

The Presbytery of San Jose

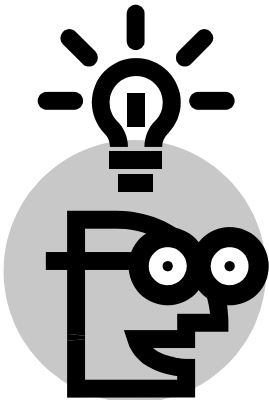
Hunger Action Advocacy Program

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“... let us love, not just in word or speech, but in truth and action.” 1 John 3:18

“We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?” - 1 John 3:16-17

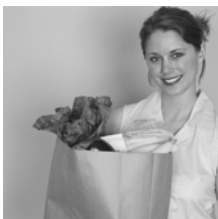


IDEAS

for Individual and Church ACTION to **HELP** Alleviate Local Hunger and Homelessness

In general, here are the steps to being really helpful:

1. **Pray:** Pray that people's hearts will soften and they will learn to care for each other as we have been called to do. Pray that you will understand how you have been gifted and called to serve others. Pray that you will be available to help others and be equipped to help by using the ideas below. Pray for the poor that they might not be poor in spirit and may find the resources necessary to live a decent and good life.
2. **www.bread.org/take-action/offering-of-letters-resources/background.html** Learn: (observe, study, visit) Study the issues pertaining to the poor (see resources listed below); consider having a small group study. Read from the vast amount of interesting books on the causes and solutions to hunger and homelessness.
3. **DO** something or a variety of things to help others. Usually this leads to wanting to do even more and knowing where you want to plug in. We are said to be the “hands and feet of Jesus in this place.” We can certainly use our hands and feet to make a difference; we can be the wallet of Jesus as well, and invest in groups working to make positive change on behalf of the poor.



Easy things to do:

- Collect food for local hunger programs (see resources below)
- Volunteer at local agencies that serve the poor (see contact information below)
- Write letters to the editor of the *San Jose Mercury News* applauding positive articles they do and encouraging others to help local agencies
- Donate money to local agencies which serve the poor.
- Take part in regional hunger activities like the **CROP WALK** held each year

in April in San Jose (that benefits Church World Service hunger efforts as well as Second Harvest Food Bank and Sacred Heart Community Service locally), or our Santa Clara County *Bread for the World* group that will work on hunger advocacy (contact Pat Plant at pat@sanjosepby.org.)

- Think creatively. Maybe there are other things you can do (collect need things for agencies: underwear, socks, pillows, blankets, warm coats, etc.)
- Convince others to do these things as well.

4. **Advocate:** We elected people to serve as lawmakers at the local, county, state and national levels of government. These people are eager to hear from you on what you think they should do. Much of the legislation that affects the poor has been created by people wanting to make the life of the poor more fair and hopeful. You can affect decision making (see resources below for guides to doing this).



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RESOURCES



Good Books to Read (all available from Amazon.com):

- **How Much is Enough?** by Arthur Simon
- **Grace at the Table: Ending Hunger in God's World** by David Beckmann and Arthur Simon
- **Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity** by Ronald J. Sider
- **Under the Overpass** by Mike Yankoski; a seminarian takes six month off from his studies and blends into the homeless community in different cities.
- **The Visible Poor: Homelessness in the United States** by Joel Blaus
- **The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time** by Jeffrey Sachs
- **Social Solutions to Poverty: America's Struggle to Build a Just Society** by Scott Myers Lipton (San Jose State Sociology professor)

Presbyterian Hunger Program website resources (www.pcusa.org/hunger/resources.htm):

- **Just Eating: Practicing Our Faith at the Table:** a very good individual or group study on food and hunger. Order online or by phone through Presbyterian Distribution Service at (800) 524-2612, referencing the Participant Book (\$5; PDS #7436505361) or the Leader Guide (\$4.50; PDS #7436505362).
- **Hunger No More:** an adult study on world hunger (download at: [/www.hungernomore.org/download.html](http://www.hungernomore.org/download.html))
- **Is There Enough?** A good children's study on issues pertaining to hunger and poverty. Order from PDS: #7436099324.
- **A Fast that Lasts:** feel the pangs of hunger while studying about hunger and relief of hunger. Designed for Middle and High School but do-able by all ages. \$20. PDS #7436002324.
- **Isaiah's Challenge to the People of God:** Based on Isaiah 8: 6-12 (Item # 7436001305): a free resource, very good study of Isaiah; examines helping others, why believers in God should help the poor. Can be read in a sitting, discussed in a one meeting or several-meeting format.
- **Get the Bread for the World Offering of Letters Kit:** Includes all the background on this year's *Bread for the World* legislation (features the re-authorization of important Farm Bill legislation where Food Stamps and school lunches, among other important programs, are housed.) \$7. Visit: www.bread.org/take-action/offering-of-letters-resources/background.html



Advocacy: Besides voting, you can take an active role in making the playing field more level for the poor. You can write letters, call or write your congress people, or pay them a visit. This is your right as a voter and citizen. Besides encouraging your elected official to vote in a particular way, you can work with their staff to create needed legislation.



Bread for the World
Seeking Justice. Ending Hunger.

- **PC USA Washington Office:** www.pcusa.org/washington/
- **Bread for the World** (www.bread.org) Advocate via an offering of letters or individually by writing to legislators or visiting them.
- **California Food Policy Advocates** (www.cfpa.net) The definitive website for California food policy information and legislative action.

- **California Hunger Action Coalition** (www.hungeraction.net/home.html): Each May they sponsor a Hunger Action Day in Sacramento and help schedule visits with each of the California legislators.



Community Service agencies in our Presbytery

Santa Clara County:

Food Banks and Community Service Agencies:

- Second Harvest Food Bank (www.2ndharvest.net/)
- Palo Alto Urban Ministry; Inn Vision (www.umpa.org)
- Mountain View Los Altos Community Services Food Bank (www.csacares.org/)
- Sunnyvale Community Services: (www.svcommunityservices.org)
- Salvation Army, San Jose and Sunnyvale ([/www.volunteerinfo.org/salvarmy.htm](http://www.volunteerinfo.org/salvarmy.htm))
- Sacred Heart Community Service- Louisa's Pantry ([/www.shcstheheart.org/flash.html](http://www.shcstheheart.org/flash.html))
- Santa Maria Urban Ministry: www.smum.org
- EHCLifebuilders (www.ehclifebuilders.org)
- InnVision: www.innvision.org/index.html)
- San Jose Family Shelter/ Family Supportive Housing (www.sjfamilyshester.org)

National Agencies that make a difference to the poor:



- America's Second Harvest ([/www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org))
- OXFAM (www.oxfam.org)
- Bread for the World (www.bread.org)
- Food First (www.foodfirst.org)
- World Vision (www.churchworldservice.org)
- Church World Service (www.churchworldservice.org)
- Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness (www.pnteh.org)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness (www.naeh.org)
- National Coalition for the Homeless (www.nationalhomeless.org)
- Family Promise/Na. Hospitality Network of Hospitality Networks (www.nihn.org)

"Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth,
I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'
- Deuteronomy 15:11-11

