



PHP POST

Fall 2018 | Presbyterian Hunger Program | pcusa.org/hunger

Food Week of Action

At Home Playing in the Adamah

“then the Lord God formed Adam from Adamah” Genesis 2:7a

Rev. Ryan Althaus, Hunger Action Advocate for San Jose Presbytery



Costanoa Commons

On any given day at Costanoa Commons Farm, you'll likely find Chris Robertson out tilling the soil - shirtless and shoeless. Chris's struggles to overcome homelessness and addiction, while caring for a severely autistic 13-year-old child, make him a representative of three distinct and too often despondent populations. To Chris's right, Carson, a 20-year-old whose passion for farming shines brighter than his cerebral palsy diagnosis, preps a watermelon patch. To Chris's left, a group of 'special' children attend a summer camp, oblivious to any segregating needs, and they frolic after free-range chickens.

Costanoa Commons is an urban farm/intentional community located less than

a mile from downtown Santa Cruz, CA. Costanoa cultivates a deep sense of companionship by integrating diverse neighbors, including unhoused people and disabled youth, as common-'panions' (Latin for 'spiritual/physical nourishment') through a common-passion (the foundation for 'compassion') for gardening.

Five years ago, Heidi Cartan was searching for a path that would offer her son, Noah, a full life. When she learned of the farm-based L'arche Tahoma Hope Community in Tacoma, WA, she knew she had found it. Despite being an optimist at heart, Heidi had spent countless hours over the years worrying, along with her husband Philippe, about how their quadriplegic son

would ever find meaningful work and a life purpose. She couldn't envision how Noah could partake in gardening, much less full-scale farming, since wheelchairs and farms rarely mix.

However, inspired and encouraged by Tahoma Hope, the couple founded Costanoa Commons. They quickly found they were not alone. A variety of parents and their young adult children living with developmental disabilities have since joined in creating this "pocket" intentional neighborhood of affordable housing and in cultivating its three-acre farm.

Noah, now 22, has come a long way. Though born with cerebral palsy, his

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Sharing Communion, Becoming Community

Rebecca Barnes, Coordinator for Presbyterian Hunger Program

Opening worship at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly in St. Louis this summer was a powerful and meaningful experience. To sing, pray, and worship together was moving to me, as I looked around the vast room that held thousands of Presbyterians from across the country—and partners from around the world—in a diverse gathering of race, age, gender, nationality, and perspectives. Local leaders gathered at the font to emphasize the waters of baptism, as we Presbyterians were gathered at the Mississippi River. We closed worship by breaking bread together—all sharing in holy communion.

On the first Sunday of October, we observe World Communion Sunday. Like sharing the Lord's Supper in an auditorium of Presbyterians at General Assembly, we break bread and share communion all on the same Sunday throughout the world with all other Christians participating—feeling the kinship we share as God's family. While not in the same room as one another, and beyond the boundaries of one denomination, we connect to one another by this meal we share and the food God blesses. We share communion and open ourselves to becoming global community.

Food produced, baked, blessed, broken, shared—it is part of our identity as

Prayer for the Care of All Creation
From Prayers at Mealtime, The Book of Common Worship, 2018, page 589

In 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed September 1st as the “World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation,” joining Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople, who earlier extended an invitation for Christians to offer together “every year on this date prayers and supplications to the Maker of all, both as thanksgiving for the great gift of creation and as petitions for its protection and salvation.”

We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of earth and sky and sea;
 for the richness of mountains, plains and rivers;
 for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers.
 We praise you for these good gifts,
 and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity.
 Grant that we may continue to grow
 in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation,
 to the honor and glory of your name, now and forever. **Amen**

Christians in addition to filling a basic human need. We gather around tables, whether kitchen tables or the Lord's table, whether seated on the floor or cushions or chairs, whether in hot or cold climates—and those tables and the food we need connects us to one another.

This Food Week of Action in October, remember your connection to brothers and sisters all around the world. As we tend the land that grows our food—whether in community gardens in California or on

islands in Sri Lanka, let us remember what a gift it is to be connected and to share stories of empowerment and blessing. As we work for those who have little food—whether in famine-stricken areas of conflict in Africa or because of land grabs in the U.S. and Brazil, let us not just say the beautiful prayers of blessing food, but may we also become blessings in the world through our actions and advocacy to end hunger and care for creation. May our shared communion help us to become true and compassionate global community that we may nourish the world.

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Merrimack Valley Project

2018 Food Week of Action & World Food Day

October 14-21

We envision a world where everyone has enough affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food, where no one is hungry, and where all who work in the food chain are fairly compensated, respected and celebrated!

The purpose of the Food Week of Action is to raise awareness about hunger and its underlying causes, and to motivate people to take one or more actions on local and national concerns. PHP and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, have been celebrating the Food Week for almost a decade. By joining together we can multiply our impact! Last year, participating groups reached more than 479,000 people with education and action alerts through newsletters and social media.

Contact us at php@pcusa.org if you would like to be listed as a co-sponsor along with other churches and organizations. Co-sponsoring means that you will promote the Food Week and related action. There is no cost to become a co-sponsor. We will list the co-sponsors on the www.pcusa.org/foodweek website and you can publicize your related events during October on the Food Week Listing and Map.

Join us in building more equitable and ecological food & farm systems:

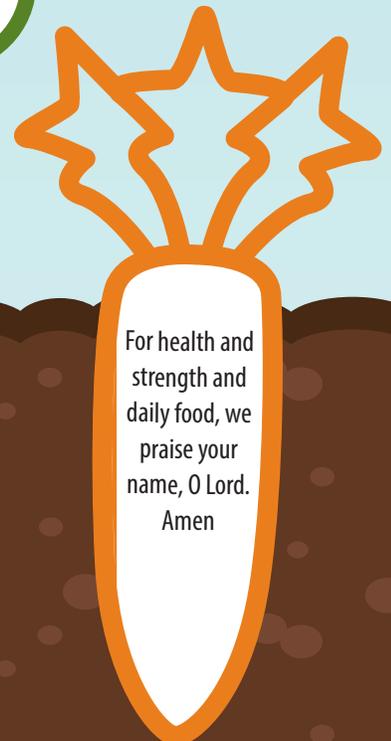
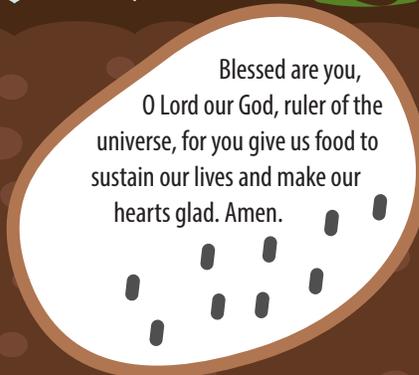
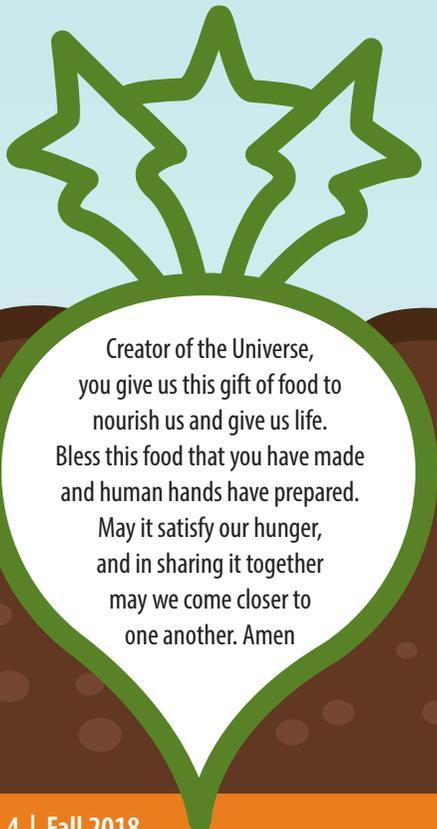
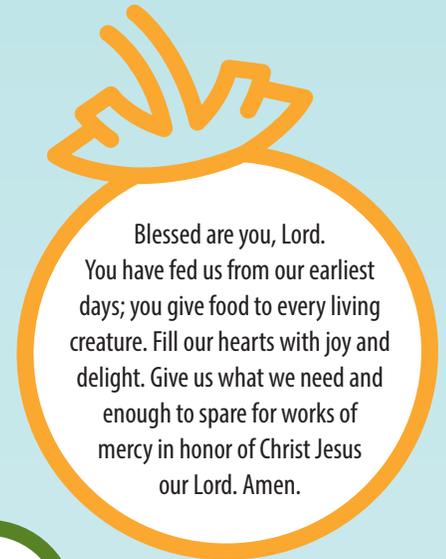
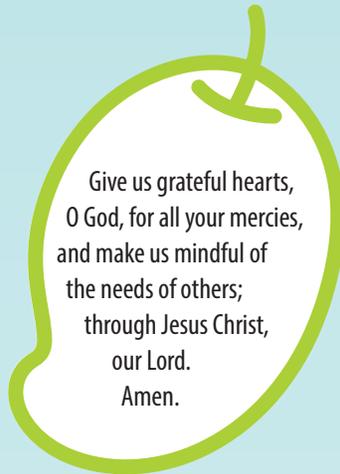
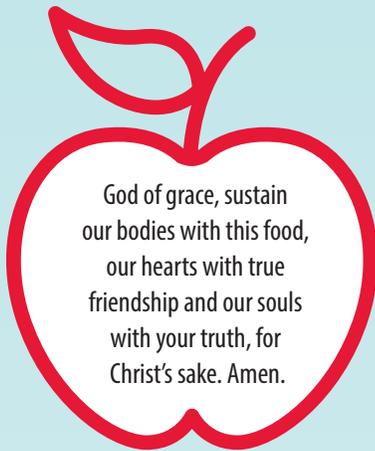
1. **Claiming Rights:** Claim the right to food, freedom from want, and an end to racialized systems of oppression.
2. **Fair Compensation:** Demand fair prices for farmers, fishers and other producers, and fair wages for everyone.
3. **Food Sovereignty:** Resist harmful practices and policies, and build just and sustainable local & regional food economies.

Beyond examining our food choices, we must recognize the lingering racism embedded in our food system. We call for changes which bring us closer to food sovereignty, where producers have control over seeds, land and livelihood, and where all have the right to food.

Seven Prayers for Food Week of Action

From *Prayers at Mealtimes, The Book of Common Worship, 2018, page 908-909, 623*

From a historical perspective bread was a powerful symbol of God's physical provision for God's people in the Old Testament. This reference however encourages us to make all our needs known to God in prayer. As we enter this conversation and communion with God, we see specific answers to our prayers, even when they aren't the ones we may have sought. The Presbyterian Hunger Program invites you to use these Prayers at Mealtimes* during this Food Week of Action to ask for our physical and spiritual daily bread.



Food Relief Activities

For your congregation, conference, youth, or mission trip

HELP MEET NEEDS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

With a little bit of planning, you can offer a great opportunity for your group to help feed the hungry, as Jesus calls us to do in Matthew 25. The Presbyterian Hunger Program, working to alleviate hunger and eliminate its root causes, suggests these activities in lieu of “quick fix” international food packaging programs (such as Rise Against Hunger/Stop Hunger Now) because our brothers and sisters around the world say there are much better ways to support food security.

Find your local food bank (feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank) and ask them these questions:

- 1 What items they need to stock and how much they can handle.
Then collect those supplies through:
 - A door-to-door collection program, leaving a card with your church information on it and the name of the food pantry that their contribution will help.
 - A worship offering time where congregants bring food forward.
 - An “admission fee” of canned goods or other supplies for people to attend your event or a particular session of a conference.
- 2 Whether the food bank hosts (or knows of other community resources or agencies that host) a backpack program—filling backpacks with food or school supplies to help children in need in your own community. If the answer is no, consider starting one! How to start a backpack program: www.bit.ly/backpack-program.
- 3 Whether there are hot meal programs where your group can help serve those who are hungry.

SOME EASY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY



Volunteer! Programs like Meals on Wheels prepare and deliver meals to seniors and others who are hungry. www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/signup



Collect small gift cards (groceries, gas, restaurants) to hand out; insert them into gift card holders with your church information on it, or donate them to a local food bank.



Ask local family farms when they could use volunteers on a single day to help bring in harvest, glean fields, or otherwise care for the land that feeds the hungry.



Create care kits for your own community. See examples at www.bit.ly/care-kits.

HELP MEET NEEDS GLOBALLY



Collate and send **Church World Service Kits** for those impacted by poverty and disasters. Hygiene Kits, School Kits, & Clean-up Kits are needed. www.pcusa.org/gohkits



Help provide **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 pcusa.org/hunger.

Become A Hunger Action Congregation

1. What's Required

Be active in at least one area of hunger action to become a Hunger Action Congregation! If your church is active in all six areas, you can become a Certified Hunger Action Congregation.

2. How to Join

Visit www.pcusa.org/hac to download a copy of the covenant to complete for your records and then submit the online covenant application.

3. What to Expect

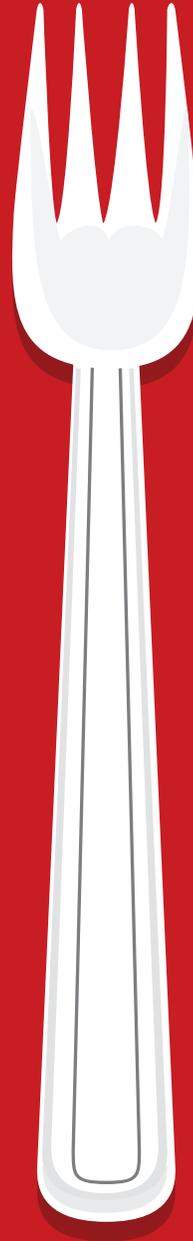
Complete the online covenant by September 15th to be included with those celebrated on World Food Day. Covenant every three years to remain in the network.

4. Why Become A Hunger Action Congregation

To continue to help alleviate hunger in your community, to share stories and best practices, and to make connections with other congregations for mutual inspiration for broader, deeper hunger ministries.

5. Questions?

Email php@pcusa.org or call (502) 569-5832. Go to www.pcusa.org/hunger and www.facebook.com/presbyhunger to connect with PHP and get inspired!



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Presbyteria

1. Hunger Allevi

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3. Hunger Education (i

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4. Lifestyle Integrity

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5. Corporate & P

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Six Areas of Hunger Action

Congregations around the nation are working in many ways to follow Christ's example of feeding the hungry and caring for those in need. Churches who become Hunger Action Congregations are acknowledged for their work, invited to share their stories, and celebrated by the national Hunger Program each year on World Food Day — October 16th. We invite you to covenant with us to help end hunger!

Food (providing and/or sharing food)

"We provide meals for the homeless at our church. Our members prepare meals for the homeless shelter. The youth group dedicates a meeting to preparing some of these frozen meals." — Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, Appleton, WI

Language (equitable and sustainable development)

"We teach English as a Second Language on a weekly basis to immigrants so they are more able to deal with our society in general." — Pleasantville Presbyterian Church, Pleasantville, NY

Education (including systemic, underlying causes of hunger)

"We host a Mission Luncheon with personnel from the county food bank, whose presentation included a showing of a video about hunger in America." — First Presbyterian Church, Matawan, NJ

Environment (personal and corporate practices to care for all people and creation)

"We promote fair trade for Mission presentations on fair trade; we provide water from pitchers for many of our social events and we use solar panels on our roof." — Covenant Presbyterian Church, Kansas City, MO

Public Policy Witness (advocating for changes in policies and practices)

"Each day of each month, our Faith Builders Sunday School class worships through service projects, writing letters to our local and national elected officials or serving in the homeless shelter in our community." — Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, Black Mountain, NC

Worship (scripture, prayer, story-telling, and singing)

"During our VBS children worshiped with the 'Cheerful Chicken' and watched skits that taught them about the importance of sharing the gift of food." — Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sacramento, CA



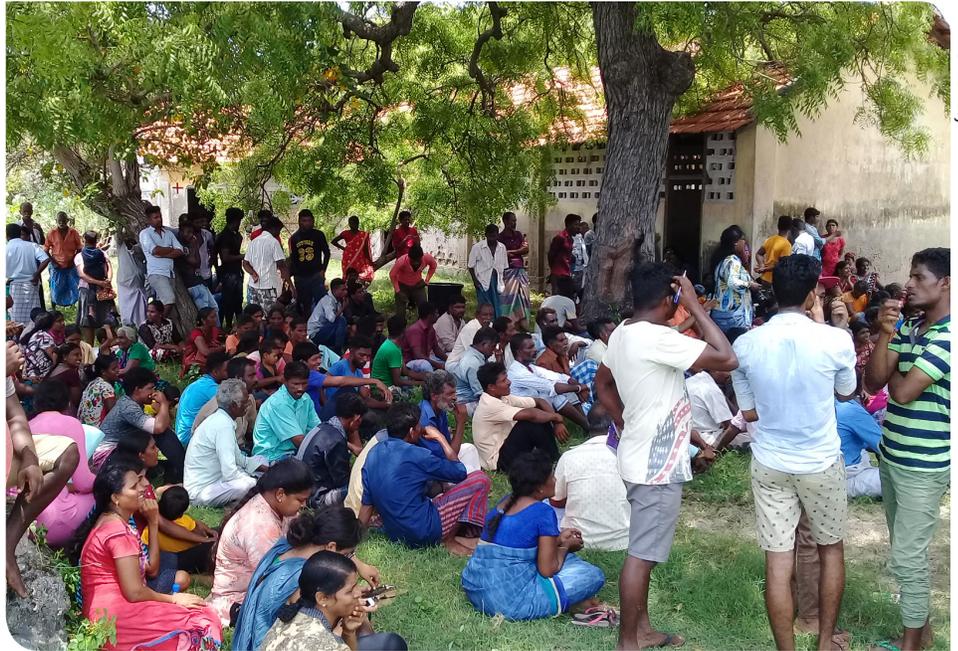
Iranaitivu Land Released in Sri Lanka: Islanders Return Home

Francis Raajan, Coordinator for the Joining Hands network in Sri Lanka, Praja Abilasha

On the morning of April 23, 2018, in the northern province of Sri Lanka, about 350 Iranaitivu people decided to sail in 40 boats from the city of Iranaimathanagar to their homeland, the Iranaitivu Island. In 1992, the Navy had begun to occupy the island and barred the Iranaitivu island people from living or even visiting their traditional land. The island housed many important institutions including a school, a cooperative, a weaving center, a hospital, a village council, churches, and more.

The joy of having reclaimed their own land, in their own way, was indescribable. By sharing past lessons, leaning on community, and mobilizing partners, we were truly able to join hands and win.

The years of displacement had been challenging for the Iranaitivu people. They hoped to return after the end of the war in 2009 and again after the election of a new government in 2015. However, they were not allowed to return despite multiple meetings with Ministers, politicians and government officials. While waiting to return home, the people of Iranaitivu island were learning lessons from people in Pulakkudiruppu who recently won their land back on March 1st, 2017, through continuous protest. This victory encouraged the people of Iranaitivu to begin their own yearlong protest. The



Francis Raajan

Community members, partners, and media mobilizing to assist in the land release.

first mass protest was on May 28, 2017, in Kilinochchi. Afterwards, there were many meetings with government officials, but even that didn't bring them home.

Our Joining Hands network Praja Abilasha (PA) was contacted by a priest at the parish house in Mulangavil. In desperation, he needed to garner support and let the word out about the situation of the Iranaitivu islanders. The priest and the community asked for Praja Abhilasha (PA) to organize support, food and water, and bring a team of journalists to cover the news in both Tamil and English medias. With partners and other organizations, PA was able to accommodate all of the requests. Journalists came from Colombo, and people from Mannar were mobilized, along with food, in order to join hands with the Iranaitivu people.

Finally, on April 23, 2018, the parish priest had a mass at 7 a.m. and then started a march towards the anchoring point of fisher folks in Iranaimathanagar. At the anchoring point, they sailed in 40 boats

towards the Iranaitivu Island while the rest of the people stayed at the coast. When those in the boats reached Iranaitivu, the Navy personal inquired about who they were, but didn't stop them.

The fishermen were able to catch fish, and people continued the struggle from the island. Some parliament members visited, but the Chief Minister said that he had no power to release the land legally. People stayed and continued to live on their land.

On May 15, 2018, I received news from leaders that the District Secretary and officials from Ministries of Land & Resettlement visited the island and said they will release 190 acres of the land so that the Iranaitivu people can stay. Two houses being used by the navy were also released.

The joy of having reclaimed their own land, in their own way, was indescribable. By sharing past lessons, leaning on community, and mobilizing partners, we were truly able to join hands and win. This is truly a moment of celebration.

Famine in Countries Experiencing War and Civil Conflict

Valery Nodem, Associate for International Hunger Concerns and Joining Hands

In May 2018, the United Nations recognized the impact of conflict on hunger. This is the first time the connection between violent conflict and hunger have openly been recognized by the UN.

In our decades of partnerships with churches and organizations in countries experiencing war, civil conflict or massive violence, PHP has always witnessed massive and extreme hunger as a result. War and civil conflict usually lead to displacement of people from their land and livelihoods, and the destruction of all their essential goods. Our experience

in countries like Palestine, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo and other countries have shown how much war and civil conflicts impact hunger.

In 2017, the world was shaken by the resurgence of famine affecting more than 20 million people in 4 countries: Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen. The magnitude of conflicts hasn't changed much in these countries, and there are not many signs that the situation will get better soon.

PHP has been building partnerships in

countries affected by famine and extreme hunger and where civil conflicts are impacting people and their livelihoods. In 2019, we hope to join forces with organizations in Yemen, South Sudan, northern Nigeria, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Venezuela, and others that are responding to violent crises and conflicts. Please join us in supporting the upcoming, focused work that PHP will be doing in countries facing famine! Contact us at php@pcusa.org or give to our work through the Hunger Fund at presbyterianmission.org/donate/H999999.

Pensions Fund Land Grabs in Brazil and U.S.

Andrew Kang Bartlett, Associate for National Hunger Concerns for Presbyterian Hunger Program

TIAA-CREF is the primary pension fund used by teachers, professors and many nonprofit professionals, and it is the world's largest global investor in farmland. Although considered a socially responsible investment, it is important that TIAA-CREF hear from their clients and others that land grabs are not an acceptable investment. You can ask that your money not be used to push up farmland prices in the United States or contribute to deforestation and land grabs overseas.

The Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) has been working with an international coalition of groups to research where and how these land grabs are happening, and to pressure TIAA-CREF to halt damaging farmland investing.

PHP would like to hear from you if you are concerned about this issue and we're especially eager to connect with TIAA-CREF clients. Contact andrew.kangbartlett@pcusa.org, and sign the petition to TIAA online at bit.ly/TIAAact.



TIAA Brazil

Cristiano Navarro



TIAA rally in New York

Brandon Wu - Action Aid USA

Just Transition: A Powerful “No!” and a Visionary “Yes!”

Andrew Kang Bartlett, Associate for National Hunger Concerns for Presbyterian Hunger Program

Jackson, Mississippi

Jackson is a city in crisis. The late Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, in his statement *Jackson Rising: Building the City of the Future Today* said, “Jackson, like many urban centers, is struggling to overcome decades of economic divestment, deindustrialization, suburban flight, a declining tax base, chronic under and unemployment, poorly performing schools, and an antiquated and decaying infrastructure.”

Jackson is also a city confronting numerous environmental racism challenges resulting in an ongoing health crisis and human rights violations for many residents, particularly in the most impoverished neighborhoods. The air quality in South and West Jackson is terrible, leading to chronic levels of asthma and other breathing and heart-related issues; the water infrastructure is so bad that it is often not suitable for drinking; and unregulated dumping of toxins has contaminated many sites.

Just Transition

The Just Transition framework, which emerged nationally amidst environmental justice struggles about 30 years ago, says “No!” and rejects such neglect and harm. Just Transition is a framework that critiques an inequitable, hurtful status quo, while at the same time building proactive campaigns and initiatives. Just Transition declares “Yes!” to solutions based in cooperative economics and participatory democracy.

Often, we see environmental concerns pitted against jobs, and jobs usually carry the day. Just Transition emerged where the struggles against coal mines and oil refineries were pitted against workers who depend on these industries to survive. This trend continues into the present

day. Just Transition campaigns across the country are fighting the repercussions of extractive and polluting industries, while attempting to advance real alternatives for energy production and economic self-determination. They are successful when solutions are able to address health, environment, and livelihood needs—no easy feat!

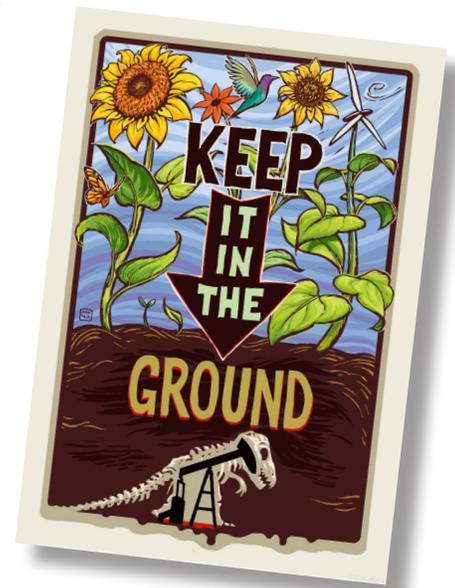
Food

Food is often an integral and important part of Just Transition campaigns. In Jackson, the Just Transition program is called the Sustainable Communities Initiative and has a focus on local, sustainable food. Community members identified carbon emissions and other pollution as a core problem that leads to poor health and climate change. Jackson came up with a plan which focuses on “a new, democratic economy that is centered around sustainable methods of production and distribution that are more localized and cooperatively owned and controlled.” (Jackson Just Transition Plan, 2015)

Eco-Village

The Sustainable Communities Initiative revolves around an Eco-Village. This Eco-Village is protected by a Community Land Trust, which was created by Cooperation Jackson -- a workers’ cooperative and the driving organizational force behind Jackson’s transformation.

The Eco-Village will be a sustainable live-work community in West Jackson that provides “affordable housing through cooperative housing, and jobs through integrated and interdependent cooperative enterprises situated within the community, including urban farms, composting operations, childcare, solar-thermal installation and maintenance, security, arts and culture, and a grocery store. The ecological component of the



Mona Caron

community is centered on creating an integrated solar-thermal, recycling, and composting network.” The economics rely on a web of cooperative, worker-owned businesses.

Zero Waste

Zero waste is central to Jackson’s Just Transition, with comprehensive

» WHAT IS JUST TRANSITION?

Just Transition is a framework for a fair and sustainable shift from an extractive economy towards an economy for life.

- We must immediately begin to transition out of an extractive economy, but to do this we must create new jobs and a safety net for workers who will transition out of those specific industries as well as the broader communities impacted by extreme energy.
- We envision creating new systems will serve as the seeds for a new economy based on local self-determination, resilience, and harmony with the Earth [from the Cooperation Jackson website].

continued from At Home, page 1

passion for friendship, his innate ability to charm just about anyone, and his playful pursuits of kayaking, skiing, writing stories and drawing pictures keep his soul rich in laughter. Though he relies upon a feeding tube for sustenance, he has learned to ask for (and eat plenty of) ice cream and now helps grow the strawberries to put on top!

The farm is filled with raised beds, colorfully painted by local children; the fields are lined with a variety of vegetables, flowers, and sun-ripened strawberries that grow famously well in this coastal climate. A wheelchair-accessible greenhouse is near completion, thanks to a partnered grant from the Presbytery of San Jose and Sweaty Sheep. The greenhouse will host a hydroponic lettuce, basil and microgreen system for year-round vegetable production. Soon Noah and his physically-disabled peers will be able to find meaningful employment here growing fresh produce for the local community.

Serving as a Presbyterian Hunger Program Hunger Action Advocate in this unique place - near Silicon Valley, surrounded by berry fields, migrant farm workers, and one of the country's highest per capita homeless populations - compels me to look at hunger,

sustainability, and inclusivity differently.

Our presbytery's partnership with Costanoa Commons has aided in broadening our understanding of hunger and inclusion so that together we can start to satiate a deeper hunger in society. This is a hunger for companionship and purpose - a hunger alluded to in Jesus's claim that 'man cannot live by bread alone.' (Luke 4:4)

The farm is working hard to demystify labels and misperceptions by focusing on the gifts, not the 'needs' that make these neighbors 'special.' "Noah is very clear about wanting to offer something to his community that other people value," says Heidi. "With an effort that is truly integrated, where those with disabilities work side-by-side with others who don't have the same challenges, attitudes that typically hinder people from living full lives can change."

Society vastly misunderstands people who are often classified as "disabled," despite their prominence in the community. In fact, "if formally recognized as a group [they] would be the largest minority in the United States" says the National Institute on Disability. Moreover, it is the one minority group that any of us could join at any time.

Alternatively-abled individuals are too often viewed as lacking... defined, labeled and limited by their 'needs.' This is far from the case, for God has made each 'perfect' and 'whole' and their presence is essential to the completeness of our greater community. As Plato wrote, "we are all born whole, but we need each other to be complete."

As soon as you set foot on the soil - the 'adamah' (dirt) from which we sprout - of this Santa Cruz sanctuary, you feel at home. In these fields, inclusivity is more than an aspiration, but an experience as refreshing as the early summer strawberries brightening the fields. What makes gardeners of this farm so special isn't their 'dis'-abilities but their unique ability to see beyond divisive labels (the L's, G's, B's, T's and Q's; abled and disabled; housed and homeless; Jew, Christian, Muslim...) as they cultivate a community of true acceptance.

We hope that our denomination carries forward the spirit of Costanoa and takes a deeper look at hunger by embracing the wholeness and diversity of creation in ways in which all find purpose, healing, sustainability, and community through the cultivation of mutually dignifying, mutually nourishing, and mutually supportive, inclusive relationships.

continued from Just Transition, page 10

recycling to reduce the burden on the city's landfill and also produce jobs. All organic refuse from households, businesses and organizations will be composted, and cooking oil will be collected from restaurants and food service operations.

A Local Food and Production Charter for Jackson will encourage and incentivize local food production and distribution, which creates more jobs. Moreover, local production will reduce carbon emissions by eliminating the need for extended transportation systems and refrigeration. The primary focus of this local food economy will be to support producers

from historically discriminated and capital deprived communities within and surrounding Jackson.

The challenges to achieving this vision are many, but progress is being made. As of now, Cooperation Jackson has established the Chokwe Lumumba Center for Economic Democracy and Development, a community center and small-businesses incubator. They also operate Freedom Farms, an urban farming collaborative, named after the Freedom Farm Cooperative, founded in 1969 by civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer.

Cooperation Jackson carries forward Hamer's torch of resistance along with a participatory vision of an equitable, community-controlled economy—an emphatic "No!" and an ambitious "Yes!"

» SAVE THE DATE

Find a bulletin insert and more information for Hunger and Homelessness Sunday (November 18, 2018) at www.pcusa.org/homelessness.



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