

Rethinking Holiday Meals

Whether at church or home, consider putting faith in action regarding holiday meals and gatherings. Here we provide a variety of ways Presbyterians are using their purchases and gatherings to support low-income and marginalized producers around the world, alleviate hunger and poverty, and minimize the impact of our consumption on the planet.

Keep it local

Vegetables, fruits, meats, breads, dairy products, and table decorations can be purchased from local farms, farmers markets, and local, independently-owned shops such as bakeries and groceries.

Perhaps you can feature items grown or crafted by neighbors or family members.

Keep it based in faith

Share in ancient rituals of prayer, sharing and community building.

Allow as many parts of the meal as possible to reflect your faith in a God who provides for all.

Celebrate God's presence and the gifts of each other and community over "stuff."

Keep it simple

Resist the urge to overdo, whether it be with food, decorating, or other forms of hospitality.

Consider a theology of enough and a refrain of simplicity when planning meals and events.

Consider increasing vegetarian options both as a form of hospitality to vegetarians who may attend your meal, and because eating lower on the food chain often uses fewer resources.

Keep it healthy

Ingredients that are fresh, travel only short distances and are grown organically all have higher nutritional value, and are better for God's creation, too.

At mealtime, resist the temptation for seconds and thirds; instead, savor each bite and enjoy the moment. You'll thank yourself later when you don't feel overly full.

Keep it fair and cooperative

Products purchased fair trade (such as coffee, tea, cocoa, spices, sugar, olive oil) support farmers around the world who struggle to get their products to market and are working to develop their farms, families, and communities.

Where possible choose cooperative-made products, where producers and workers own a share in the business and find that together they can not only survive but thrive.

Encourage members of your family to cooperate by setting the table together or preparing dishes as a team.

Consider setting aside old family conflicts and cultivating a harmonious environment.

