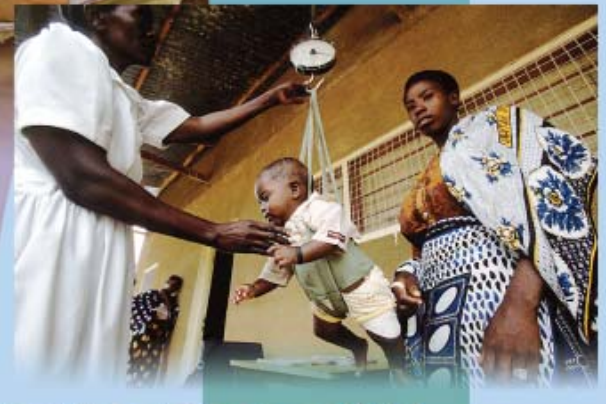


NEW EDITION



HUNGER
no more

Hunger in the World



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Hunger No More is a uniquely cooperative effort of the churches and organizations listed on the back cover of the folder and on the handout titled “Go and Do Likewise.”

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Hunger No More can be ordered from Bread for the World, www.bread.org, or downloaded, along with children’s activities, supplementary materials and Web site links at www.hungernomore.org.

Introduction

What is this study about?

We live in a shrinking and ever-more-interdependent world. Whether we look at the labels on our clothes, the globalization of communication and markets, the role of transnational corporations, the threats of international terrorism, multi-national peacekeeping, surfing the world wide web, or hunger at home, our lives are touched by people, events and ideas that originate far from our homes and borders. And, we, in turn, affect the lives of people far away.

For people of faith, this growing awareness brings a gift – knowledge of customs, traditions and witness from many cultures – and an obligation to understand our world better, and the claims made on us. High among these claims are the biblical mandates to care for those who are hungry and poor, and constantly to look into our own hearts for the ways in which we can open our hearts to God's grace, to walk in love as Jesus did with people for whom he also suffered and died.

This new packet helps parishes open up a discussion of issues related to hunger, poverty and powerlessness in the United States and the developing world; the causes, solutions and the roles that we might play. It is about the relationship of the community of faith, Christ's body in the world, struggling to clarify our identity and mission – believers seeking to understand and respond to God's call at home and abroad.

Who is it for?

These lessons are very basic, very introductory. While social activists will find it useful, the material is designed for people of faith who are willing to discuss these issues, perhaps for the first time. The materials aim to get a discussion going, not to push people to predetermined answers. At the end of the sessions, people may continue to disagree about issues and strategies, but remain friends in the faith.

This packet includes six sessions for adults and youth as part of the larger program of parish life and education. Each session is supported by a unit in this guide, a separate handout with

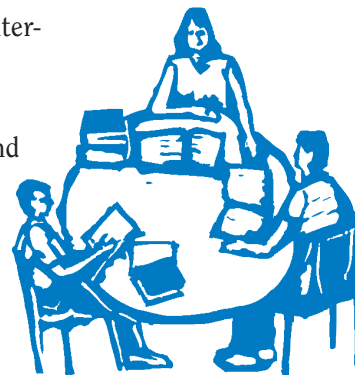
stories from scripture and from life, references for further study and suggestions and materials for children that can be offered simultaneously with, or separately from, the youth/adult sessions. Many of the materials can be adapted for more than one age group or setting. So explore them all with an inquisitive mind and an open heart. Since the issues cross generations, the lessons can also be used to connect generations!

Here are some ideas for using the materials:

- Adult, youth or children's Sunday school during a special season of the church year, such as Lent, or as an on-going supplement to the regular curriculum
- Small-group faith formation, including programs for newcomers, for Christian initiation of adults and confirmation preparation for any age
- Meetings of Christian communities
- Mid-week adult or inter-generational forums
- Program groups and committees to ground the work of mission, e.g. education or family ministry committees
- Retreats. Family nights at home. For the formation of parish staff or as a focal point for ecumenical and interfaith gatherings. (There is a separate, but parallel, Jewish version of *Hunger No More*.)

One of the best ways to use the materials is during regularly scheduled study sessions that have an ongoing established community. The leader can do supplementary recruitment, but does not have to start from scratch.

Be creative! How about involving shut-ins by phone, computer, correspondence? Use the internet to reach those temporarily away, like college students who may be studying these issues in other ways.



The six handouts included in the back pocket can be handouts for class or discussion sessions, bulletin inserts or in newsletter mailings to the congregation. Choose one, two or all six to help educate the whole congregation. They can also be used along with an outside speaker. Some pages in this guide can be used in the group sessions, incorporated into other education programs or events, or used for individual study and reflection.

Who might lead this study?

This study is not just about learning facts. It engages people in a conversation about their faith, with prayerful reflection, dialogue and response. The primary learning occurs in the group interactions as people share their own experiences, opinions and knowledge with one another. Participation is key!

The leader **does not** need to be someone who is:

- An expert
- A member of the parish staff
- Someone already active in hunger or social justice issues

The leader **does** need to be someone who is:

- Comfortable leading group discussions, who will encourage everyone to participate and be accepting of a diversity of opinions
- Open to the work of the Spirit in the group
- Wants to learn more about faith, the ways God works in the world and asks us to do likewise
- Willing to take on the tasks of preparation and follow up

What should the leader know before starting?

People have varying points of view on issues, approaches and interpretations, some of which may be strongly held. The leader will want to encourage an atmosphere of trust and openness rather than the promotion of an individual agenda. This requires sensitivity, but will also be helped by starting out with basic ground rules. On page 30, you will find “Helps to Guide Our

Discussions.” The leader should go over the “helps” with participants at the beginning of the first session, and post a copy of them on newsprint or poster board so everyone will remember during the sessions.

These materials are introductory. The group may be looking for answers or further guidance on questions between sessions. For those who are interested, we have provided additional resources and Web sites.

The leader should be able to deal with (and make the group comfortable with) the likelihood that consensus on solutions to hunger and poverty are not likely to arise in any one session, or even at the end of all the sessions. At the same time, people can and do change – both minds and hearts. This change may be apparent, or may be going on deep within. Never discount the hidden work of the Holy Spirit.



Getting Started

The person(s) initiating this study needs to:

- Get permission to hold the sessions from the appropriate people in your faith community. Discuss ways in which the larger pastoral team can support the program or relate it to other work or study going on in the parish.
- Decide on the timing and number of classes to be held, and whether the children’s activities (www.hungernomore.org) will be used during the same hours as the youth/adult studies or independently.
- Give the materials to the appropriate people in plenty of time to prepare. Children’s sessions may take longer to prepare. You may want to hold a preparatory session with just the leaders if there are more than one.
- Hang the poster (included with this packet) in a prominent place to advertise the sessions. Include the dates, times, topics and contact information (person, phone number).
- Announce the sessions in the congregation’s bulletin, newsletter and Web site (if available), and at the appropriate time when people are gathered for worship.

Introduction

- If possible, get a sign-up sheet or other indication of the number of participants so that you will have enough materials and the space adequately prepared.

Each session has:

- An opening prayer. You may use the suggestions in each unit or develop your own. It is important that the discussion and atmosphere be shaped by prayer.
- God's Story, a brief study of selected Scripture(s).
- A story by or about people in different societies, countries, communities and cultures. The sessions suggest various ways of presenting these stories.
- Facts about facets of hunger, poverty, powerlessness and what we can do. Remind participants that behind each fact, there are many human stories.
- Our Story, that explores how we can connect our individual, family and congregational lives with the people in need and with our mandate from Scripture.
- Closing reflections and prayer.

The sessions can be done in approximately one hour. The timing and setting depends on the size of the group. In some cases you will have more materials than you can use. So select according to your sense of the group's interests. To shorten a session, skip some of the discussion questions. To lengthen a session, e.g. for a retreat setting, allow more time for discussion and include supplementary games, discussion questions and other activities found at www.hungernomore.org.

As part of any session, you can invite someone involved in hunger concerns from your congregation or community to share briefly with the group. Make sure to encourage the group to look for and bring in news articles explicitly or implicitly related to hunger. Post these articles for others in the congregation to see. You can also share a quick summary from each session in the congregation's newsletter or bulletin. Be alert to articles, radio and television programs

and Internet sites that you can suggest to the group as well.

Remember, that the learning taking place *in* the group can be a catalyst for the whole congregation.

For each session you will need:

- This leader's guide
- The "Helps to Guide Our Discussions" poster or sheet, p. 30
- Photocopies of the appropriate handouts in the pocket of this guide, and other materials, for each participant
- Bibles for each participant, or enough to share
- Overhead projector or copies of selected pages; a VCR for videos
- Statements from your denomination on world hunger, justice or poverty (see www.hungernomore.org)
- Pencils and markers
- Newsprint and easel
- Masking tape
- A rough outline of how you plan to divide the time of the session among activities – even though things might not go exactly as you plan!
- Copies of any parts of the prayer materials that the whole group will use, or an overhead of the same



Hints for Leaders

- Begin your own preparation with prayer.
- Be sure to read over the session well in advance so that you have a good idea of the materials and direction.
- Make the required copies or transparencies.
- Begin each session with the prayer and Bible study to set a framework for the discussion and remind the participants of its purpose and grounding.



- Encourage everyone to participate in the discussion and be receptive to listening to all points of view. Be clear at the beginning of each session, and by your own actions throughout the session, that whether or not you agree with someone's opinion, no opinion or person is to be belittled.
- If one participant tends to dominate the discussion, ask that no one speak a second time until everyone has had the opportunity to speak. If this is an opening ground rule, no one will feel singled out later.
- Expect that the discussion will bring out a variety of opinions. Encourage participants to speak with certainty only of their own experiences and to avoid making generalizations from them or about others.
- Keep track of the time so you will not have to rush or omit the closing meditation and prayer. You might ask for a volunteer timekeeper to tell you when you are halfway through, or at various benchmarks on your own timeline, and when there are 10 minutes left to go. It is helpful to keep a brief summary of each session, especially concerns that remain to be addressed in future sessions. You will save time and avoid being distracted if you can ask one of the participants to act as a volunteer recorder.
- At the end of each session add your own notes to the recorder's notes. Is any action required on your part before the next session? Has anyone else volunteered to look into something that you might need to remind them of? Are there issues arising out of the discussion that you might want to be particularly alert to before you meet again?

The Millennium Development Goals

Many of the handouts include one or more of the Millennium Development Goals (p. 31). You could hand out and post copies of the whole list at any point in the group discussion, e.g. during the discussion of globalization. Or, the Goals could become the focus of an entire session. For more information on the Goals, see links at www.hungernomore.org.

In 2002, President George W. Bush announced that the United States would significantly increase development assistance to poor countries that demonstrate a commitment to good governance, investment in people and sound economic policies. Citing and affirming the Millennium Development Goals, the president said the increased assistance would go to a new Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) to fund initiatives that improve the lives of people in developing countries around the world.

The Millennium Challenge Account should incorporate many of the lessons learned over the years about the effective delivery of development assistance. Governments that are tough on corruption, invest in improving the health and education of their people, and implement sensible economic policies are much more likely to have a good strategy for reducing poverty and to use development assistance effectively.

In order for the Millennium Challenge Account to meaningfully enhance the lives of hungry and poor people, Congress must adequately fund it. This amounts to an additional \$5 billion a year in poverty-focused development assistance by 2006, as the president promised in his announcement. Along with securing this funding, Bread for the World and other organizations will urge Congress to design the MCA in a way that maximizes its effectiveness in reducing hunger and poverty. Check www.bread.org to learn the current status of this initiative.

Adult, Youth and Children's Activities

A partial list of adult and children's activities, and many other materials to supplement *Hunger No More* can be found on page 32 or at www.hungernomore.org.



Session 1

When Did We See You Hungry? (Matthew 25:37)

Focus

To initiate a discussion about hunger in the United States and worldwide, and begin to see the human face of hunger in new ways.



Preparation

- Refer to “For each session you will need” on page 4. Use the points as a checklist for this session.
- Prepare “Hunger and Poverty Definitions” (see “Useful Terms” at www.hungernomore.org) on newsprint, a transparency or as a handout.
- Make copies of the handout “When Did We See Thee Hungry?” so each participant will have one.
- Download the list of Millennium Development Goals at www.hungernomore.org or copy p. 31.
- Arrive early at the meeting place and make sure everything is set up and laid out in the order you will need the copies/books/materials/lists.

Welcome

In your own words, briefly welcome the group and invite them to be seated and quiet for the opening prayer.



Opening Prayer

The leader, or a chosen participant, begins:

(L) In the name of God, in us creating, for us redeeming, with us transforming (or, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit). **(All)** Amen.

Ask each participant to say his or her first name and a brief, two or three word reason for being present. If there are more than twelve people, ask each person to share this with a person next to her or him.

(L) We have begun in God’s name and given each other our own name. Let us now pray:

Loving God, in your grace you have gathered us at this time and in this place to hear the word you are speaking this day in the voice of people who are hungry and poor. Open our hearts and minds to the power of that word. May we see with your eyes the vision of a world which knows no borders, no boundaries, no fear, but invites us again to live together the promise of abundance which is both your gift and promise. We ask this in the name of your own beloved son, who lives and reigns united in the love of your Holy Spirit, now and always. **(All)** Amen.

God's Story

See that everyone has a Bible. Various translations are fine. At some point you may want to have people compare translations of the selected text.

First, introduce the scripture lesson by reading aloud the paragraph below or paraphrase it in your own words:

The Gospel of Matthew is an interesting choice to begin this study of hunger and how we as the church are related to it, since it is the only gospel to actually use the word “church” to describe the community of believers. It was most likely written in a Jewish Christian community. The writer understands the faith of the church to be built on the Hebrew scriptures and traditions of the Jewish community. This passage is set in a scene in which all the nations of the world – the Gentiles – are envisioned around God’s throne. While the passage sounds like it is about the end of the world, remember that it was intended to speak to the church about what was then the present time. Hear now what the Spirit says to the church:



Next, have someone with a strong voice read Matthew 24:34-40 from the handout.

Then, lead the discussion with these questions:

- Matthew’s community thought it was already living in the “end time.” Do you think we are? Why do you think we begin this study with this particular story?
- In what ways is it true, or false, that when we see hungry people, we are looking at the face of Christ?
- This story doesn’t seem to mention anything about confessing faith in Jesus Christ. Why do you think that is? How is this story, whatever its original context was, really about us as the church?
- How do you feel inside when you hear these words? What do they make you think about in your own life? In our life together?
- Who do you think the “least of these who are members of my family” are today?
- How would you hear this story if you were rich? If you were poor?

It may be difficult to “break the ice” with a group discussion. If it looks like people are not ready to speak in the whole group, form groups of two or three, and let them talk in these small units. After the group is “buzzing” in these more comfortable discussions, call people back together to report on their conversations.



Personal Stories

Distribute the *When Did We See You Hungry* handout (folder pocket) to the group. Ask different people to each read one of the personal stories. If the group is large enough, divide it into smaller groups first (but preferably not the same small groups from the previous activity). Ask all groups to talk about the first story and assign each group one of the other stories as well.

Ask participants to use the following questions to guide the discussion. Provide paper for one person in each group to make notes of their conversation.

- What does “being invisible” to others mean? Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt this way? What did it do to you? How did it make you feel or react? How do you think being invisible affects those who are poor and feel this way?
- Ask each group to talk about the experience of the speaker in their story. What might a day look like for them? What would their fears and hopes be? How is their life different than or similar to yours?

Call the group back together for a very short summary of what was shared in the small groups.

The Hunger Story

The first hunger fact on the list is from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eight items of the MDGs are spread throughout the handouts.

Ask people to take turns reading one of the hunger facts. Ask participants for their reactions to these statements (no more than one or two sentences). Then ask for opinions – again, no more than a sentence, as to why people think hunger and poverty exist on this scale. If they have difficulty coming up with reasons, ask whether some of the following might be responsible:

- greed,
- ignorance,
- neglect of Scriptures,
- racial differences,
- gender,
- immigration,
- destructive personal habits,
- lack of work,
- disabling conditions,
- natural disasters,
- inadequate socialization,
- inadequate support systems.



Go over the definitions of hunger – hungry, at risk of hunger, malnutrition, poverty – using the definitions at “Useful Terms” www.hungernomore.org.

Finally, ask for reactions to the statement: “Hunger could be cut in half if....”

Have the recording secretary note down what is said in summary or “bullet point” form.

Our Story

This study is not just about sharing information or opinions. It is about discerning God's call and our response.

Ask people silently to read "Our Story" in the handout.

Ask people to share what they are already doing as a volunteer. Make a list so every one can see how much is already being done. Affirm what has been/is and encourage what still can be.

Ask people to articulate some connections between the action possibilities and the study session. Invite comments or questions, including, "Can anyone think of any other actions we could do as individuals, families or as a group before our next meeting?"

Provide information on volunteer opportunities at food pantries, food banks and soup kitchens in your community.

Finally, ask for any questions or comments on the session. Then remind participants of the topic for the next session and suggest that they watch for articles about the topic for the next session.



Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to be quiet and centered for the closing reflection and prayer.

Beginning with the person on your left, **ask the participants to read** Matthew 25:34-40 aloud, each person taking one line. Take one more moment of silence at the end of the passage and then **invite the group** to join you in this short prayer, saying it three times, with the group joining after the first time:

O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.



After the Session

Collect the notes made by the recorder(s). Jot down any unanswered questions, suggestions or requests made by the group. Note anything you would particularly like to remember for the next session (a comment, an idea, an issue). List for yourself anything that needs to be communicated to the larger parish or to the parish staff. Take a moment to pause and thank God for being with you in leading and serving this group.



Our Story

- Interpreters suggest that Matthew 25:34-40 might be loosely based on Isaiah 61. Read and discuss both passages at your family or class devotions.
- Discuss Matthew 25:40. Who counts as family today? In what sense are we all part of the family of God? Who are the “least of these”? What does Jesus mean when he says that when we do it to the “least of these,” we do it to him?
- Discuss the personal stories and list of facts.
- Although war, and sometimes natural disasters, most often cause hunger emergencies, long-term malnutrition is caused by poverty and powerlessness. If people had resources, such as land or money, they would buy food. If they had personal and political power, they would demand that their governments help them get on their feet. Discuss what we can do to help reduce poverty and powerlessness in our communities, nation and world.
- Look up www.secondharvest.org and www.bread.org to learn more about hunger and what you can do.
- Pray as a family, as a community, together three times: “O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.”



Uniquely cooperative effort by African Methodist Episcopal Women's Missionary Society, American Baptist Churches USA, America's Second Harvest, Bread for the World Institute, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Reformed Church, Church World Service, Community of Christ, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Program, Franciscan Friars, Good Ground Press/Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Heifer International, Maryland Province of the Jesuits, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Presbyterian Hunger Program, Reformed Church in America, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Committee on Relief, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



When Did We See You Hungry?

God's Story

*Then the king will say to those at his right hand,
“Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world;
for I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me”...*

*Then the righteous will answer him,
“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food,
or thirsty and gave you something to drink?”...*

*And the king will answer them,
“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these
who are members of my family, you did it to me.”*

- Matthew 25:34-40 NRSV



Personal Stories

A Voice from Pakistan

We poor people are invisible to others – just as blind people cannot see, they cannot see us. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

A Blind Woman from Moldova Speaks

For a poor person everything is terrible – illness, humiliation, shame. We are cripples; we are afraid of everything; we depend on everyone. No one needs us. We are like garbage that everyone wants to get rid of. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

Lela from the United States Speaks

We get our food from the supermarket and the Beth El Mission. We travel three miles to get our food, but when we are out of gas we cannot go. If we had more money, I would buy more meats and fresh vegetables. We do not have enough money to pay our bills and buy enough food. We get no help from the government. Sometimes I get a bag of food from the mission.



We are going through a time now when we do not have enough food to eat. That's why I came to Beth El Mission (Beth El Presbyterian Ministry). The biggest problem our family is facing is that we need more fresh food and medical help. The one thing I would change to make my life better is to have enough money to pay my bills, and good food in my home.

Hunger Action Leadership Team, *I've Seen Hunger in My Community, and It Looks Like This*, Tampa Bay, Florida

A Ten-Year-Old from Gabon Speaks

When I leave for school in the mornings I don't have any breakfast. At noon there is no lunch, in the evening I get a little supper, and that is not enough. So when I see another child eating, I watch him, and if he doesn't give me something I think I'm going to die of hunger.

<www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

Hunger Stories¹

each number is a human story

- Millennium Development Goal (MDG) #1: Halve the proportion of people in poverty and hunger. More than a billion people still live on the local equivalent of less than US \$1 a day, but the number of undernourished people is declining.² <<http://hdr.undp.org>>
- There is enough food today to feed all people in the world with a minimally nutritious diet, and likely will continue to be enough until the year 2020. <www.bread.org>
- Undernourishment in developing countries has, overall, decreased almost 30 percent since 1980, but about 800 million people are still malnourished. <www.fao.org>
- Underweight (malnutrition) remains the leading cause of disease and death in the world. At the same time, there are more than 1 billion adults in the world who are overweight, about half a million of whom die from obesity-related diseases every year. <www.who.org/int/en>
- More than 33 million people, including 13 million children, live in households in the United States that experience hunger or are at risk of hunger. <www.fao.org>
- The effects of undernutrition are:
 - Impaired physical development – low weight and/or height for age
 - Increased susceptibility to illness
 - Impaired mental development, leading to such things as slow learning, short attention span
 - Lethargy; low work productivity
 - An underdeveloped human potential for self and world
- Hunger could be cut in half in the United States and worldwide by 2015 for seven cents per American per day. <www.bread.org>



¹ Additional facts, updates, Web links, stories and educational materials at www.hungernomore.org.

² Millennium Development Goal targets for 2015, set by the world's leaders in September 2000.

Session 2

Defend the Cause of the Poor (Psalm 72)

Focus

To initiate a discussion about poverty and wealth, causes and solutions.

Preparation

- Send invitations and post announcements as needed.
- Refer to “For each session you will need” on page 4. Use the points as a checklist for this session. Arrive early at the meeting place and make sure everything is set up and laid out in the order you and the group will need the copies/books/materials/lists.
- If you held a previous session, make any needed adjustments and review the notes from that session. Are there any tasks outstanding? Any changes to the timelines or sequences? Some groups will want to spend more time discussing the Bible, the personal stories, facts or programs, so use the material selectively as it fits the interests of your group.
- Remember to invite the timekeeper and recorder(s) to do their tasks.
- If you select readers in advance, make sure that they have the opportunity to prepare the assigned selections.

Welcome

If this is a second session, when you welcome the group, briefly summarize, in two or three sentences, what happened at the previous session. Then invite the group to be seated and centered.

Opening Prayer

The leader (or a designated participant) begins:

(L) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **(All)** And also with you.

The leader invites people to greet one or two persons next to them, exchanging names and the peace.

(L) We have greeted each other with God’s name and God’s peace. Let us now pray in that same peace together:

Gracious God, your name is justice; your name is love. Continue to grace us and strengthen us to grow in your likeness. Make the cause of your poor people our cause, and draw us more closely to you and to all whom you love. Help us to act with courage, with faithfulness and with compassion this day and every day. We ask this in the name of your only begotten, who lives and reigns with you, united in the love of your Holy Spirit, now and always. **(All)** Amen.

God’s Story

Double check to make sure that there are enough Bibles.

Then, **share the following information** about Psalm 72 in these or your own words:

Psalm 72 is one of the hymns that was probably written for a royal coronation in the line of David, perhaps Solomon’s, and may have been used for a number of royal coronations in Jerusalem.



A central theme is that the ruler is responsible for justice for poor people and the ones who are otherwise without any help. In this, the ruler is acting on God's behalf, and on behalf of the whole people, to do the will and purpose of God in the world.

Other nations are called to honor the ruler, not only for his military prowess, but because of his works of justice.

Let's close our eyes and listen to each of the petitions as we pray this psalm-prayer for God's justice.



Read (or have a previously designated person read) the portions of the psalm in the “Defend the Cause of the Poor” handout (folder pocket) clearly and deliberately. Pause for a moment after the reading.

Then invite the entire group to turn to their handouts and pray the psalm out loud in unison. Keep your own voice strong and deliberate, but not overpowering, to help the group stay together (or ask the reader to do so).

After a brief pause for reflection, **ask the group** to try to recall (without looking) and say out loud in their own words what the petitions were in the psalm. Write (or ask the recorder to write) them on newsprint.

After you have done this, **ask them** to check their recollections against the psalm itself in the Bible. What differences did they note? What commonalities did they find among the recollections or the restatements? Try to group the petitions broadly as stated by the group.

Encourage discussion:

- Who is referred to in the petitions?
- What is asked for them?
- We have all heard of the “divine right of kings.” In this psalm, what is the real role and “right” of the ruler and where does it come from?
- What do you think the psalmist means when using the word “justice?”

Make sure that the **highlights are noted down**.

Then, invite the group to divide up into small sized units. Each unit should have paper and a pencil or marker to write down a short prayer to God for justice and righteousness. Tell the group that this can be very simple and unpolished.

Ask them to think about what content they want to put into the notion of justice (what are they *really* asking for) and who are they asking to be empowered? Just the ones in high offices? Others? Who? And how? Let them know how much time they have (it should be fairly brief or they will get caught up in a big discussion).

After time is called, ask the individual groups to **share their prayers** with the whole group, and post the prayers where they can later be seen and collected. Are there any commonalities? Major differences? Have these noted down.

Personal Stories

Ask four readers to read the first four personal stories from the handout previously distributed, with a pause between each one. Before they begin, ask the group to listen, rather than read along. Then ask each person to read one sentence of the “Ethiopian Voices.”

Ask the group to reflect together on the following questions:

- Why do they think that the tellers of these stories are in the situations they are?
- What would it take to change their conditions?
- What is the role of government/society/others to provide assistance and help people move to self-sufficiency?
- What business is it of *ours*? (Note that different members of the group may have different ideas as to just *who* the *we/us* is here.)

Make a written record jotting down the basic thoughts and phrases.



Stories of Poverty and Wealth

Ask members of the group to read out loud each of the statements in “Stories of Poverty and Wealth.”

Initiate a discussion:

- Which statements stir up thoughts or feelings in you? Which ones surprise you? Why?
- Psalm 72 keeps referring to poor people. The ruler is bound to respond to poor people when they call. This is a God-given responsibility. Who would you say are the “poor people” in today’s world? How would you describe these people? What are their needs? Are they different than your needs? How?
 - If we are true to the vision of the psalm, what would you say poor people’s claims are on government and society?
 - What special claim do hungry and poor people have on us, a faith community that generally is among the economic and political “haves?”
- Some people say that the golden rule is “The one who has the gold makes the rules” instead of “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” How are these two rules different? To what extent are they both true; guides for action?

Ask the recorder to note the answers.

Programs That Respond

The major domestic and international anti-hunger programs are briefly described at www.hungernomore.org. A list for poverty might additionally include housing, education, transportation and health care programs. Since emphases change over time as federal and state programs and funding change, consult www.bread.org for up-to-date policy information.

Copy the programs you would like the group to discuss and hand them out. Ask whether anyone has a personal experience or general knowledge about each program. How do these programs help prevent hunger and poverty or not? Why are they successful, or not?

Our Story

Refer the group to “Our Story” in the handout. This is a good time to remind the group of (and introduce newcomers to) the purpose of this study – hearing and sharing God’s call and responding. Refresh your memory by looking at both the introduction to this guide and the notes from the previous session.

As the group looks at the suggestions for action in the handout, read them out loud. Ask what other ideas the group might have for action.



Start with a “teaser” question. For example “what would happen if for every night for one week, our family....”

- Read and prayed about one news story
- Skipped meat in a meal and put the saved dollars aside
- Tried to imagine the poor at the top of the pyramid rather than the bottom
- Tried to influence one of our political leaders and talked about it as a grace before dinner.

See how many ideas the group can come up with in a few minutes and then see if any of them seem to “click,” and might lead to actual commitments by one or more participants. Write items people have committed to down on newsprint. Ask the group to support their efforts in prayer during the coming week.

Reflection and Closing Prayer

Invite the group to center themselves in God for the closing reflection and prayer. After the group is settled, have two designated readers read parts of the following adaptation of Psalm 72 in tandem with the “Ethiopian” story from “Personal Stories” in the handout, as follows:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| <i>Reader I</i> | We are left tied like straw.
What is life when there is no friend or food? |
| <i>Reader II</i> | May we defend the cause of the poor of the people,
Give deliverance to the needy and crush the oppressor. |
| <i>Reader I</i> | We are above the dead and below the living,
We simply watch those who eat. |
| <i>Reader II</i> | For we deliver the needy when they call,
The poor and those who have no helper. |
| <i>Reader I</i> | It is like sitting and dying alive,
We have become empty like a hive. |
| <i>Reader II</i> | Give to your people your justice, O God,
And to their children, your righteousness. |

After a moment of reflection, ask two participants at random to take the newsprint with the commitments on it to the center of the group and hold the sheet(s). Ask the participants to join in prayer:

(L) Let us pray. O God, you are our God. We are seeking to do your will. Help us to open our hearts, and to stand with and for those who are your special portion. Support us this week in our commitments, and in all we do or undertake in your name. Give to your people your justice, O God, and to their children your righteousness. **(All)** Amen.

Then, three times, with the whole group joining on the second and third repetition.

O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread. Amen.

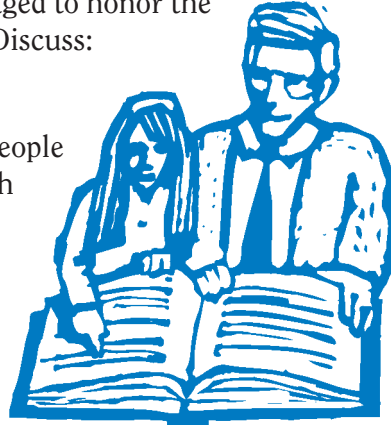
After the Session

Collect the notes. Jot down any unanswered questions, suggestions or requests made by the group. Note anything you would particularly like to remember for the next session. List for yourself anything that needs to be communicated to the larger parish or the parish staff, including a prayer request for the assembly asking God to support the efforts of the study group and anti-hunger programs. Do a quick note to remind yourself after a day or two to think carefully about the dynamics of the group and how they might be changed, improved or supported. Take a moment to pause and thank God for being with you in leading and serving this group, and giving you the gift of being, for these moments, attentive to poor people, who are children of God as are the members of the study group.



Our Story

- Read (as a family, as a community) Psalm 72 – a prayer on behalf of the king of the nation. The ruler was responsible to maintain God’s justice. The nations are encouraged to honor the king because he “rescues the needy.” Discuss:
 - The characteristics of God’s justice.
 - What poor people, higher income people and governments can do to establish justice today.
- Make an appointment and take your family or group to a local church-based charity, food bank or soup kitchen.
- Check out the Web site of your national church or www.hungernomore.org. Look up social statements on hunger, poverty, women and children to see where your church stands.
- Invite someone from a government agency, hunger or poverty group, especially church-related, to speak at your church.
- Pray as a family, as a community, together three times: “O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.”



Uniquely cooperative effort by African Methodist Episcopal Women’s Missionary Society, American Baptist Churches USA, America’s Second Harvest, Bread for the World Institute, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Reformed Church, Church World Service, Community of Christ, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Program, Franciscan Friars, Good Ground Press/Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Heifer International, Maryland Province of the Jesuits, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Presbyterian Hunger Program, Reformed Church in America, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Committee on Relief, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



Defend the Cause of the Poor

God’s Story

*Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king’s son.
May the ruler judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
May the ruler **defend the cause of the poor** of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor....
For the ruler delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
The ruler has compassion on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
From oppression and violence redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.*

- Psalm 72: 1-4, 12-14 NRSV adapted



Personal Stories

A Voice from Latvia

Poverty is humiliation, the sense of being dependent on them, and of being forced to accept rudeness, insults, and indifference when we seek help. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

A New York City Homeless Mother Speaks

It's not fair to make us wait so late to take us [into the shelter] and get us up so early. My kids don't want to get up after five or six hours of sleep. If they go to school, they'd be sleeping. My eight year-old asks me, "When are we going to go home Mommy?" <www.childrensdefense.org> citing the Association to Benefit Children

A Voice from Ghana

Take the death of this small boy this morning, for example. The boy died of measles. We all know he could have been cured at the hospital. But the parents had no money and so the boy died a slow and painful death, not of measles, but of poverty. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

A Young Man from Zambia speaks

When food was in abundance, relatives used to share it. These days of hunger, however, not even relatives would help you by giving you some food. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

Ethiopian Voices

We are left tied like straw.
Our life is empty; we are empty-handed.
What is life when there is no friend or food.
We are above the dead and below the living.
Hunger is a hyena.
The poor is falling, the rich is growing.
We simply watch those who eat.
It is [like] sitting and dying alive.
We have become empty, like a hive.

<www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>



Stories of Poverty and Wealth¹

each number is a human story

- In 2001, nearly 33 million (12 percent) of the 277 million people in the United States lived in poverty (\$14,269 a year for an adult and two children). <www.census.gov>
- The majority of people in the United States who live in poverty are White, but the poverty rates of African-Americans (23 percent) and Hispanics (21 percent) are twice as high as the poverty rate for Whites (10 percent) or Asians and Pacific Islanders (10 percent). <www.census.gov>
- The share of U.S. national household income going to the top 5 percent of the population reached its highest level on record in 2001, while the shares going to the bottom, the next-to-bottom and the middle fifths of the population fell to all-time lows. <www.census.gov>
- Almost 43 million people in the United States lack health coverage. Ten million are children. <www.census.gov>
- World poverty fell from 44 percent of the global population in 1980 to 13 percent in 2000, the fastest decline in history. <www.iie.com>
- The cost to the public sector of enabling a poor small farmer's family in Africa to make the investments required to attain an adequate level of food security is about \$500. — New Partnership for Africa's Development with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, "Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, May, 2002, p. 61
- Millennium Development Goal #5: Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters. In the developing world, the risk of dying in childbirth is one in 48, but virtually all countries now have begun to develop safe motherhood programs.²



¹ Additional facts, updates, web links, stories and educational materials can be found at www.hungermomore.org.

² Millennium Development Goal targets for 2015, set by the world's leaders in September 2000.

Session 3

And God Saw That It Was Good (Genesis 1)

Focus

To see issues of hunger and scarcity, health and illness, in the context of God's intended abundance and well-being.



Preparation

- Issue invitations and announcements as needed. Is there anyone whose presence could make a substantial difference within the group or parish who should be encouraged to come?
- Refer to “For each session you will need” on page 4. Refer back to the “Preparation” in Sessions 1 and 2.
- Review the notes you made after the last session about the group dynamics. How might a different room arrangement encourage conversation among the participants? What additions to the space would make it more inviting?
- Bring seven (7) candles to light during the reading of “God’s Story” below.
- When preparing to lead this session, notice that the opening parts have a little different “tone” – emphasis on “and it was good” – than the previous two sessions. What change might you make in the space to invoke this positive tone?
- Read the definition of globalization on “Our Story” of the handout “And God Saw...” and check some of the links for further information.

Welcome

As you welcome the participants, provide a quick recap of what has happened so far. Then, remind the group of the prayerful context of this work, and invite them to be seated and center themselves in God.

Opening Prayer

The leader (or a previously designated participant) begins:

(L) Blessed be the reign of the one, holy and living God, now and always. **(All)** Amen.

Ask the participants to greet one other person by name and name one gift from God's goodness and blessings that you wish for that person.

(L) We have greeted each other and shared from the richness of God's goodness and blessings. Now, together, let us pray:

O God, your name is providence. O God, your name is love. You have spoken us into life, formed us in goodness and summon us to fullness. Continue to shape us in the knowledge that your gifts are abundant, your desire for us is infinite, and your spirit within us can do all that we are called to do and become for the people and creation you cherish as your own. We ask this in the name of your own Christ, who lives and reigns united with you in the love of your Holy Spirit, now and always. **(All)** Amen.



God's Story

Make sure that everyone has access to a Bible, and distribute the handout, “And God Saw That It Was Good.”

Then, **comment on** Genesis 1:1-31 (as adapted):

When we open the Scriptures, what we learn first is that in the beginning was God. This is our beginning, and creation's. Walter Brueggemann, a well-known scholar of the Old (First) Testament has said that the “beginning point for God...is the wonder and goodness of creation,” and that creation itself is an “exuberant, lyrical, doxological expression of gratitude and amazement for the goodness and generosity of God. The theme that recurs is generosity and abundance. There is enough! There is more than enough!”¹

Everything is given. Everything is ordered. Everything is delight. There are no strong and weak, rich or poor, no struggle, no competition for life and its fullness. This is the way it was in the beginning, for a God who created us in the divine image. Let us listen now to what the Spirit is saying to a people who are blessed from the beginning.

Read (or have a previously designated person read) the abridged version of Genesis 1 in the handout, remembering that it is intended to be poetry. If you are using candles, have someone light one each time the reader says “it was good.”

Ask the group to reflect silently for a few moments. **Gently guide** the silent reflection with questions like these, leaving some “breathing space” in between each of them:

- What must it have been like to be God as creation unfolded?
- When in your own life did you recognize something as “very good” in a deep sense? What did that feel like?
- What does it feel like to be wanting; to be lacking; to feel insecure; to have a child, or parent or spouse in trouble and be unable to do anything about it?
- What must it feel like when God looks at a good creation, where there is “more than enough,” and sees powerlessness, want, hunger, scarcity?

After time to reflect, invite anyone who would like to share a thought to do so. Note the feelings and reactions. Move quietly into the next portion of the session.

Personal Stories

Have different readers prepared to read the stories of “Baby Antonio and Maria” and “Ibu Sahnun” from the handout.

Divide the group, if large, into several smaller groups, or work as a whole if the size is manageable. Discuss the stories with the following questions:

- What do these two stories have to do with the Scripture we just heard?
- How are the experiences of Baby Antonio and Maria, and Ibu Sahnun similar? Different? Separated by oceans and continents, what connects them, if anything?



¹ Walter Brueggemann, “The Truth of Abundance: Relearning Dayenu,” in Brueggemann, *The Covenanted Self*, Patrick Miller, ed., Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1999, p. 108.



- If you were one of the people telling their stories in these excerpts, how would you understand the Genesis text?
- If there really is “more than enough for all” (and scientists, social scientists, economists and theologians all seem to agree on this), why are the people in these stories lacking? What is the cause? And what do you think we can do about it?

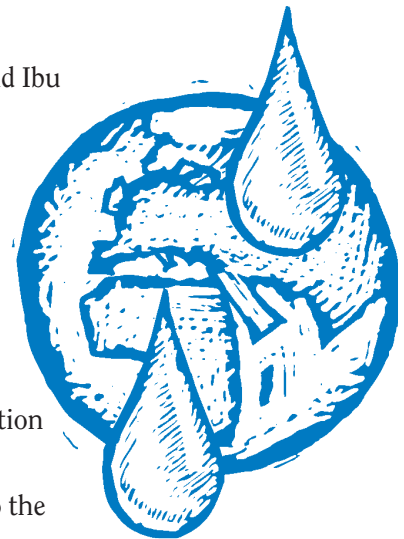
Make sure that there is a **recorder** in each group and bring them back together to share as a whole.

The Globalization Story

Before turning to the “Globalization Story” in the handout, **ask the group** to define “globalization.” Ask if anyone has a direct, personal experience of “globalization.”

Then **turn to the handout**. Ask participants to read the globalization facts out loud, with a different volunteer reading each point. On newsprint, write down one word that summarizes each point. Then ask the group to discuss the following questions (Remember, there are no wrong answers.):

- What connects these facts?
- What do they have to do with the stories of Baby Antonio, Maria and Ibu Sahnun?
- What do these stories have to do with globalization?
- How are these stories related to the truth of abundance disclosed in the Genesis story and in today’s world?
- Why does it seem as though, generally, women and children are the ones most often affected by poverty? Why do population rates decline when poverty is reduced among women?
- How do the Millennium Development Goals suggest that globalization may provide some solutions to the world’s problems?
- In what ways do corporations contribute positively or negatively to the process of globalization?



Now, **summarize and record** the insights of the group. **Read** the definition of globalization found in “Our Story.” **Ask** the group to discuss it, in the light of the stories, previous discussion and the Scripture.

Our Story

Remind the group about the need for changed hearts that lead to changed responses. Remember that when God spoke words, they became light, water, living things, and even flesh! Go over the suggested actions from “Our Story” in the handout. Does the group feel that these are an adequate response from them at this time? Are there other suggestions for activities?

Ask whether, in addition to things that might be done individually, the group is ready to **undertake one activity** for one week together? The activity itself can be done separately, but will be the same activity that others are doing. What will it be?

Tell the group that you will ask that their action and faithfulness be included in the intercessory prayers at Sunday worship. Ask if there is anything that the group wants to ask the congregation as a whole to think and pray about.

Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to be seated, quiet and centered in God for the closing reflection and prayer.

(L) Remember our beginning and our end is in the abundance of God's love. Be still, now. Our life together, and this moment together in God is a taste of that abundance. (Pause for a moment). Let us pray:

O God, lover of all you have made, walk with us this week and lead us more deeply into your mystery. Let us touch others and make tangible in their life in some small way, the gift of knowing that there is enough, more than enough, because all that is, is from you and in you.

Then, three times, with the whole group joining on the second and third repetition.

And give us – all of us – this day our daily bread. Amen.



After the Session

Before everyone leaves, invite anyone who would like to share suggestions or ideas that they have thought of in response to your suggestion at the beginning of the session. Let them know “I will be here for the next 10 minutes to hear any ideas or suggestions, or to collect any notes you might want to quickly jot down!”

Remember to list anything that needs to be communicated to the larger parish or staff, including the intercessory prayer. Review the suggestions under prior “after the session” headings. And remember to take a moment to pause, and thank God for being with you in leading and serving this group, and for being “enough.”



Our Story

- Read, as a family or group, the first and second chapters of Genesis. Discuss the differences between the two. What are the major themes of each chapter? What are the implications for us that God created the world? That God “saw that it was good?”
- Discuss Baby Antonio, Maria, and Ibu Sahun’s stories. What lessons can we learn from their experiences?
- Choose several of the facts on the inside page and try to define globalization. Discuss:
 - Ways in which globalization is helpful or harmful to us and to others.
 - Concerns about the long-term future – population, consumption, availability of food, clean water, health care – at home and abroad.
 - The implications of, and solutions to, the growing income gap, both within countries and between them.
- Globalization – The expansion of global linkages. In economic terms, the process of increasing integration of national economies at the global level. In social terms, the increasing interconnectedness of peoples and cultures and the increasing exchange of ideas. Look up www.emory.edu/SOC/globalization for various views and many links.
- Invite someone who has recently moved to the United States from a developing country to speak at your church about the situation in their home country and their views on globalization.
- Pray, as a family, as a community, together three times:
“O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.”



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And God Saw That It Was Good

God’s Story

*In the beginning.... God said, “Let there be light.”
And God saw that the light was good.
God said, “Let the dry land appear.”
And God saw that it was good.
Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation.”
And God saw that it was good.
And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky.”
And God saw that it was good.
And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures.”
And God saw that it was good.
And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind.”
And God saw that it was good.
Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness.”
God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.*

- Genesis 1 NRSV abridged



Personal Stories

A Story About Baby Antonio and Maria in the United States

Antonio was born to Maria, a young mother who was sent home with him the day he was born. Only she didn't have a home. She was a single parent with no extended family support. She loved her baby and within the limits of public assistance was able to find a small room to rent. When Antonio was about three months old, Maria

called a health clinic to report that her baby was sick. The nurse told Maria to bring him in. Maria said she didn't have transportation. The nurse asked for the baby's symptoms and, after hearing Antonio had suffered diarrhea for two days, concluded he had a flu virus and advised Maria to keep the baby hydrated. "Feed the baby liquids every hour. Pedialyte or apple juice is good."



Maria went to her refrigerator. She didn't have any Pedialyte or apple juice or even ice. But in her cupboard she did have tomato sauce, so she filled the baby's bottle with it and stayed up all night feeding him every hour on the hour. The sodium content of the tomato sauce accelerated the baby's dehydration, and by morning his tiny body was lifeless. <www.childrensdefense.org>

Ibu Sahnun Speaks from Indonesia

Ibu belongs to the "Tiga Senangkai" Association in the village of Montong Ara.

When I received a loan of 50,000 rupiahs [less than \$6] from the [International Fund for Agricultural Development, a United Nations agency] project, my life changed as I could afford to buy more goods and then I could sell them in the village. Moreover, I could take part in activities organized by the association and I had the opportunity to learn how to read and to write. Now the situation has changed once again because the prices of rice and oil have gone up, so it has become difficult to buy enough things for my activity. <www.ifad.org/media/success/indonesia.htm>

Globalization Stories¹

each number is a human story

- Millennium Development Goal (MDG) #6: Halt the spread and begin to reverse HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases. Seven million agricultural workers in Africa have died of HIV/AIDS since 1985. Sixteen million more deaths are likely in the next two decades, seriously affecting agriculture and education. <www.fao.org> Countries such as Brazil, Senegal, Thailand and Uganda have shown that the spread of HIV can be stemmed.²
- MDG #7: Ensure environmental sustainability. More than 1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water and more than 2 billion lack sanitation. During the 1990s, however, nearly 1 billion people gained access to safe water and the same number to sanitation.
- MDG #8: Create a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief. Make the global systems more friendly to people who are poor.
- When poverty and hunger are reduced among women, population rates usually decline. <www.bread.org>
- One-third of the world's food is harvested from irrigated land, and 70 percent of the water drawn from rivers or underground sources is used for irrigation. <www.bread.org> In some developing countries, the figure is as high as 85-95 percent. <www.fao.org> Some experts say that 21st century wars are likely to be fought around water rights.
- The wealthiest fifth of the world's people consume 86 percent of all goods and services, while the poorest fifth consumes 1 percent. <www.undp.org>



¹ Additional facts, updates, Web links, stories and educational materials at www.hungermore.org.

² Millennium Development Goal targets for 2015, set by the world's leaders in September 2000.

Session 4

The Children Beg for Food (Lamentations 4:4)

Focus

To confront the impact of hunger on the children of the world, that is, on our own children.

Preparation

Go over the list of suggestions and reminders under this heading in the previous session.

Consider how you might enhance the atmosphere of the room for this session. You might ask people to bring a picture of a child or grandchild to post on the wall, and take home at the end of the session. You could obtain a variety of pictures of children from around the world. A majority of the pictures should be of healthy and happy children. We're not trying to create pity but hope, and all children are a gift of God, including those who are suffering. You will need pins, tape, "sticky stuff" or other means of fastening the photos to the wall, or to newsprint, without damaging either the wall or the photos. Put up the photos or pictures you brought before the session begins.

For an alternative activity with children's pictures, see "Connecting Statistics with the Lives of Real Children" at www.hungernomore.org.

Bring paper and pencils.

Gather information on your denomination's advocacy and other efforts on behalf of children.

Do some **web research** on the effects of armed conflict on children. Start with the links listed in the handout for this session.

Review the "Hunger Basics" section, as well as the "how to get involved" section of the Bread website at www.bread.org.

Prepare a brief summary of the group's past experiences and the topics for future sessions.

Welcome

As you welcome participants, bring them up to speed on where the group has been. Ask if anyone has pictures of children to put up. If so, have them do it quickly and then invite them to be seated and to center in God.



Opening Prayer

The leader (or a previously designated participant) begins the prayer:

(L) Let us place ourselves in the presence of God who is the author of all, the Word become flesh in Jesus Christ and the Spirit sustaining all life. **(All)** Amen.

Then, ask the participants to **turn to each other**, introduce themselves with just their name, and wish each other grace and peace.

(L) We are graced by the presence of God and each other. In that grace and the peace it brings, let us now pray together:

Loving God, you came to us as a vulnerable child, entrusted to a mother denied shelter and rest. Although you are the sovereign of the world, you come again and again to us in the children of this world, and because they are your own, you make them our own. Attune our hearts to know the depth of this mystery and this gift, and make us one with them and with you. We ask this in the name of the One who became our flesh and dwelt among us, and now dwells and reigns again united with you in the love of your Holy Spirit, always and forever. **(All)** Amen.



God's Story

Begin by sharing the following brief introduction to the scripture, in these or similar words:

The Book of Lamentations was written in the aftermath of a devastating war that crushed the City of Jerusalem, left destruction and famine in its wake and saw the leadership of the nation largely sent into exile. Given what we know of the effects of war and conflict on the most vulnerable in society, we shouldn't be surprised to find that the prophet uses the images of women and children to bring home the plight of the whole people.

The destruction makes the people desperate. This desperation is physical – death in battle had been the fate of many of the men, and slow death by hunger and malnutrition was the worse fate of the children. The mothers who saw them starving could do nothing but die with them. Their desperation was also spiritual. Had God abandoned the people, forsaken the covenant? Were the fathers, mothers and children of so little value that not even God cared anymore? The prophet shares their story with us. As we listen, let us join our hands and hearts with the mothers of the fallen city, Jerusalem.

Then read (or have a designated person read) the passage from Lamentations in the handout.

After a short **time of silence** to let the words sink in, ask the participants to name a **word, phrase or image** that stood out in their mind during the reading, and why it stood out. **List** the images on newsprint.

- What contemporary examples of such devastation come to mind?
- What spiritual dimensions, similar to those in the biblical account, are present in contemporary situations?
- Why are children, and the women, the greatest losers in any armed conflict?
- This Scripture selection is a very personal account told by the prophet, but the section title is not “the prophet’s story” but “God’s story.” Why do you think that was done?



Personal Stories

Ask **three persons** to read the personal stories in the handout and instruct them to wait for you or someone else to read “facts” in “The Children’s Story” before the next reader begins. Use the same reader for each of the facts. Begin a **discussion** with questions like these:

- The Lamentations story was written sometime after the sixth century B.C.E. How is it reflected in any of the stories we just heard?
- What do you think the causes of the stories we heard are? Why are the facts we listened to so bleak, despite the tremendous wealth and resources that we know exist? (In leading this portion of the discussion you can make reference to, or distribute relevant portions of material from “Hunger Basics” which you reviewed in preparation for the session.)
- What systemic issues cause these situations? We can probably see how individuals and governments should get involved in resolving these issues, but why and how should the church get involved?



Our Story

Distribute pencils and small pieces of paper.

Refer the group to “**The Children’s Story**” in the handout. Just as the prophet’s story was God’s story, we can say that “The Children’s Story” is also our story. Ask the group “how” and “why” this is so. Then ask each participant to take a moment to think prayerfully about how “The Children’s Story” might become part of their life stories. Ask them to write down one way in which they can concretely make this joining of stories begin to happen before the next session.

Check www.hungernomore.org or with your church office to get a summary of, or a web link to, your denomination’s hunger resources. Suggest that each family share a simple meal of soup and bread (not too fancy) in the next week and discuss the ways in which their family can respond to those denominational commitments.



Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to be **quiet and centered** in God for the closing reflection and prayer. Pass out pieces of paper each of which has one of the facts in “The Children’s Story.” After a moment begin,

(L) The Lord be with you.

(All) And also with you.

(L) Our help is in the name of the Lord.

(All) Who is making the heavens and the earth.

(L) God is one: Loving, Bearing, Upholding.

(All) In God, we become as one, to love, to bear with and to uphold each other.

(L) (in these or similar words)

I invite each of you who has received a “fact,” a piece of the story of the children of the world, to come forward, read it out loud, and then take down one of the pictures of the children we brought here tonight, and place both the picture and fact here on the table before us. After each fact is read, we will all respond by saying together: “in God, we become as one, to love, to bear with and to uphold each other.”

After the facts are read and the pictures gathered, the leader **prays** and all may join hands or stretch out their hands toward the table:

(L) Gracious God, lover of all whom you have made, we place before you this night the hopes and dreams of each of these children we love and cherish – those we know and those we do not. Those we can name, and those whose names are unknown to us. We promise you this night, that in the grace of your own child, who lived and died for us, to keep each and all of them in our hearts, prayers and actions until the day that no child again shall beg for food, weep for water or cry out for a loving touch. We ask the grace we know you freely offer to empower this promise until you come again in glory and in everlasting peace.

(All) Amen.



Our Story

- Read the passage from Lamentations. Discuss, as a family, as a group what happens to children in war zones, as refugees, as displaced persons. List the steps that might be taken to prevent national and international violence. Choose one or two where you can make a contribution toward peace.
- Discuss the personal stories. What would you have done if the army had taken your school children?
- List the things that can be done to protect children and nurture their growth. Choose one or two ways you can help.
- Invite someone from a child welfare agency to speak to your church.
- Get your family involved in National Hunger Awareness Day (NHAD), June 5. This initiative is led by food banks, food rescue programs and their agencies to inform the general public, food manufacturers and policy makers that hunger is a severe domestic issue, but that it can be ended. The majority of America's Second Harvest partner agencies are faith-based representing every faith tradition and denomination, from large urban multi-service organizations to small rural programs. For information and resource materials, see www.hungerday.org.
- Pray, as a family, as a community, together three times: "O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread."



Uniquely cooperative effort by African Methodist Episcopal Women's Missionary Society, American Baptist Churches USA, America's Second Harvest, Bread for the World Institute, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Reformed Church, Church World Service, Community of Christ, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Program, Franciscan Friars, Good Ground Press/Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Heifer International, Maryland Province of the Jesuits, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Presbyterian Hunger Program, Reformed Church in America, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Committee on Relief, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



The Children Beg for Food

The Prophet's Story

of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE

*The precious children of Zion,
worth their weight in fine gold –
how they are reckoned as earthen pots,
the work of a potter's hands.
The tongue of the infant sticks
to the roof of its mouth for thirst;
the children beg for food,
but no one gives them anything.
Those who feasted on delicacies
perish in the streets;
those who were brought up in purple
cling to ash heaps....
Happier were those pierced by the sword
than those pierced by hunger,
whose life drains away,
deprived of the produce of the field.*

- Lamentations 4:1-2, 4-5, 9 NRSV



Personal Stories

Rani's Story from Bangladesh

In part of Battala slum, Dhaka City, Bangladesh, shanties of bamboo have been constructed on raised platforms over a big ditch, which is used for all sorts of waste. Below the shanties is thick and greasy mud or water covered in water hyacinth. Rani worked as a maidservant in two houses. Her husband left her and married again. She lives in a bamboo shanty with her two children, since she earns very little. She has no alternative but to leave her children in that house. One day when she went to work, her two-year-old daughter dropped into the ditch and could not get out.

In the last two years, five children have been lost in Battala this way. If a baby drops in, he or she drops with force and sinks deep into the greasy mud or goes into water under water hyacinths. Any rescue operation under the raised platforms is difficult. So there is no hope of getting back alive the babies that fall in. <www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>

A Homeless Mother from New York City Speaks

I'm totally confused. They tell you something different every time. I cry all the time. My seven-year old son cries all the time. He tells me, "Mom, we don't have a home anymore."

<www.childrensdefense.org>



Bishop Paride Taban tells a Sudan Story

The soldiers came to the school and took away children for the army. The women in the village were angry and discussed what to do. They decided to take their babies to the barracks. "If you want to take our children, take them from the beginning, not after we have already raised them," they said as they put the babies down. The commander of the troops looked at the crying babies and decided to release the school children. - as told to Bread for the World staff

Children's Stories¹

each number is a child's story

- One in every five children in the United States is poor during the first three years of life – the time of greatest brain development. Almost 80 percent of poor children in the United States live in working households. <www.census.gov>
- Every dollar invested in the U.S. Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) saves \$3 in future costs. <www.bread.org>
- In 2000, there were more than 1.2 million volunteers in the Head Start program helping 858,000 children. <www.census.gov/statab/www>
- Millennium Development Goal (MDG) #2: Achieve universal primary education. As many as 113 million children do not attend school, but the target is within reach. India, for example, is expected to have 95 percent of its children in school by 2005.²
- MDG #4: Reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds. Every year nearly 11 million young children die before their fifth birthday, mainly from preventable illnesses. That number is down, however, from 15 million in 1980. Each day in the developing world, 30,100 children die from mostly preventable and treatable causes such as diarrhea, acute respiratory infections or malaria. Malnutrition is associated with more than half of these deaths. <www.unicef.org>
- There are more than 13 million AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa.
- As many as 300,000 children under the age of 18 serve in government forces or armed rebel groups, some as young as eight years old. <www.hrw.org>



¹ Additional facts, updates, Web links, stories and educational materials at www.hungernomore.org.

² Millennium Development Goal targets for 2015, set by the world's leaders in September 2000.

Session 5

Hunger No More (Isaiah 49:10, Revelation 7:16)

Focus

To begin to shape our vision of how the world can be, by contrasting how it is now with God's vision for the world.



Preparation

Review the suggestions, learnings and assignments in previous sessions.

Think about creative ways of setting this session up. Read the scripture passage and the stories. Can your physical environment for the session model the vision in some way? Can the session take place around the altar or table in your worship space?

Change the table setting (without too much interruption) as you move through the session. Begin with a bare table for the opening prayer, then set it with just a cross or crucifix for the stories and ending with bread and wine and non-alcoholic wine or juice enough for all (including perhaps enough for “unseen guests” for which chairs and places have been set throughout the session). If you do this you will need to have people bring the provisions and also discreetly and quietly help place them as you move along.

You will also need to decide on the best way to **record comments** and thoughts without intruding on the environment you are setting up. If the group is large, you can form concentric circles around the table.

You might use the invitatory vision of the Revelation text to invite newcomers to join the group.

Purchase the bread, wine and other juice. Also provide a variety of colors of construction paper and cut them into many different shapes as there will be people in the group, so that each person will, by the end of the session, have received a different shape.

Prepare your summary of where the group has been and where you are now going.

Welcome

Welcome the participants and briefly remind them of what has been done so far. Welcome newcomers and invite them to enter the discussion without worrying about what has gone before.

Opening Prayer

The leader (or a previously designated participant) begins the prayer, if appropriate, with the sign of the presence of the Holy Trinity.

(L) In this place, God – one and holy – is with us in power, in love and in grace.

(All) Amen.

Ask participants to turn to each other, introduce themselves with just their name, and wish each other grace and peace. Then,

(L) Let us pray together to the God of promises, who even this moment is seeking us, calling us and touching us:



(One side of the table prays) O God, you have given us your promise, a word and a covenant that brings us the touch of your favor and grace, and allows us to sip from the springs of living water and taste the bread of your salvation.

(The other side of the table prays) O God, you have made us into your promise, a covenant to all you have created, a word that drives us like a dream which gives no rest until it is pursued.

(Then all join in) As we gather we ask you to empower us with your continuing presence until we are so transformed that we have indeed become part of the level road on which all can walk with ease, to eat and drink to fullness in your reign. Amen.

God's Story

Make sure that everyone has a Bible, or can share one, and distribute the handouts titled "Hunger No More."

Read the following information about Revelation 7:15-17 aloud or present it in your own words:

When the book of Revelation was written, it addressed Christians who were trying to be faithful to the vision of Jesus in a very difficult and hostile world. In some ways then, the book is addressed to people who are like ourselves. Some people have tried to make the book of Revelation seem hard to understand, or directed to just a very few people. The passage we are reading today, which is based in part on an earlier passage in the book of Isaiah and adapted in our opening prayer, is actually very simple. It does not describe salvation for a few people but for a vast throng beyond imagination. That is what the number 144,000 would have meant to the people John was addressing. This passage is part of what is known as the "song of victory." The victory is God's vision for creation – the vision that God began with in creating a world marked by peace and abundance; the vision which God has maintained and for which God gave the only Son, the lamb; and which God will see come to pass. Can we understand this as our vision as well? Let's listen to what the Spirit is saying to us, the church.



Then read (or have a previously designated person read) the passage from Revelation 7:15-17 found in the handout.

Ask the group to reflect on the passage for a few moments. Since the passage is short ask someone else to read it again. After the passage is read the second time, **ask gently**: "Can these words live now?"

After a moment, ask the participants to say aloud a word or phrase that struck them in particular. On the newsprint record their words and phrases, and after each one, have the group repeat the question, "Can these words (or this word) live now?"

Personal Stories

Ask two persons to prepare to read the stories of Theogene and the Elderly Woman. If you are gathered at the table, remember to place the cross on it before the stories are read. Use these questions as a basis for discussion:

- Sometimes we think about salvation in very abstract ways. When you were a child how did you imagine salvation (if you did)?
- If you imagined it as "being in heaven," what did that look like?



- How do you think Theogene Rudasingwa imagined salvation at different stages along his way? How do you think the Elderly Woman imagines salvation? Is it abstract, or can we sometimes touch it?
- What parts of the Revelation passage relate to your situation today?

Empowerment and Disempowerment Stories

Ask members of the group to read out loud the facts in the handout. Discuss the following questions:

- What factors empower or disempower people?
 - A strong spiritual life
 - Physical or mental conditions
 - Socialization
 - Money and other resources, e.g. land
 - Education
 - Participation in public life, e.g. voting, civil rights
 - Wars, civil conflict
 - Discrimination – race/ethnicity, gender, age, religion, nationality
- The Revelation passage talks about satisfying what seem to be basic needs, and the stories we have heard seem to relate to people who are in need. What does all of this have to do with empowerment and disempowerment?
- How is or might the church be a part of the empowerment process?
- In the context of these stories of empowerment and disempowerment, can the words of the Revelation passage really live? How?



Ask someone to make three columns on the board – reasons why the *church should, should not, is inevitably* involved in politics. Since this is a controversial question, caution the whole group not to comment on other peoples' views, but just briefly to state their own. If you feel that the discussion would not be too heated, ask the group to discuss the three columns.

Then ask someone to make a list on the board or on newsprint. Ask people to give short answers to the ways in which wars contribute to hunger and poverty.

Our Story

Distribute small pieces of paper (each in a different color or shape) to each participant. Read Revelation 7:15-17 aloud.

Then **go over the questions and actions** on the handout that the group will be asked to reflect on between this session and the next. Get commitments for each of these in as specific terms as possible, jotting them down on pieces of paper.

Gather them in the center of the table. Set the vessels of food and drink on the pile of paper. Invite the participants to share the food and drink which is now brought out to the table. After they partake, place the commitments on the tray where the bread had previously been set.

Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to be quiet and centered in God for the closing reflection and prayer.

(L) We believe that God is in our midst.

(All) We do believe it.

(L) We believe that God's words live.

(All) We do believe it.

(L) We believe that those who are hungry will hunger no more.

(All) We do believe it.

(L) We believe that those who thirst will be satisfied.

(All) We do believe it.

(L) We believe in the feast that is the reign of God.

(All) We do believe it.

(L) We believe that God is empowering us to help make straight the way to the feast.

(All) We do believe and we beg together for the eyes to see, the ears to hear, the hands to work and the hearts to hold us together in love until we and all creation know the fullness of the supper of the Lamb.

Then three times, with the whole group joining on the second and third repetition:

And give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.

(L) I invite you as you leave to take your commitment from this tray, and as the bread-and-drink prayers you have shared, make it part of your life until we meet again.



After the Session

Review the “after the session” suggestions in the prior sections and adapt as appropriate.



Our Story

- Discuss Theogene Rudasingwa's story. List the things that enabled him to move from refugee to high government official.
- Discuss the U.S. Catholic Bishops' "A Place at the Table" which says that to "serve and stand with the poor...rests on these four legs:"
 - What families are called to do.
 - The role and responsibility of community organizations and faith-based institutions.
 - The marketplace and institutions of business, commerce, and labor.
 - The role and responsibilities of governments, doing "together what we cannot accomplish on our own." – "A Pastoral Reflection of the Catholic Bishops of the United States" <www.usccb.org/bishops/table.htm>
- Invite a former refugee or displaced person to speak to your church.
- For information on HIV/AIDS worldwide, look up www.unaids.org.
- Pray, as a family, as a community, together three times: "O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread."



Hunger No More

God's Story

*For this reason they are before the throne of God,
and worship God day and night within the temple;
and the one who is seated upon the throne
will shelter them.*

***They will hunger no more,
and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.
For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd,
and will guide them to springs of the water of life;
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.***

– Revelation 7:15-17 NRSV adapted



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Personal Stories

Theogene Rudasingwa's Story

Former ambassador to the United States from Rwanda, Theogene is Director of Cabinet in the Rwandan president's office. The first 30 years of his life were spent in refugee camps.

I am told that my father was crucified. The four of us, together with our mother, first went to Burundi, and then left Burundi through Tanzania and finally settled in southwest Uganda, where we lived in a refugee camp for most of my life.

We moved on foot through the thick jungles of East and Central Africa. Many people perished in the course of this movement and during the very harsh conditions that existed in refugee camps.

Life in the refugee camp is something that you can only really experience in order to adequately describe it. The refugees are ultimately the most impoverished. My mother, brother and sister had to work long hours in order to get food for the day. After working 12 hours, they gave you a bunch of bananas.

When I actually began going to school, it was not in a formal classroom, but under a tree. When I began learning how to write, it was not in an exercise book with a pen, but rather on our thighs using sharp pieces of wood or grass in order to leave some kind of imprints on our thighs. But as time went by, with the help of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations, schools were established in the refugee camps. <www.refugees.org>

An Elderly Woman Speaks from the Ukraine

If I lay down and died, it wouldn't matter, because nobody needs me. This feeling of my own powerlessness, of being unnecessary, of being unprotected is for me the worst of all.

<www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>



Empowerment and Disempowerment Stories

each fact is a human story

- Eighty percent of refugees are women and children. Women are especially vulnerable to sexual harassment, abuse and violence. Children are targets of abuse, prey to military abduction and typically miss years of education. <www.womenscommission.org>
- Millennium Development Goal #3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Two-thirds of illiterate people are women, and the rate of employment among women is two-thirds that of men.
- Nearly 4 million youth in the United States between the ages of 14 and 24 are high school dropouts. <www.census.gov/statab/www/>



- Nearly 2.5 billion of the world's 6.3 billion people lack access to basic sanitation. One billion people lack access to safe drinking water. Contaminated water kills 2.2 million people per year. <<http://hdr.undp.org>>
- At least 300 million people have acute cases of malaria, 90 percent of them in developing countries, 75 percent in sub-Saharan Africa. <<http://hdr.undp.org>>

* Additional facts, updates, Web links, stories and educational materials can be found at www.hungernomore.org.

Session 6

Go and Do Likewise (Luke 10)

Focus

To learn to become “neighbor” in a deeper sense, and to imagine and act on ways that we and our congregations can follow Jesus’ teaching to “go and do likewise” together with hungry and poor people.



Preparation

Review the suggestions and reminders for invitations, announcements and preparations given in previous sessions.

Consider inviting several participants from prior sessions who have been touched by the work done in the sessions thus far, and prepare for this final session with prayer and reflection together. Give thanks for what has happened in the hearts of participants and lift up both the issues that have been studied and the future possibilities that have been opened up for your local congregation.

Print copies of “Now What?” at www.hungernomore.org for participants.

Gather or make copies of denominational and ecumenical approaches materials that support systemic change and ways that congregation members can participate. Include materials about advocacy and community empowerment. A selection of appropriate materials from Bread for the World can be downloaded at www.bread.org or requested by calling 1-800-82-BREAD.

Watch for stories in the **national and local press** (or on news Web sites) in the days preceding the session. Make copies of some headlines and paste them on a poster board. Hang it over the table on which the materials are placed.

Welcome

Welcome the participants and briefly remind them of what has been done so far. Invite newcomers to feel welcome. There are still lots of places at the table. Set the stage for the session by suggesting that this meeting is really the first session of what can happen in the future, rather than the last session of the group’s study.

Opening Prayer

The leader (or a previously designated participant) begins the prayer:

(L) The grace of the God who is beckoning us into creation, into redemption and into transformation be with you all.

(All) And also with you.

Ask participants to turn to each other and wish each other grace, peace and courage.

(L) Let us pray together for the grace to hear the word of the God who is still speaking, still acting, still calling in the lives of those who are poor, oppressed and burdened:

(Reader 1): O God of the poor, you challenge us with the vision of a world of shared abundance and graced possibilities.

(All) Lord, have mercy.



(Reader 2): O God of the prisoner, you invite us to risk living in the glorious freedom as the children of God.

(All) Christ, have mercy.

(Reader 3) O God of the brokenhearted, you empower us to heal and be healed by walking with those whom you love and for whom you gave your only begotten.

(All) Lord, have mercy.

(L) Lead us, now, O God of hopefulness, to see your people who suffer, to hear your word, that summons us to love your world. We ask this in the name of your beloved, Jesus Christ, now and always with you and your Holy Spirit. **(All)** Amen.

God's Story

After making sure that all have or can share a Bible, distribute the handout titled “Go and Do Likewise.”

Next, give the following information about the scripture reading (Luke 10:25-30, 36 and 37) in these words or your own:

Jesus often taught in parables. This form of story is designed to challenge the assumptions of the listener and to explode the ways in which the listener has become accustomed to thinking about the world, both the way things are and the way things ought to be. The parable of the “Good Samaritan” mixes experiences and characters which would have been familiar to those who first heard it with some radical possibilities on which to build a new understanding of what must be done to “inherit eternal life.”



Then read Luke 10:25-37 in the handout.

Ask the group to reflect for a few moments and then name the verbs or actions that stand out in the parable itself (vs. 30-36). Print them on newsprint. Go back over the reading and see what the group might have missed. You will probably find two main sorts of categories here – the first being more “negative” and the second being more “positive.” If possible, put them in columns as the group suggests them.

fell	moved with pity
stripped	went to him
beat	bandaged wounds
went away	poured oil
left him for dead	put him on his own animal
passed by	brought him to an inn
passed on the other side	took care of him
	come back and repay

And so on, depending on the translation.

Ask the group to identify what characteristics the verbs in each column share in common with the other verbs in that column. Then reflect on what the common characteristics suggest about the way in which we go about living the Christian life in the world.

Some of the possibilities that might be teased out include those that relate to:

- Engaging directly – touching, pouring, caring

Session 6: Go and Do Likewise

- Being pro-active – the Samaritan took action even though he did not have the religious responsibility of a priest or Levite
- Doing whatever it takes – as the situation, not our prior conceptions, discloses
- Committing for the long haul – we are not satisfied with the quick fix
- Willing to get out of our comfort zone – if we stay in our church/family/neighborhood fixed way of doing things, we might not ever see or hear the neighbor in need.

Ask: “What does the parable invite us to change in the light of our Christian calling?”

Finally, ask the group to look briefly at the **two passages** that are placed before and after this story – how the disciples are sent out and return from mission and the story of Martha and Mary. Invite the group to read the whole chapter at home and ask themselves what these two stories add to the understanding disclosed in the group discussion.

Success Stories

Ask individuals to read each of the stories out loud while others follow along in the handout. Then break into several groups, one per story, each taking one of the situations. Ask each group to appoint a note taker and then to discuss the following questions:

- In this story, how is success defined?
- What kinds of ministry do you find in the story?
- What is the underlying issue that is at the root of the personal situation that the story describes?
- What other things could be done to address the underlying issue?
- If you were the injured person in the story, what would you be asking this group to do? What actions would you ask us to undertake, and why?



Bring the group back together. Have the note takers share the conclusions. Then take a look at the selection of materials you gathered. How do they open up ways of addressing the concerns and conclusions of the discussion?

Our Story

Say the following, or put it in your own words, as a way to bring the session and the series to a conclusion:

“Our Story” for the final session of this group study is yet to be written. In each of the previous sessions it has always flowed from the interaction of three stories – the stories of Scripture, the stories of those who are hungry and poor, the facts that have many faces, and the stories that participants bring from their own lives. What will it take to write today’s version of “our story?” Can we begin to outline it by thinking about what we have heard, prayed about and shared in these weeks; by looking at the approaches our church is calling us to be and do; and by looking at what is happening in the world today? Let’s try.

Hand out the page headed “Now What?” at www.hungernomore.org. Ask the group to discuss what they can do as individuals and as a group to help end hunger at home and abroad.

Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to **be quiet** and centered in God for the closing reflection and prayer. Begin with the following quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer and then allow a few moments of silence:

The way of Jesus Christ, and therefore the way of all Christian thinking, leads not from the world to God but from God to the world. – *Ethics*, p. 351

(L) Let us pray together to the God who is always before us, and ask for the grace and courage to follow faithfully:

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the face of hungry, poor and powerless people who are summoning us to walk with them all the way to your reign.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, along the highways of this land, where your homeless ones look for shelter.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the corridors of power, where voices can be raised, hearts changed and healing policies begun.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the lives that are broken and lost in war, in violence, in needless suffering, in hunger and in hopelessness.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord. You are freeing us from what holds us back and you are calling us to respond.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) Together, let us pray:

God of our journeys, God of our dreams, you so loved the world that you gave your only son, the child you loved, and still you hold this world before us to summon us, to challenge us, to enfold us with its longing. Give us grace as we need it to hear, to see, to love and to act, and always to “go and do likewise.” We ask this together in the name of the One whose name we claim, and by which we are claimed. Amen.



Our Story

- Read together (as a family, as a community) Luke 10:25-37. Discuss:
 - What do you think is the main message of the parable?
 - How do you answer the question – “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”
 - How would you apply this message most effectively in today’s world?
- To learn effective actions you can take, check the websites of the following organizations which have partnered in these materials:
 - African Methodist Episcopal Women’s Missionary Society, www.wmsame.org, 202-371-8886
 - American Baptist Churches USA, www.abc-oghs.org, 800-ABC-3USA
 - America’s Second Harvest, www.secondharvest.org, 800-771-2303
 - Bread for the World Institute, www.bread.org, 800-82-BREAD
 - Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), www.disciples.org, 317-635-3100
 - Christian Reformed Church, www.crcjustice.org, 616-224-0840
 - Church World Service, www.churchworldservice.org, 800-297-1516
 - Community of Christ, www.cofchrist.org, 816-833-1000
 - Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, www.cbfonline.org, 770-220-1600
 - The Episcopal Church, www.episcopalchurch.org, 800-334-7626
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Program, www.elca.org/dcs/worldhunger.html, 800-638-3522
 - Franciscan Friars, www.hnp.org, 202-541-5245
 - Good Ground Press/Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, www.goodgroundpress.com, 800-232-5533
 - Heifer International, www.heifer.org, 800-422-0474
 - Maryland Province of the Jesuits, www.jesuit.org, 410-532-1403
 - MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, www.mazon.org, 310-442-0020
 - National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., www.nccusa.org/publicwitness/tanf.html, 212-870-2299
 - Presbyterian Hunger Program, PC(USA), www.pcusa.org/hunger, 800-334-0434
 - Reformed Church in America, www.rca.org, 800-968-3943
 - Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, www.bgct.org/bgctroot/clc, 888-332-5870
 - United Church of Christ, www.ucc.org, 216-736-3710
 - United Methodist Committee on Relief, gbgm-umc.org/umcor, 212-870-3816
 - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.usccb.org/sdwp, 202-541-3380 with support from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Pray together as a family, or as a community, three times:
“O God, give us – all of us – this day our daily bread.”



Go and Do Likewise

God’s Story

Just then, a lawyer stood up to test Jesus, “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers.... [Finishing the story, Jesus asked]

“Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

- Luke 10:25-30, 36-37 NRSV



Making a Difference

U.S. Families are Helped

Patsy had always been able to support herself and her three children with jobs in the hotel and food service industries, but when her mother died, that changed. Her 12-year old brother and 9-year old sister needed a new home, and Patsy didn't think twice before opening her doors. "It was hard when I first got them," Patsy says. "I was used to feeding myself and my kids, but not this. I eventually got some government assistance to help out with my brother and sister, but it took a long time to go through the courts. Before that was worked out, I found myself having to cut back on a lot of the food I bought. I was forced to make the choice between feeding my kids and being in the dark or having electricity. I chose to feed the kids."



Patsy's welfare counselor referred her to the Second Harvest Heartland Food Bank in the Twin Cities where she enrolled in the Kitchen of Opportunities culinary job-training program. When she graduated three months later with a certificate in culinary arts, she was able to get a higher paying job at a hospital.

"Now that I've got this job and I'm getting assistance, it's not as bad as it was," Patsy explains. "We all get to eat. Growing up I watched my grandmother make something out of nothing, so I know how to do that, but I still can't really buy them the things they want. We can't afford it. But because of everything I've been through, I know how fortunate I really am."

- America's Second Harvest <www.secondharvest.org>

Grassroots Citizens Help Win Billions

In March 1999, Bread for the World members Pat Pelham, Elaine Van Cleave, Roger McCollough and Bobby Cardwell flew from Alabama to meet with Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL), head of the subcommittee of the House Banking Committee with jurisdiction over the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They convinced Bachus that debt relief for the world's poorest countries should be an important congressional priority, and Bachus became a leader on debt relief in the U.S. House of Representatives.



Their visit was part of a BFW campaign for debt relief that generated 250,000 letters to Congress, lobbying on Capitol Hill and widespread publicity in the media. Other individuals and organizations were also pressing for debt relief, from Pope John Paul II to Archbishop Desmond Tutu to Billy Graham.

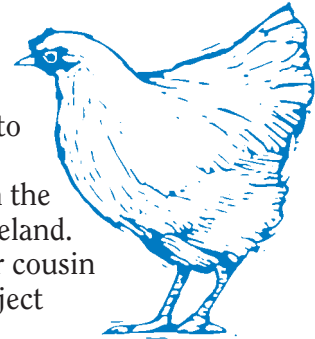
The result? Congress appropriated \$545 million for debt relief. They also authorized the IMF to sell a portion of its gold reserves to pay for its share of the debt relief plan, freeing up an additional \$2.3 billion to be used for programs to help the world's most vulnerable people.

<www.bread.org>

A Head Start

After the peace accords were signed in El Salvador in 1992, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a United Nations agency, designed a rehabilitation and development project (known as Prochamate) in collaboration with the government of El Salvador and co-financed by the European Community, other international and several nongovernmental agencies.

Aida Gutierrez, 33 years old, was born into a family of farmers and pig breeders. Aida and her parents, brothers and sisters fled from El Salvador to escape the war. They went to Nicaragua where she worked as a teacher in a rural community, but with the economic crisis, Aida decided to return to her homeland. She arrived in Chalatenango without anything. Her cousin told her about Prochamate, and the fact that the project was giving loans to women without collateral.



"I attended a meeting in Prochamate and asked them whether they could give me funds to set up a small farm to raise chickens," she said. "That same night I wrote a small project describing the farm and how much I needed for infrastructure and seed capital to buy the animals and fodder. I got the loan, and now I run a small farm with 2,500 chickens. The loan was initially to finance 1,000 chickens, but now the business has expanded and I make enough profit to buy more chickens. I feel very happy to be back in my own country and my hometown."

This project benefits 10,500 families.

<www.ifad.org>

Helps to Guide our Discussions¹

We as people of God have never had all of the answers to life's questions, but we are committed to trusting in God and depending on each other for care and comfort as we discern God's will for us in complex situations.

Some things to keep in mind as we proceed:

- We are guided by a concept of shared wisdom. No one of us has all of the wisdom. Each of us, however, has a piece of the wisdom. Therefore, we encourage all participants to work hard to share ideas and to begin to think in new ways. No one, however, will be forced to share or to speak.
- We listen carefully to each other, not to win arguments but so that we can better understand other people and the issue at hand.
- We can agree or disagree. Everyone's opinion is respected, and every person's dignity is affirmed.
- We observe the common courtesies of discussion. We don't interrupt others or dominate the discussion. We acknowledge our own feelings and avoid judgmental language. We give feedback and speak only for ourselves and not for others.
- We remember what binds us together: our unity in Christ and our care and concern for each other as a community of believers.

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The Millennium Development Goals

In September, 2000, 189 nations, including the United States, affirmed a set of international development goals in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. These have come to be known as the Millennium Development Goals. They reflect an understanding of the devastation caused by global hunger and poverty, and aim for a world that is free of such misery. They are achievable. Most of them are very specific, and the UN has indicators by which progress can be monitored.

Many countries have made significant strides in fighting poverty despite major obstacles, such as scant resources. Few additional resources, however, have been contributed since the goals were adopted. If additional new funding is not put forth, at the current rate, none of the Millennium Development Goals will be met by their target dates.

By 2015, all UN member states pledged to:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Reduce by half the proportion of people who live on less than one dollar a day.
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

2. Achieve universal primary education

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.

3. Promote gender equality and empower women

- Eliminate the gender discrepancy in primary and secondary education by increasing opportunities for girls to attend school preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

4. Reduce child mortality

- Reduce by two-thirds the percentage of children who die before age five.

5. Improve maternal health

- Reduce by three-quarters the percentage of women who die in pregnancy and childbirth.

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

- Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Sustainable development means reducing hunger and poverty in environmentally sound ways, by: meeting basic human needs, expanding economic opportunities, protecting and enhancing the environment, and promoting democratic participation.
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.
- Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020.

8. Develop a global partnership for development

- Reform the trading system (i.e., the World Trade Organization) and the financial system (e.g., private capital flows and international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund) so that poor countries can more easily sell their products to developed countries at fair prices and obtain the financial resources needed to create stable, growing economies that lift people out of poverty.
- Focus special attention on how to help the poorest countries mobilize the resources needed to reduce hunger and poverty and become self-reliant.
- Focus special attention on how landlocked and small island developing countries can promote economic development and poverty reduction.
- Make an all-out effort to resolve the problem of unpayable debt for the world's poorest countries.
- Develop decent and productive work for youth.
- Provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries.
- Make available the benefits of new technologies.

Activities, Games and Ideas for Children, Youth and Adults

On the The *Hunger No More* Web site, www.hungernomore.org, you will find:

- Activities for children, youth and adults – games and creative activities that can be downloaded to get people involved at age-appropriate levels.
- Web resources for children, youth and adults – valuable links to Web sites with games, ideas and activities, both secular and religious.
- Stories and story links – personal stories similar to those on the *Hunger No More* handouts. Click on links that lead to stories from the United States and abroad. True stories, whether of suffering or successful change efforts, help link our lives with those of other people.
- Policies of religious groups – Web links to hunger and poverty policies of many Christian and Jewish groups. Look up the policies of the national expression of your congregation. Compare the ways different groups address policy issues.
- Policy updates – links to current domestic and international policy information and campaigns on hunger and poverty issues. Helps you stay current, so you can get involved in the action in a timely manner.
- Data updates – links to current data. Printed data quickly become outdated. These links will help you find up-to-date sources.
- Lists and links – of *Hunger No More* sponsors and their Web sites.
- Definitions – and explanations of terms.

The Web site helps you find materials and activities that can be used:

- To engage people in fun, interactive, learning games and activities.
- To expand a one-hour session to fit a longer period.
- To expand the number of sessions.
- For weekend retreats.
- For individual research, study and meditation.
- By families for study, prayer and shared activities at home.
- By schoolteachers for classroom materials and activities.





Hunger No More is a uniquely cooperative effort by:



African Methodist Episcopal Church
Women's Missionary Society
1134 11th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001



Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
CBF Resource Center
P.O. Box 45329
Atlanta, GA 31145-0329



Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger
1990 S. Bundy Drive, Suite 260
Los Angeles, CA 90025



American Baptist Churches USA
World Relief Office
P.O. Box 851
Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851



The Episcopal Church
The Episcopal Church Center
815 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017-4503



National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
Poverty Mobilization, 8th Floor
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115



Bread for the World Institute
50 F St NW Suite 500
Washington, DC 20001



Evangelical Covenant Church
5101 N. Francisco Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625



Presbyterian Hunger Program
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396



Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Week of Compassion
P.O. Box 1986
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631



Reformed Church in America
Reformed Church World Service
4500 60th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-9670



Christian Reformed Church
Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action
2850 Kalamazoo SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560



Feeding America
35 E. Wacker Dr., #2000
Chicago, IL 60601



Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission
333 North Washington
Dallas, TX 75246



Church of the Brethren
1451 Dundee Ave
Elgin, IL 60120-1694



Franciscan Action Network
PO Box 29053
Washington, DC 20017-0053



United Church of Christ
Wider Church Ministries
One Great Hour of Sharing
700 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100



Church World Service
P.O. Box 968
Elkhart, IN 46515



Heifer International
P.O. Box 8058
Little Rock, AR 72203



United Methodist Committee on Relief
General Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church
475 Riverside Dr., Room 330
New York, NY 10115



Community of Christ
1001 W. Walnut
Independence, MO 64050-3562



Maryland Province of the Jesuits
5704 Roland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21210



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 4th Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20017-1194