering, or by the presbytery in the last year, over time, etc.

Let's all remember to bring our coins, so we can keep helping to feed Jesus' lambs.

SHARING MORE THAN BREAD

Prepare: fresh bread, already cut

Did any of you miss breakfast this morning? How would you feel if you did? How would you feel if you had no supper last night? What if you also had no breakfast yesterday, and all you had for lunch was a little rice with a few vegetables in it – how would you feel? Hungry! Really, really hungry, right?

If you were hungry now, how could I help you? Oh, I know! I have this nice loaf of bread here. Let me share this bread with you. Do you feel better now? Good, I am glad.

But what happens if you didn't have any more food today? What would happen tomorrow? You would be hungry again, wouldn't you?

It helps a little when I share my bread with you – it stops you from being hungry right now. But what you really need is a way to stop your hunger permanently.

That is what Cents-Ability is all about. When we eat our meals, then collect our coins all together, we can help with two things. We can help offer food to hungry people. But our Cents-Ability gifts can also help people get seeds or shovels or water or whatever they need to grow more food for their families. Then they won't have to be hungry anymore.

Let us pray:

Good and generous God, you have given us so much: people to love us, food to eat, and a place to live, a church to belong to, a life to enjoy. We want to thank you by helping others. Please use our money to feed hungry people and to help them grow their own food. AMEN.

“IN” DOOR OR “OUT” DOOR? (to be used on collection Sunday)_____

Let's meet here by this door. (*Gather by a door that goes to the outside, if possible.*)

We are all in here. How did we get here? (*Answers - drove, walked, etc. If nobody mentions the door, ask what everyone walks through to get inside.*)

I believe somebody said the door. (*Open the door, look outside, etc.*)

Is this an “In” door or an “Out” door? (*Have conversation until someone says both.*)

Today we came in this door or another door. What did we come in to do? (*Answers - worship, sing, pray, praise God, etc.*)

We came in a door to do all those things. And later we will go out a door. What will we go out the door to do? (*Answers - eat, talk to people after church, drive home, etc.*)

Yes, we will go out this door to eat lunch and to be back out in the world. We can share with people outside the things we learned, we can help people, and we can enjoy fun and fellowship.

Remember the Cents-Ability offering we brought inside with us today? It will not stay in these doors either! It will go out so that it can help provide for people who are hungry or have needs.

Closing prayer.

PUTTING IN YOUR ‘TWO CENTS WORTH’ (OR YOUR ‘NICKEL’S WORTH’) _____

I wonder how many pennies this Cents-Ability bank could hold. Do you think it could hold 100 (a whole dollar’s worth)? How about \$5 worth (500)? \$50 (5,000)? \$10,000 (1,000,000)?

Tell how many cents (and dollars) have been given by your church or by Presbyterian Churches in your presbytery or synod in the last year.

That is a lot of pennies! That money can help poor people in our community (and around the world.) Sometimes it may seem like just a little when we put 2 cents in at a time, but when other people are caring, too, it adds up!

THE EMPTY PIE PAN (CHILDREN’S STORY) _____

Lee Ann and Bobby were really excited. Thursday was Thanksgiving, and they loved thanksgiving. Grandma and Grandpa would be there. Uncle Steve was coming this year too. They would have a BIG turkey, and mashed potatoes and sweet potatoes, peas and corn, celery sticks and carrot sticks, and PIES! Each year they had three kinds of pies: cherry, apple, and pumpkin. Each year all the grown-ups would always say they were just too full to eat anything, especially pies! But they always did anyway.

Bobby and Lee Ann especially like to help their parents make the dinner. Ever since he could remember, Bobby’s job had been grinding up oranges and cranberries to make cranberry relish. Lee Ann liked mixing together all the ingredients for the dressing and stuffing it into the turkey. There was always so much that she filled up the turkey and then had to fill up an extra pan full.

Wednesday before supper they put their coins in the Cents-Ability bank on the table and prayed. Mama said, “We have so much to be thankful for. In fact, tomorrow we will have too much.”

“Yeah,” said Bobby. “Maybe we could not eat so much and put something extra in our Cents-Ability bank.”

Lee Ann joined in, “The grown-ups always say you are SO full, but then you eat pie anyway. What if we don’t make pies?”

“Why don’t we just make one less pie?” suggested Daddy. So that’s what they did! They had a hard time deciding which pie not to make, but they finally decided to give up the cherry one. They figured out how much money they would have spent making it. By the time they added up the cherries, the sugar, the flour and the shortening, they had \$3.25 to put in their Cents-Ability bank.

The next day at the Thanksgiving table, they put an empty pie pan on the table. When they prayed and put in their regular offering, they also put in the \$3.25. They thanked God very much for having so many good things, more than enough to share.

Hunger and Justice in the Bible

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is full of references to God's desire that everyone should have sufficient food. These selected references give some indication of the breadth of this biblical theme.

OLD TESTAMENT

Leviticus 19:9-10

On leaving crops in the field for the poor and the sojourner.

Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor.

Psalms 41:1-3

God sustains and protects those who give to the poor.

Psalms 82

Justice to the weak and destitute.

Psalms 146:5-8

Happy are those who give food to the poor.

Proverbs 14:20-21

Happy are they who are kind to the poor.

Proverbs 19:17

What you give to the poor is a loan to the Lord.

Proverbs 21:13

Listen to the cry of the poor.

Isaiah 1:17-18

Seek justice: correct oppression.

Isaiah 58:5-10

Pour yourselves out for the hungry.

Jeremiah 22:13-16

To know the Lord is to do justice.

Ezekiel 16:49

To know the Lord is to do justice.

Amos 5:21-24

Let justice roll down like waters.

Micah 6:6-8

Do justice. Love kindness. Walk humbly with God.

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 25:31-46

"I was hungry and you fed me."

Mark 6:30-44

Jesus feeds the multitudes

Mark 8:1-9

Feeding the multitude.

Luke 3:11

If you have two coats, give one to someone who has none.

Luke 10:25-37

The Good Samaritan.

Luke 14:12-14

Invite the poor to your dinner.

Luke 16:19-31

The rich man and Lazarus.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Put aside for the needy.

2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Sharing surplus with the needy.

Galatians 2:10

Remember the poor.

Hebrews 6:10

God knows when you show love by caring for others.

James 2:14-26

Show your faith by your good works.

1 John 3:16-18

Let us not love in word or speech but in deed and truth.

1 John 4:19-21

He who does not love his brother ... cannot love God.

Bible Stories Relating to Hunger

Genesis 1	Creation/caring for the land
Genesis 25	Esau sold his birthright because he was hungry.
Genesis 42-47	Joseph's family went to Egypt because of the famine.
Exodus 16	God provided daily manna and quail for the Israelites; they complained. Also see Numbers 11.
Ruth 2	Ruth gleaned grain from the fields; God established this way of caring for those in need. Also see Leviticus 9:9-10.
1 Samuel 21	David ate the consecrated bread. Also see Mark 2.
1 Kings 17	God provided for Elijah and the widow in Zarephath.
2 Kings 4	In the days of Elisha, God provided oil for a widow, made stew safe for the prophets, and multiplied bread for 100 people.
Matthew 4	Jesus was tempted in the desert.
Matthew 14	Jesus fed 5,000+ with 5 loaves and 2 fish. Also see Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6.
Matthew 15	Jesus fed 4,000+ with 7 loaves and a few fish. Also see Mark 8.
Matthew 25	We can feed and care for Jesus by caring for other people.
Luke 16	The tables turned for a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus.
Acts 6	Seven men were chosen to oversee food distribution for the widows.



Additional Reading:

- *Just Eating? Practicing Our Faith at the Table* curriculum – www.pcusa.org/justeating
- Presbyterian Hunger Program Bible Study, with video – <http://www.pcusa.org/hunger/biblestudy>
- *For they Shall be Fed, Scripture Readings and Prayers for a Just World*, by Ronald J. Sider, Word Publishing, 1997
- PHP-recommended reading for adults, youth, and children – <https://bit.ly/hungerbooks>.

A Litany for Hunger

Leader: O Gracious God, who loves us and cares for us in such special ways; You have recognized our needs and listened patiently to our desires, and you have met us with good and perfect gifts. Now grant us one thing more ...

People: Lord, make us hungry.

Leader: For life, for peace, for the ability to love ...

People: Lord, make us hungry.

Leader: For freedom and justice in far off lands, and for our neighbors and for ourselves ...

People: Lord, make us hungry.

Leader: For the Bread of Life and the Light of the Spirit ...

People: Lord, make us hungry.

Leader: And make us sensitive to what others need and how we might share ...

All: Lord God, hear us as we pray for all who are your children. For all who suffer, for all who are handicapped through no fault of their own ...

For those who are in doubt, for those who are in anguish, for those who fear, and for those who have given up.

Give us strength to minister to all your children and to all their needs; speak to our hearts and speak through our gifts; we pray in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Litany of Dedication

Leader: O giver of all good gifts, great and small, we come to you in gratitude for your goodness to us.

People: O giver of life, we rejoice in the bounty of this earth which you have provided.

Leader: We gather to offer these small gifts as a symbol of our commitment to remember those who are not able to partake fully of your bounty.

People: By the power of the Holy Spirit, help us feel the bond of kinship with the poor and homeless in the world.

Leader: Open our eyes so we may see the hands of your people reaching out to us with gifts of love.

People: Open our ears to those whose experiences are different from ours.

Leader: Give us the ability to perceive the real causes of hunger, poverty, and oppression.

People: Strengthen in us the vision of what can be in this world, not clouded by what is.

Leader: Help us recognize how we may be your instrument in eliminating the causes of hunger.

People: Give us your strength, O Lord, so we may have the courage to speak out against injustice and exploitation.

Leader: Giver of Life, make us hungry for peace.

People: Giver of Life, make us thirsty for justice.

Leader: Giver of Life, fill us with compassion.

People: Help us remember, O God, that all people are your children.

Leader: Bless these coins we offer to advance the coming of your kingdom on earth, and bless us as we seek ever greater understanding of our role as your servants.

All: We thank you for leading us into new ways to serve you. Help us share all your bounty with others to your greater glory. Amen.

A Litany of Dedication

- Leader: O Giver of all good gifts, great and small, we come with small gifts that have cost us very little.
- People:** Multiply our pennies, O God. Make them grow.
- Leader: We come seeking to join hearts and hands across the sea in mutual mission.
- People:** By the power of the Holy Spirit, help us to feel a new bond of fellowship with the poor and homeless in our midst.
- Leader: Our children are mostly healthy. Thank you for the people to whom we can turn for help when they are ill.
- People:** We reach out our hands and hearts to parents and children who have so little hope.
- Leader: Our homes are cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Thank you for comfort.
- People:** Give us courage to learn from your faithful servants for whom comfort is a luxury too seldom experienced.
- Leader: Giver of life, thank you for jobs to do, food to eat and love to give.
- People:** Open our eyes to see the hands of your people reaching out to us with their gifts of love, their lives, and their willingness to share.
- Leader: You have given us your work of truth written in the Bible, living in Christ Jesus, and throbbing in our hearts.
- People:** Open our ears to hear your truth as it comes to us from Christians who have received your word through experiences that are different from our own.
- Leader: Faithful God, to us a few coins is no sacrifice at all. In this ministry, our problem will be remembering to put the coins in a bank.
- People:** Remind us, O God, and be near our new friends for whom giving a few coins will be a great sacrifice.
- All:** We praise and thank you, God of grace, for new ways in which to serve you and for people of vision who respond to your call in challenging us to service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Litany of Intercession – O Lord, Kum ba yah

Sing: Someone's crying, Lord, Kum ba yah (three times)
O Lord, Kum ba yah

Leader: Someone's crying Lord, somewhere. "Some" is millions, "somewhere" is many places.
There are tears of suffering,
There are tears of weakness and disappointment,
There are tears of strength and resistance,
There are the tears of the rich and the tears of the poor.

All: Someone's crying, Lord, redeem the times.

Sing: Someone's dying, Lord, Kum ba yah (three times)
O Lord, Kum ba yah

Leader: Some are dying of hunger and thirst. Someone is dying because somebody else is enjoying too many unnecessary and superfluous things. Someone is dying because people go on exploiting one another. Some are dying because there are structures and systems which crush the poor and alienate the rich. Someone's dying, Lord, because we are still not prepared to take sides, to make a choice, to be a witness.

All: Someone's dying, Lord, redeem the times.

Sing: Someone's shouting, Lord, Kum ba yah (three times)
O Lord, Kum ba yah

Leader: Someone's shouting out loudly and clearly.
Someone has made a choice.
Someone is ready to stand up against the times.
Some are shouting out, offering their very existence in love and anger to fight death surrounding us, to wrestle with the evils with which we crucify each other.

All: Someone's shouting, Lord, redeem the times.

Sing: Someone's praying, Lord, Kum ba yah (three times)
O Lord, Kum ba yah

Leader: Someone's praying, Lord.
We are praying in tears and anger, in frustration and weakness, in strength and endurance.
We are shouting and wrestling, as Jacob wrestled with the angel, and was touched, and was marked, and became a blessing.
We are praying Lord. Spur our imagination; sharpen our political will.
Through Jesus Christ, you have let us know where you want us to be.
Help us to be there now, be with us, touch us, mark us, let us be a blessing.
Let your power be present in our weakness.

All: Someone's praying, Lord, redeem the times.

Sing: Someone's praying, Lord, Kum ba yah (three times)
O Lord, Kum ba yah

*Adapted from the worship service prepared by
Wyoming Conference Hunger Task Force for local
church use on All-Conference WHEAT Sunday*

Your Light Shall Break Forth Like the Dawn

Prayer Service

READ LUKE 4:16-19

REFLECTION AND SHARING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Let us recall that God is our light and our hope, our refuge and our strength. Let us be attentive to God's presence with us. May we listen with open minds and hearts to the Word.

RESPONSIVE READING (ISAIAH 58:6-11)

Leader: This, says Yahweh, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke;

People: Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke;

Leader: Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless;

People: Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.

Leader: Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall be healed quickly;

People: Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of Yahweh shall be your rear guard.

Leader: If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted;

People: Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday;

Leader: The Creator will renew your strength, and you shall be like

HYMN

LITANY

Leader: I was hungry, and you gave me food ...

People: Let us act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Leader: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink ...

People: Let us act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Leader: I was a stranger, and you welcomed me ...

People: Let us act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Leader: I was naked, and you clothed me ...

People: Let us act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Leader: I was ill, and you comforted me ...

People: Let us act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

All: May we be open to your Spirit that we may be a means of healing, strength and peace for all your children. We ask this through Jesus, your son and our brother! Amen.

Affirmation of Faith

GOD has reached out to those who suffer injustice and taken up the cause of the excluded and the poor.

The Lord is moving toward the time when justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We are persuaded God is at work here and now, when people deal fairly with each other and labor to change customs and structures that enslave and oppress human beings.

We believe God sends us to work with all available allies:
to correct the growing disparity between rich and poor nations;
to make the operation of courts and penal institutions more just and humane;
to root out prejudice and racism from our hearts and institutions;
to stand with men and women of all ages, races, and classes as they struggle for dignity and respect;
and to exercise power for the common good.

Charge to the Congregation

Because the world is poor and starving, go with bread.

Because the world is filled with fear, go with courage.

Because the world is in despair, go with hope.

Because the world is living lies, go with truth.

Because the world is sick with sorrow, go with joy.

Because the world is weary of wars, go with peace.

Because the world is seldom fair, go with justice.

Because the world is under judgement, go with mercy.

And because the world will die without it, go with Christ's love.

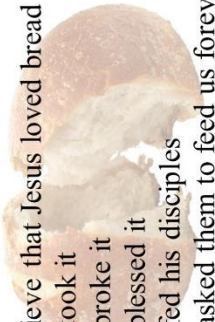
(Paraphrase of charge to Louisville Seminary class of 1995 written by faculty)

I believe that bread comes from grain
that grows in the wind
and the rain,
with the farmers' help
far from the eyes of city folk.

I believe that bread comes from love:
the love of the Creator,
the love of the farmer,
the love of the baker's hands,
the love of those who bring it to me.

I believe that bread can be and should
be broken and shared
and given to all persons,
until all have enough
and then some.

I believe that Jesus loved bread
and took it
and broke it
and blessed it
and fed his disciples
and asked them to feed us forever.



I believe enough in bread
to want it from Jesus,
to want it to nurture me,
to want his life through it,
to want to give life through it.

I believe that His body as bread
feeds me,
and as part of His body
I want to be bread for others.

I believe the Spirit will help me,
as will Jesus' people. AMEN

—Credo for a Bread Service
www.pcusa.org/centsability

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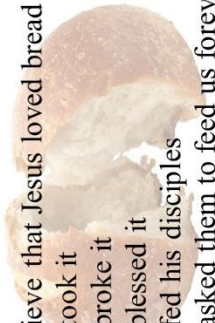
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Hymns

Many hymns relate to hunger, mission and justice issues. Here are a few selections that appear in both *Glory To God – The Presbyterian Hymnal* (2013 - red or purple) and the *PC(USA) Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990 - blue):

- “Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples” #757, #434
- “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me” #700, #369
- “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love” #203, #367
- “Hope of the World” #734, #360
- “Called as Partners in Christ’s Service” #761, #343
- “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky – Here I Am, Lord” #69, #525

Songs written by Noelle Damico, including “‘Til the World is Fed,” “God Asks us to Imagine,” and “I Saw the People Gathered,” are available by emailing php@pcusa.org.

Graces and Prayers

TABLE GRACES



Dear God, I gratefully bow my head
to thank you for our daily bread.
And may there be a goodly share
on every table, everywhere. Amen.



Creator of all life, bless this food that is before us.
Strengthen our commitment to share the gifts you
have given us so that all may have food each day.
Amen.



At our table may there be
love in every heart for Thee.
By thy goodness we are fed,
and we thank Thee for this bread. Amen.



We thank you Lord, for this our bread,
and all the blessings on us shed.
We pray you fill us with your love,
and guide us to your home above.



We are the hands and feet of Christ
Serving by grace, each other's need.
We dare to risk and sacrifice
With truthful word and faithful deed.
*(from the hymn "In Loving Partnership," by Jim
and Jean Strathdee)*



Dear God, we have been given so much. Help us to
express our thankfulness for this abundance by
committing ourselves to the feeding of all your
people. Amen.



Thanks be to God the Father Almighty. Thanks be
to God who gives us bread. Thanks be to God the
Father Eternal. Amen. (Haiti)



Gracious God, we thank you for this food. Let it
nourish our bodies to make us strong in your
service. Amen.



In gratitude we bow our heads to thank Thee for our
daily bread. And may we use the strength it brings
for doing kind and helpful things. Amen.
(Appalachia)



God, we thank you for the food we're about to
partake. Bless it that we may serve Thee in health
and strength. Amen. *(Appalachia)*



We thank thee, Lord, for happy hearts, for rain and
sunny weather. We thank thee, Lord, for this our
food, and that we are together. Amen.



Come Lord Jesus be our guest. Let thy gifts to us be
blest. May there be a goodly share on every table
everywhere. Amen.



We thank you, gracious God,
that we are the guests at your table.
As we have been fed by your gifts of life,
so we will share with the world all that
you give to us in love. *(Australia)*



Dear Lord, our world is divided
into the rich and the poor,
the haves and the have nots,
the hungry and the full.
We are truly the rich of this world.
Let us remember those who are hungry today ...
in our prayers and with our offerings.
In Christ's Name, Amen.



Oh God, we praise you for your power. Thank you for the bounty which you have given to us, our families and congregation. Your miracles today are as great as when the thousands on the hillside were fed and filled, and the disciples found that there was even a surplus. Help us to always be mindful of those who are hungry and to be willing to share a portion of our many blessings with them. In Jesus name ... Amen.



Almighty God, hear us as we pray for those who suffer; for all who are handicapped in the race of life through no fault of their own; for those whose livelihood is insecure, the overworked, the hungry and the destitute; for little children, whose surroundings hide them from love and beauty; for those who are in doubt and anguish of soul, for those who are oversensitive and afraid; for those whose suffering is unrelieved by the knowledge of your love; for those who suffer through their own wrong doings. We pray for a structure in society that will enable every person to belong somewhere. We think of the risen Lord and the Kingdom of life. May it come, beginning with our giving ourselves to humanity. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



This is the real prayer of millions . . .
bread to eat, to keep them alive,
bread to give them strength to work,
bread to share with sister and brother,
bread enough to sleep painlessly.
Give them this day their daily bread.

This is the real hope of thousands . . .
bread is knowledge about improving crops,
bread is training in animal care,
bread is having enough to share,
bread is water and soil and sun and skill.
Give them this day their daily bread.

This is the key that unlocks closed doors...
bread for all through fair and just distribution,
bread is the vision that makes deserts blossom,
bread cultivates wastelands into blooming hopes.
Give them this day their daily bread.

This is the prayer of thanksgiving . . .
bread is thankfulness for land, seed and harvest,
bread is appreciation for abundant crops,
bread is gratitude for the world's farmers,
bread is enough for all.
Give us thanksgiving for daily bread.

This day is too late for those who starved yesterday.
This day is not enough if tomorrow holds no hope.
This day is for sowing and reaping and preserving.
This day is for planning and acting and sharing.
Give us this day bread for each day.

Prayers from Around the World



Dear Lord, I don't complain that I don't have electricity in my home, but I thank you, my Lord, for the moon and the brilliant stars shining over our village.

I don't complain that I cannot go to the movies, but I thank you, my Lord, for the wonderful song of the birds in our forests.

I am not sorry for missing the city with its huge stone buildings, but I thank you, my Lord, for the beautiful butterflies playing among the forest flowers.

I don't complain that we do not have the running water in the huts, but I thank you, my Lord, for the running springs and the seasonal rain.

I don't complain that I don't live in a bungalow, but I thank you, my Lord, for the bamboo trees which provide my building material for my hut.

I don't complain that I cannot afford a bed, but I thank you, my Lord, for the soft grass and the swinging hammock.

I don't complain for missing a phone, but I thank you, my Lord, for allowing me time to pray for my friends.

I don't complain that there is no hotel in the jungle, but I thank you, my Lord, for the hospitality of the people in the jungle, always welcoming the traveler.

I don't complain that we don't have politicians around here, but I do thank you, my Lord, that we can have faith in you.

I don't complain that there are no big plans to develop our region, but I thank you, my Lord, that we can trust in you.

I don't complain that we do not have doctors and nursing homes, but I thank you, my Lord, for the healthy life we can live in your nature and that our children will take care of us when we are old and unable to work.

I do not complain that we are poor and uneducated,

but I thank you, my Lord, that thou has given us the power to love our neighbor as our brothers.

(Johnson Gnanabaranam, a campesino in Guatemala, reflects the thoughts of campesinos in his own Thanksgiving prayer.)



Almighty God, Lord of heaven and earth, we humbly pray that your gracious care may give and preserve the seeds which we plant in our farms that they may bring forth fruit in good measure; that we who constantly receive from your goodness may always give thanks to you, the giver of all good things; through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord.

(Cameroon)



Heavenly Father, You have created the countryside; its fields and forests, hills and rivers, birds and animals and fresh, healthy air to breathe. We thank you for all this goodness and beauty. Help those for whom rural life is hard and difficult: those who must travel far to collect firewood and bring their water from distant streams: all who live in poor conditions. Bless the efforts being made to improve conditions in rural areas, so that people who work to feed this nation, may themselves enjoy a higher standard of living.

(Kenya)



Lord, we know that you'll be coming through the line today. So Lord, help us to treat you well, help us to treat you well.

(Prayer of a poor woman before helping on the weekly food line a mile and a half from the White House.)



God, to those who have hunger, give bread.
And to those who have bread, give the hunger for justice. (*Latin America*)



I saw a child today, Lord, who will not die tonight, hurried into hunger's grave.
She was bright and full of life because her parents have a job and feed her,
but somewhere, everywhere, 10,000 life-lamps will go out, and not be lit again tomorrow.
Lord, teach us the way. (*Africa*)



Lord, thank you for giddy goats leaping
from crags, exploring crannies,
seeking strange mountain flowers and mischief.
May we be more like them, running
towards people instead of away,
bounding with life, hearts high with adventure,
on top of your world.
(*Heifer Project International*)



God of all youth, we pray to you:
We are young people, and we want to celebrate life!
We cry out against all that kills life;
hunger, poverty, unemployment, sickness,
repression, individualism, injustice.
We want to announce fullness of life;
work, education, health, housing, bread for all.
We want communion, a world renewed.
We hope against hope.
With the Lord of history we want to make all things new.
(*A group of Brazilian young people*)

Prayers of the Children



Dear God: On TV I saw some poor little children who were crying for food. Why do I have so much food and they don't have enough food? I don't understand, but I want to help them. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Thank you for my food. It makes me sad to think about the children who don't have enough food to eat. Help me know how to share what I have with others. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Dear God: Tonight I get to sleep in a warm bed in my own room. Some children don't have rooms to sleep in and are cold at night. Help me know how I can help these children. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Simple Meals

Keep in Mind ...

- When you publicize your meal, let people know it will be a “simple meal that will provide for nutritional needs.” Simple meals are more successful when people come prepared. Also let people know where the funds raised will be spent.
- Collect an offering – you may wish to ‘charge’ for the meal *and* put out collection containers for donations.
- Offer a presentation as part of the meal to help raise awareness of hunger issues and encourage action. Consider a speaker from a local feeding agency to share about ministry in your community.
- Take photos! Participants will want to remember the special time, and your presbytery may like to share the news. Call your local newspaper, radio, or tv reporter for “complete coverage” of your event.

Soup 'n Bread Meal (Presbyterian Hunger Program)_____

Sharing a simple meal of soup and bread can help your group focus on hunger in your community and around the world. Hearty soup, substantial bread, and a piece of fresh fruit provide sufficient nutrition while raising the issue of sufficiency. The meal can be built around the Russian legend of “Stone Soup” which reminds us of the miracles that happen when we share.

Hunger Restaurant (Church World Service)_____

Set up tables as in a restaurant. Use tablecloths, candles and menus to set the atmosphere. Volunteers serve as hosts and table waiters.

Everyone orders from the menu, but regardless of what they order, they receive a cup of cooked rice and a cup of tea. (Menu option: bean soup and rice with bread or crackers).

After dinner, guests are presented with bills for what they ordered from the menu and are encouraged to pay all or part of the bill to help end hunger. They may also add a gratuity.

Unlucky Potluck (Church World Service)_____

Set up a self-service buffet line with a large variety of prepared foods. (You could do this as a potluck.) The last three dishes on the buffet table would be potatoes, beans, and rice. Tables are set up as follows:

- 1/5 very elegantly adorned
- 3/5 simply adorned
- 1/5 bare

The guests draw individual meal tickets from a hat. (Young children may draw with their parents as one unit.) Tickets indicate the order in which they may go through the line, what foods they can take and where they sit:

Have's (1/5 of group) – can take as much food as they want from total buffet selection; they are seated at the most elegant tables with the best view and location in the room.

Enough's (3/5 of group) – can take from one dish plus as much as they want of the last three dishes (beans, rice & potatoes); they are seated at the simply adorned tables.

Have Not's (1/5 of group) – can only take one of the last three items (beans, rice, potatoes); they are seated at bare tables or on the floor near the kitchen or hallway.

After the meal, have discussion. Possible questions:

- How did you feel when you saw what your meal ticket meant?
- Do you think this meal was ‘fair?’ Why or why not?
- How did you feel about the people who shared your type of meal ticket? The other tickets?
- How did your group deal with the situation? What are other ways that might be possible?
- As a citizen of the country where you live, how do you react to this game?
- What do you think of the statement, “There is enough food for everyone; the problem is that many people cannot afford it.”

Ideas for Food Collections

CAN DO

Hold a canned food drive to help stock your local food pantry. Ideas:

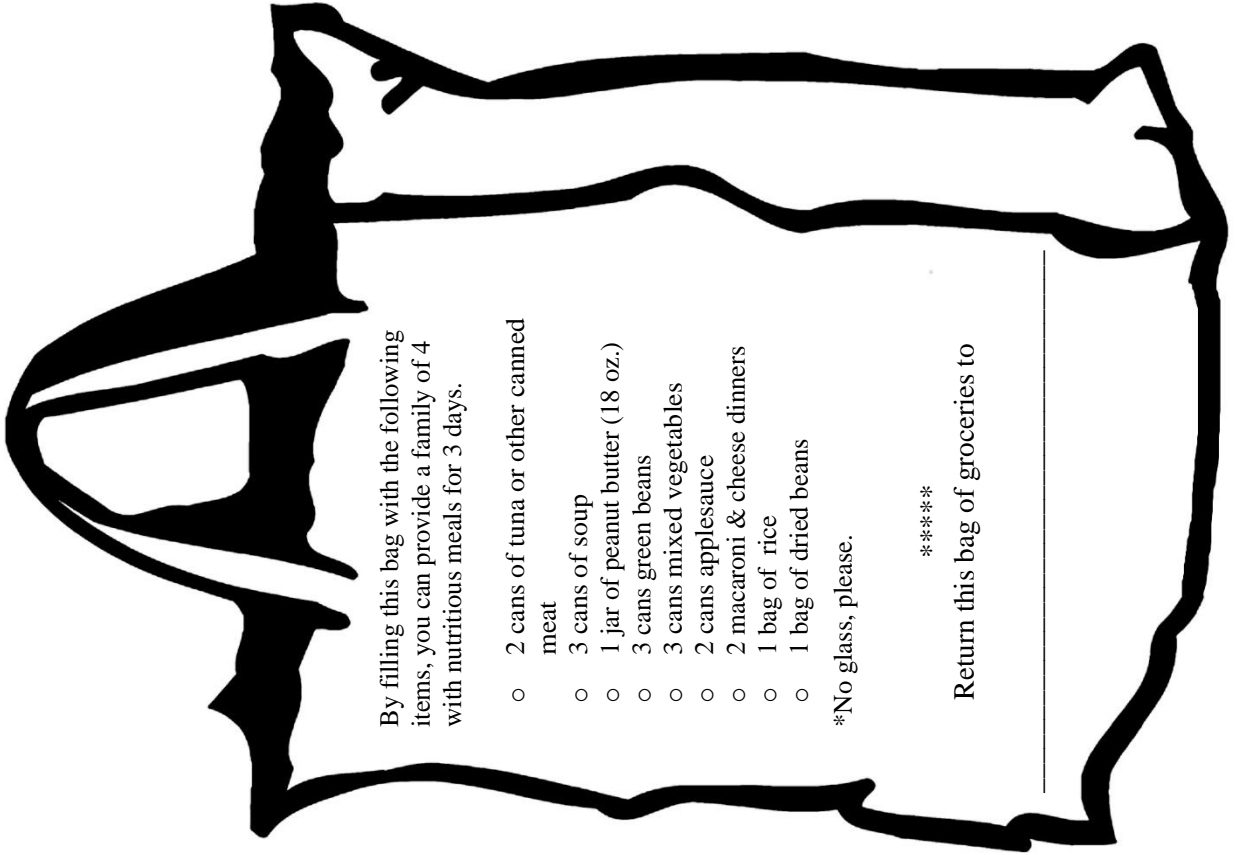
- Assign each class, group, or family a “type” of food to collect. (ie. preschoolers – canned fruit)
- Use an old grocery cart (most food stores will loan or give you one) and fill it with food donations on a regular schedule (each Sunday, first Sunday of the month, etc.)
- Set up a “Garden Display” with varieties of vegetables set up in rows as if they were growing in the garden (corn, carrots, peas, green beans, etc.) Assign a specific vegetable to each group, class, etc., and see which row grows fastest!

FILL THE BAG

Challenge people to fill a bag with groceries (for a family in your community, a food bank, etc.)



- Fill in the location and date on the “Fill the Bag” list; or use the empty bag template to list items your local organization has requested. (See following printable pages.)
- Print copies.
- Attach the “Fill the Bag” lists to empty brown grocery bags, or include them as bulletin inserts.
- Encourage families to pray for those who will receive the food they have gathered.
- When the bags are returned, have a prayer of dedication to bless the food, those who gathered it, and those who will receive it.

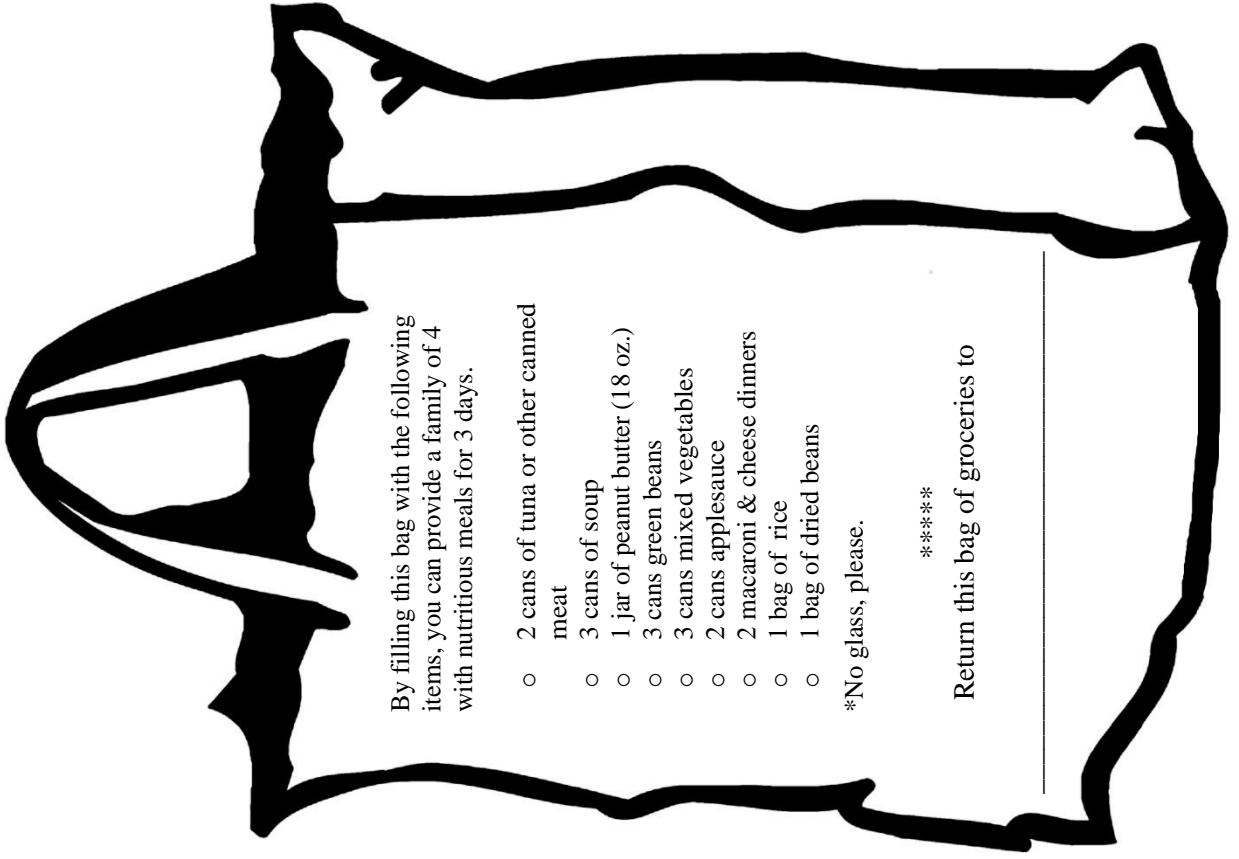


By filling this bag with the following items, you can provide a family of 4 with nutritious meals for 3 days.

- 2 cans of tuna or other canned meat
- 3 cans of soup
- 1 jar of peanut butter (18 oz.)
- 3 cans green beans
- 3 cans mixed vegetables
- 2 cans applesauce
- 2 macaroni & cheese dinners
- 1 bag of rice
- 1 bag of dried beans

*No glass, please.

Return this bag of groceries to

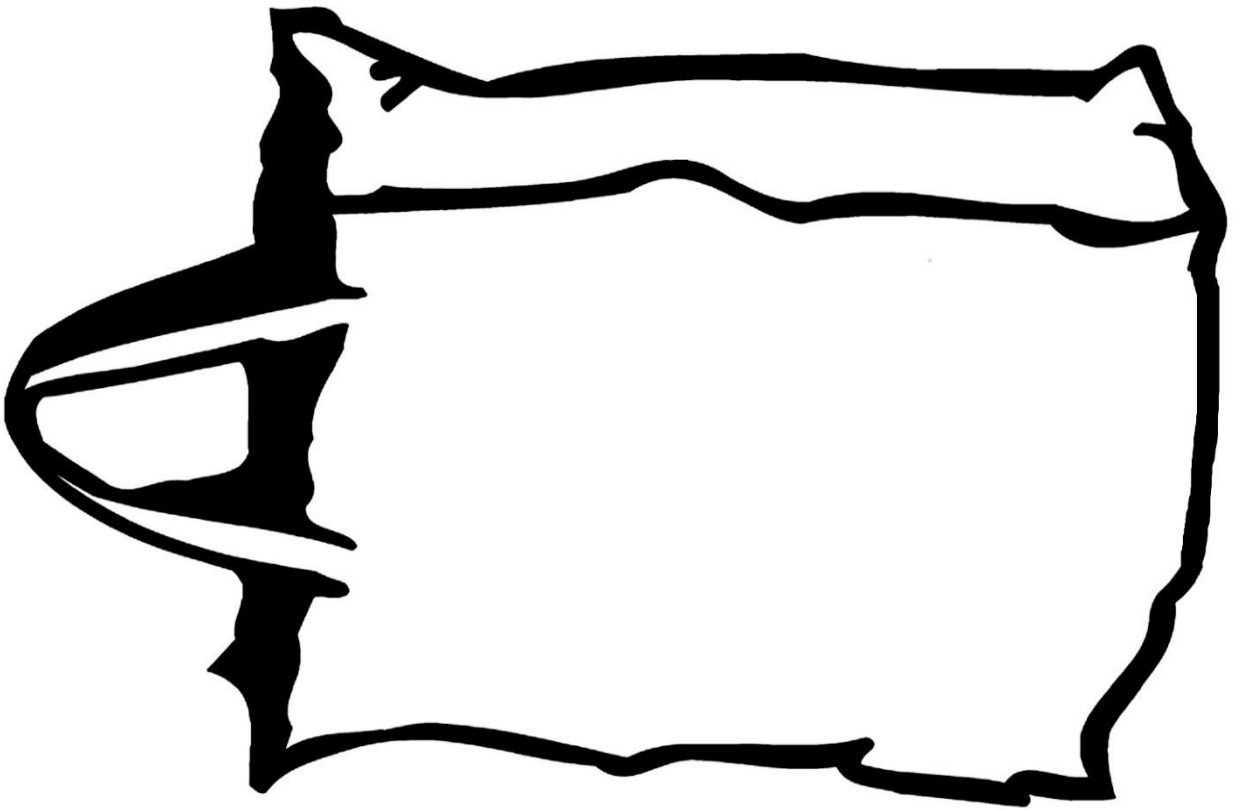
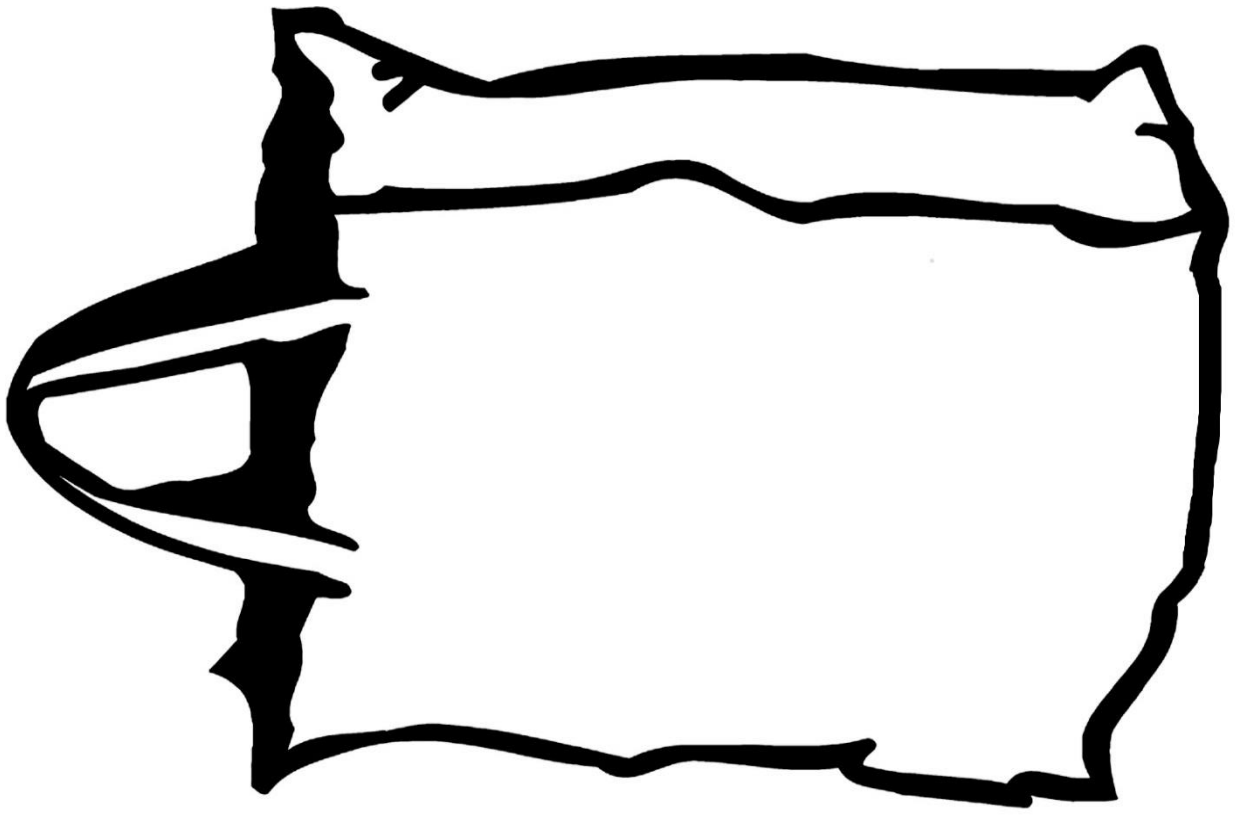


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*No glass, please.

Return this bag of groceries to



Hunger Activities for Children at Church

HOLD A DISCUSSION ABOUT HUNGER

Possible questions:

- Have you ever been hungry?
- How did you feel?
- Have you ever been so hungry that you couldn't think about anything except eating?
- What are some ways that you can help people who are hungry?
- Find suggested reading for children at <https://bit.ly/hungerbooks>.

SHARE THE STORY OF *STONE SOUP*

This Russian fable has taken many forms in children's books and storytelling, but the message remains the same – everyone can be happy and fed if we all share! Obtain your own copy of the story, and read it to the group or tell it, using props such as a pot, a stone, plastic or real vegetables, and bread. Let the group act out the story as you tell it. Then use this story as a discussion starter on sharing.

- Discuss ways the children can share what they have with others who are hungry.
- Decorate stones and attach a message to help people remember to share their food with the hungry.

CENTS-ABILITY BOOKMARKS

Make and decorate bookmarks to share with others to encourage them to join the fight against hunger in your community.



CENTS-ABILITY BANKS

Make collection banks using icing containers and Cents-Ability labels (available by emailing php@pcusa.org). Or hold a contest for the most unusual collection bank (think recycle!)

DECORATE FOOD COLLECTION BAGS

Decorate brown paper grocery bags to send home with families to be filled with non-perishable foods for your next food drive.

CREATE A FOOD COLLECTION CENTER AT YOUR CHURCH

Choose a well-visited spot, and set up a collection station for food goods and Cents-Ability offerings. You could use baskets, decorated boxes, a shopping cart, bulletin boards, posters, etc. Create a bright and attractive area, and encourage people to donate food and/or money each time they pass it.

CONSIDER CENTS-ABILITY AS A VBS MISSION PROJECT

What Churches Can Do to Fight Hunger



RAISE AWARENESS IN YOUR CONGREGATION

Sponsor a church-wide dinner to raise awareness of hunger issues and how individuals can get involved. Try a “Soup & Bread Meal” or another simple meal (see options in this document), and invite a speaker from a local feeding agency or your presbytery to present the program. Take an in-depth look at what causes hunger and poverty and actions that can be taken to bring about change.

PROVIDE SPIRITUAL DIRECTION FOR ACTION

Encourage Bible studies that seek to discover ways of responding to our calling as Christians to care for one another.

- See “Hunger and Justice in the Bible” in this document for references to get started.
- The Presbyterian Hunger Program has a Bible study and the *Just Eating* curriculum available. <http://www.pcusa.org/hunger/biblestudy> and www.pcusa.org/justeating

Consider hunger-related resources for Sunday School classes, small group studies, week-night fellowships, youth groups, session retreats, women’s or men’s groups, deacon training, mission committee meetings, etc. Encourage members to find out what is causing hunger in your community, and together seek to make an impact.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

- ✦ Hold food drives on a regular basis (monthly, seasonally, at each church dinner, etc.) for your local food distribution program. Encourage small groups within your congregation to help sort and stock the food.
- ✦ Participate in Souper Bowl Sunday by collecting cans of food and \$1.00 per person on the day of the Super Bowl football game. Donate the canned goods to your local food bank and the money to a local feeding agency. Learn more about the Souper Bowl of Caring at 1-800-358-SOUP (7687) or www.tacklehunger.org.
- ✦ Encourage individuals to get involved in hunger issues through service at a local soup kitchen or food bank, through lifestyle integrity, and through commitment to prayer for those in need.
- ✦ Encourage members to advocate for changes in laws or policies that are keeping people hungry and impoverished.
- ✦ Seek ways to encourage simpler lifestyles through Alternative Christmas and Easter celebrations, Alternative Gift Markets (to help artists and craftspeople in developing countries), co-operative gardens, clothing “swaps,” and simple dinners.** Visit www.pcusa.org/enough.
- ✦ Participate in the “Presbyterian Coffee Project” that makes Fair Trade coffee available to congregations. Encourage congregation members to learn more about fair trade policies - and to contribute to the Cents-Ability bank by the coffee pot. Visit www.pcusa.org/coffee.
- ✦ Send representatives to Bread for the World’s advocacy summit, CPJ Day, or Ecumenical Advocacy Days. Contact php@pcusa.org for more information.
- ✦ Recruit a group to participate in a hunger walk in your community, or host one.

ASSESS YOUR CONGREGATION’S HUNGER ACTION

PHP welcomes congregations involved in any hunger action area – or all six areas – to join as PHP Hunger Action Congregations. The six areas are hunger alleviation, development assistance, hunger education, lifestyle integrity, corporate and public policy witness, and worship. Find examples of each type of action using the “Ending Hunger and Its Causes” resource at www.pcusa.org/hac.

What Families Can Do to Fight Hunger



LEARN ABOUT HUNGER ISSUES

Check with your presbytery's resource center or POINT partner, or visit www.pcusa.org/hunger to find downloadable materials or resources you can order. Also see the Resources section in the Cents-Ability guide for sites to research hunger facts.

RECOMMENDED READING

- ✦ *Grace At The Table - Ending Hunger in God's World* by David Beckmann & Arthur Simon, Bread for the World, 1999. A comprehensive look at hunger and its root causes and how action is necessary to eliminate this injustice.
- ✦ A list of recommended reading for adults, youth, and children is available at <https://bit.ly/hungerbooks>.

STUDY GOD'S WORD ON HUNGER AND JUSTICE ISSUES

Read a Biblical passage on hunger and justice. Use some of the following questions as discussion starters:

- What is this passage saying about the poor and hungry in Bible times?
- What is this passage saying about the poor and hungry in our time?
- What does God want us to do about the poor and hungry today?

A “*Hunger and Justice in the Bible*” list is available as part of PHP's Cents-Ability Guide.

HOLD FAMILY DISCUSSIONS

Consider devotional time, mealtime, or other family time to explore some of the following questions:

- How many meals does your family consume in a week?
- How much of your family budget goes to buy food?
- How much food is wasted on a monthly basis?
- How would you feel if you could eat only one meal a day? What if that meal consisted of beans and rice only?
- What could you “do without” for one month in order to donate that money to someone who is hungry? Let each family member choose one food/beverage item (a soft drink a day, candy bar, etc.)
- If each person in your family contributed a set amount of money per meal (2 cents, 4 cents, a nickel, a dime) for one month, how much money would that be?
- What are some ways your family can give service to help feed the hungry? (Raise money, donate food, walk in a hunger walk, make posters for a food drive, volunteer.)

Close with a prayer for those who don't have enough to eat today.

GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND WORLD

- ✦ Participate in the Cents-Ability offering each time you eat. Donate your offerings to feeding programs in your community, to your church or presbytery hunger funds, or to the Presbyterian Hunger Program to support national and international hunger projects.
- ✦ Look for ways to simplify your lifestyle and conserve resources that are shared by all.
- ✦ Look for ways to help those who are trapped by injustice and poverty.
- ✦ Volunteer as a family to help a food bank or feeding agency in your community.
- ✦ Use the *Sharing Is Caring Calendar* for one month to help you remember those in need. Request by emailing php@pcusa.org.

What Adults Can Do to Fight Hunger



LEARN ABOUT HUNGER ISSUES

- See if your presbytery has a Hunger Action Advocate, POINT Partner, or resource center where you can find ideas; or visit www.pcusa.org/hunger.
- The Resources section of the Cents-Ability Guide has a list of sites where you can research hunger facts and learn about organizations that are working to end hunger in our world.

HOLD A BIBLE STUDY

Learn what the Bible says about our calling as Christians. See the “*Hunger and Justice in the Bible*” list in the Cents-Ability Guide (www.pcusa.org/centsability) for Biblical passages to read and study. How does God encourage us to treat those who live among us who are in need? Are we following God's commands?

Participate in a group study that explores ways of responding to God's call to care for one another. A Bible study and *Just Eating* curriculum are available online. <http://www.pcusa.org/hunger/biblestudy>; www.pcusa.org/justeating

GET INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

- ✦ Set aside coins for every meal you eat and contribute it to the Cents-Ability offering.
- ✦ Pray for those who are hungry, and for those who are in a position to help.
- ✦ Donate food to your local food bank. Better yet, organize a food drive!
- ✦ Volunteer your time at a soup kitchen, feeding agency, or food bank. They depend on volunteers to help sort and stock food, cook and serve meals, and clean up. Get your family or peer group to help.
- ✦ Get involved in helping to change public policies and laws that discriminate against those who cannot help themselves. Find out what organizations in your area are working to help balance the system.
- ✦ Look for ways to simplify your lifestyle and reduce waste.
- ✦ Look for ways to make holidays and special occasions meaningful through relationships rather than “stuff.” www.pcusa.org/justliving
- ✦ Support local hunger walks and CROP Walks to help raise money for hunger.
- ✦ Check out websites that are working to end hunger in our world (see suggestions in the Resources section of the Cents-Ability Guide. www.pcusa.org/centsability)

What Youth Can Do to Fight Hunger

LEARN ABOUT HUNGER ISSUES

- See if your presbytery has a Hunger Action Advocate, POINT Partner, or resource center where you can find ideas; or visit www.pcusa.org/hunger.
- The Resources section of the Cents-Ability Guide has a list of sites where you can research hunger facts and learn about organizations that are working to end hunger in our world.

PARTICIPATE IN A BIBLE STUDY OR FASTING EVENT – OR HOST ONE

Learn what the Bible says about our calling as Christians. See the “*Hunger and Justice in the Bible*” list in the Cents-Ability Guide (www.pcusa.org/centsability) for Biblical passages to read and study. How does God encourage us to treat those who live among us who are in need? Are we following God's commands?

Participate in a group study that explores ways of responding to God's call to care for one another. A Bible study with videos and the *Just Eating* curriculum (general and middle school versions) are available online. <http://www.pcusa.org/hunger/biblestudy> and www.pcusa.org/justeating

Order a free copy of *A Day in the Life* (includes a booklet/leader's guide & posters) to read about typical day in the lives of young people from around the world. Visit www.pcusastore.com/ or call 800-524-2612 and request item #74360-00-316.

Participate in a “Fasting Lock-in” to feel the effects of being hungry while learning about those who are hungry all the time.

GET INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

- ✦ Set aside coins for each meal you eat and donate the money to the Cents-Ability offering.
- ✦ Pray for those who are hungry. Pray for those who are in a position to help.
- ✦ Sponsor a food drive for a local food bank.
- ✦ Participate in a gleaning project to help gather food for people who are hungry. If there is not one in your area, contact a local farmer and start your own.
- ✦ Help sort/stock food at a pantry in your community; help serve a meal at a local feeding agency.
- ✦ Research hunger or a hunger ministry for a writing project or a scout project.

HELP GET OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED

- ✦ Sponsor a “Soup and Bread Meal” or a Simple Meal for your congregation. Plan and prepare the meal and organize the program. (Meal ideas are available as part of the Cents-Ability guide at www.pcusa.org/centsability.)
- ✦ Create a “Hunger Awareness” station at your church. Make posters to raise awareness of hunger issues in your community. If your church collects food, set up a special collection receptacle (a basket, a decorated box, a barrel, or even a food cart borrowed from a grocery store).
- ✦ Volunteer to collect the Cents-Ability offering on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, etc.) Assist with reminders, supply collection tools (baskets, jars, buckets, etc.), and help count the donations.
- ✦ Sponsor a “Souper Bowl Sunday” to collect cans of soup and dollars for hunger projects. Contact the Souper Bowl of Caring for ideas and materials at 800-358-SOUP (7687) or visit www.tacklehunger.org.
- ✦ Sponsor a food drive in your church, school, or community. Be creative! Create a contest, hold a food scavenger hunt, or come up with your own ideas of how to raise awareness of hunger issues and collect food for hungry people.
- ✦ Volunteer to create a Cents-Ability web page for your congregation's web site. Be sure to link it to the PHP site at www.pcusa.org/hunger.

What Children Can Do to Fight Hunger



LEARN ABOUT HUNGER ISSUES AND SHARING

Read and discuss one of these books and talk about how the children feel:

- *Shelter Folks*, by Virginia L. Kroll
- *A Rose for Abby*, by Donna Guthrie
- *Benjamin Brody's Backyard Bag*, by Phyllis Vos-Wezeman
- *Stone Soup*, a Russian folktale

GET INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

- ✦ Make a Cents-Ability bank for your family. Set aside coins for every meal you eat.
- ✦ Pray every day for those who do not have food.
- ✦ Give up one treat each week, and donate the money saved to help feed hungry people.
- ✦ Choose one food each week to donate to your local food collection.
- ✦ Help decorate a box for your church's food collection.
- ✦ Make a poster reminding people to set aside coins for each meal they eat.
- ✦ Use the *Sharing Is Caring calendar* for one month with your family to help you remember those who are in need. Request by emailing php@pcusa.org.
- ✦ Help sort food at your local food bank with your family or church group.
- ✦ Research hunger or a hunger ministry for a writing project or a scout project.



Food Relief Activities

Ideas for your congregation, conference, youth, or mission trip

Your group can help feed the hungry, as Jesus calls us to do in Matthew 25. The Presbyterian Hunger Program's mission is to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes in the United States and around the world. Our partners have shared that instead of international food packaging programs, there are ways that we can better support their food security efforts; so we suggest that groups who wish to participate in food packaging events consider those that benefit communities nearby. Thank you to those who are loving your neighbors near and far in tangible ways, serving Christ with energy, creativity and passion.

Help meet needs globally



Help provide **Moringa Trees**, support **small farmer projects**, and provide **tools, animals, and agricultural assistance** for communities around the world. Instead of receiving only a meal, communities will be able to grow their own solutions. Give to H999999 at www.pcusa.org/hunger.



Prepare **Hygiene Kits, School Kits, and Clean-up Kits** for people impacted by poverty or disasters. Learn more about the Church World Service Kits at www.pcusa.org/gohkits.

Help meet needs in your community

First find out what the needs are, and then consider how your group can help make a difference.

Local Opportunities to Serve

- Find your local food bank; ask what items they need and how much they can handle.
- Join with a local group or agency that hosts a backpack program. Fill backpacks with food or school supplies to help local children in need.
- Help with a hot meal program, sack lunch distribution, meal delivery service, food pantry, or summer student food program.
- Start something! As we serve our neighbors who are hungry, we serve Christ.



Clarksville Presbyterian Church, WV

Food Collections

- Sponsor a "Souper Bowl Sunday" collection of canned soup and funds for local hunger projects.
- Announce a door-to-door collection, leaving cards with your church information and the name of the food bank or pantry that contributions will support.
- Collect an offering of food staples or other needed items during worship time.
- For a church event or particular conference session, charge an "admission fee" of non-perishable foods.
- Grow and share fresh produce from a community garden; or help identify gleaning opportunities.

Other Ideas

- Help connect community members with community supported agriculture opportunities; or help a local family farm with harvesting, gleaning fields, or caring for the land that helps feed the hungry.
- Collect small gift cards for groceries, gas or restaurants to hand out (in gift card holders with your church information on it) or donate to a local food bank.

Helpful Links

- Multi-generational fund-raising and food collections ideas – www.pcusa.org/centsability
- Care kits for people in your community – examples at www.bit.ly/care-kits
- Find your local food bank – www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank/
- Start a backpack program – <https://bit.ly/backpack-prog>
- Meals on Wheels – www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/signup
- Souper Bowl – www.tacklehunger.org



Hunger Facts/Statistics

Current statistics can help you promote your Cents-Ability program. Visit the following sites to find recent statistics on poverty and hunger in the U.S. and worldwide:

- <https://www.bread.org/who-experiences-hunger>
- <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us>
- <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/food/index.html>
- www.worldhunger.org (information and short quizzes)

Examples:

- Poverty is the main cause of hunger in the world. Nearly 1.2 billion people in developing countries live in extreme poverty. (*BFTW 2020*)
- More than one in seven people in the U.S. lives below the poverty line; 51% will live in poverty at some point before age 65. (*BFTW*)
- Even short-term episodes of hunger can cause lasting damage to a child's development. Hunger puts children at risk of a range of cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and physical problems. (*BFTW*)
- In many countries, women and girls are more likely to suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Poverty and lack of education contribute to this disparity. (*BFTW*)
- Rates of food insecurity in the United States were higher for households with children, black-headed households, Hispanic-headed households, and single parent households. (*USDA*)
- Two thirds of extremely poor employed workers worldwide are agricultural workers. (*UN*)
- One in nine people do not get enough food to be healthy and lead an active life. (*UN*)
- Hunger and malnutrition are the biggest risks to health worldwide – greater than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined. (*UN*)

For answers to questions about federal nutrition programs such as Food Stamps or WIC, visit the Food Research & Action Center at www.frac.org.

Additional Recommended Web Sites for Information on Hunger & Related Issues

- Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) – www.pcusa.org/hunger
To give Cents-Ability gifts to PHP online – <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/H000107/>
- Bread for the World – www.bread.org
- Children's Defense Fund – www.childrensdefensefund.org
- Church World Service – www.cwsglobal.org
- Congressional Hunger Center – www.hungercenter.org. Check out the Zero Hunger Academy for videos and more.
- Feeding America – now www.feedingamerica.org. Locate food banks, find out how many people are food insecure in your county, and more.
- Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations – www.FAO.org
- Food Research and Action Center (working to end hunger in America) – www.frac.org
- Heifer Project International – www.heifer.org
- Souper Bowl of Caring – www.tacklehunger.org
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund – www.unicef.org
- World Hunger Education Service – www.worldhunger.org

Other Ways to Join the Presbyterian Hunger Program

Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

—Proverbs 31:9 (NRSV)

Presbyterian congregations are making a difference in communities around the nation. We invite you to join us in national and international opportunities that complement your local work. Together we can work to end hunger!

Become a Certified **Earth Care Congregation**. Take the Earth Care Pledge and complete worship, education, facilities and outreach activities and projects. www.pcusa.org/earthcarecongregations

Hunger Action Congregations are PC(USA) churches that commit to faithful action to end hunger and address its causes. HACs work in the areas of hunger alleviation, development assistance, hunger education, lifestyle integrity, corporate & public policy witness, and worship. www.pcusa.org/hac

Order **Eco-Palms**. More than 300 million palm fronds are harvested each year for U.S. consumption—most for Palm Sunday. PC(USA) congregations who purchase eco-palms help protect forests, local jobs, and sustainable livelihoods in the harvesting communities. www.pcusa.org/ecopalms

Drink **Fair-trade Coffee**, and buy from the **Global Marketplace**. There **is** enough for everyone!
www.pcusa.org/enough

PHP promotes **Reflection/Action Trips** which analyze the root causes of hunger and poverty while calling participants to engage in solidarity actions with our local and global partners. www.pcusa.org/trips

PHP's international initiative, **Joining Hands**, is engaging constituents on the issues of food & land, resource extractions & climate, and trade reform. If you are passionate about fighting systemic causes of poverty, there's a place for you. Contact Valery.Nodem@pcusa.org. Let's problem solve together.

Through the **Campaign for Fair Food**, the PC(USA) supports the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' victories in ending the conditions of poverty and exploitation in fields where farmworkers harvest our food. Contact Andrew.KangBartlett@pcusa.org for information on solidarity actions and advocating for fair wages for all workers. www.pcusa.org/fairfood

Be creative! Use yard sales, hunger walks, auctions, concerts, and more to raise funds to end hunger.

Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of People, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance are supported by gifts to **One Great Hour of Sharing**.

Resources available from the Presbyterian Hunger Program:



- *PHP Post*, with articles & information about how to get involved
- *Just Eating? Practicing our Faith at the Table* curriculum
- *Considering Our Treasure: A Reflection on Embracing God's Economy*
- Climate-related posters and resources: www.pcusa.org/climate
- Downloadable PHP presentations
- *Garden Safe – Garden Well*
- *Food Relief Activities*
- *Food Sovereignty for All Handbook*
- PHP Bible Study
- Recommended book list (adults/youth/children)
- *Tread Lightly for Lent* calendar

Visit www.pcusa.org/hunger or email php@pcusa.org for information.

www.pcusa.org/hunger