



Hunger for Justice

**A LEARNING AND REFLECTION
GUIDE FOR YOUTH GROUPS**



DEAR YOUTH LEADER,

We are excited to provide this resource to you as a way for youth to deepen their understanding of justice, poverty and global hunger from a Christian perspective.

This guide contains an outline of three engaging two-hour sessions that can be done online or in-person. While we give a general breakdown of suggested time for each activity, you can modify for your group as needed.

The theme that runs through each of the sessions is hunger around the world. Together, these sessions help young Christians move from a basic understanding of charity to a deeper appreciation of the complexity of issues around the causes of hunger, and a plan to take concrete action. Each session includes suggested Bible verses and suggested activities to encourage further reflection.

SESSION 1 Isaiah calls us to loosen the chains of injustice. But what exactly does that mean?

SESSION 2 Why do people experience hunger? And why does it matter that I know anyway?

SESSION 3 The reasons why people around the world are hungry are complex. Other than giving food, how can Christians respond?

For us at the Foodgrains Bank, we suggest responding to hunger starts with **giving, praying, learning** and **advocating**.

Throughout the guide, you will notice **text for leaders** and **instructions for leaders**. The text is a script you can either read to the group directly or modify. The instructions are information to help you facilitate.

While we encourage you to stick to the main messaging provided, feel free to be creative with your delivery! For example, you could use small breakout groups or posters with stickers when youth are asked to make a choice.

All the information you need for these sessions is included in this guide. However, don't hesitate to reach out for support, prayer, or even a general pep talk!

We welcome your feedback on this resource. Please feel free to email us with your comments and suggestions.

You can connect with us at:
youth@foodgrainsbank.ca



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SESSION 1



Photo: Emily Gehring

Use Both Feet

SESSION 1 • Use Both Feet

THEME

The Foodgrains Bank proposes four ways to respond to hunger: Give, Learn, Pray, Advocate. Today we are going to **pray** and explore how to **give** of ourselves in the name of Jesus.



QUESTION

Isaiah calls us to loosen the chains of injustice. But what exactly does that mean?

OUTLINE

Welcome and group check in	10 minutes
Introduce the topic for the three sessions & show introductory video	7 minutes
Scripture readings	5 minutes
Story and discussion: Garbage on the Beach	10 minutes
Using both feet to walk toward a world without hunger – discussion	15 minutes
Using both feet to walk toward a world without hunger – activity	20 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Food for All video & discussion	13 minutes
Filling the Bowls activity	20 minutes
Prayer and closing	10 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bible verses:

- Bible(s) or a way to look up the suggested passages

Videos:

- The proper equipment to show the videos

Using both feet to walk toward a world without hunger:

- 1-2 large sheets of paper per person
- Scissors
- Pen/Markers

Fill the Bowl Activity:

- Several plastic cups or small containers of the same size (empty yogurt or sour cream containers that are 500g or smaller would work well); one for each person if gathering in person.
- A bucket with rice or another grain.
- Spoons and utensils of different shapes and sizes. Some utensils can have holes or be flat.

Resources for Session 1

WELCOME AND GROUP CHECK-IN



Introductory Video with Andy

Found with your download or at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/6cz3ksm7>

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 58:6–10, Matthew 5:6, Matthew 25:40-45

STORY: GARBAGE ON THE BEACH

Instructions for leaders: Share the story with the group. Have them discuss and/or vote on the questions that are highlighted in the story. Check in with the group about what they are thinking or what questions arise in them after listening to this story.

Text for leaders: Today, we'll be reflecting on how we can work to loosen the chains of injustice. The story that we about to read will help us think about the different kinds of actions that we can take.

One year for spring break, a family traveled to the beautiful oceanside to spend their holiday. They spent the first few days touring around the area. Later in the week, they went for a long drive and ended up in a remote community up the coast. The area was absolutely breathtaking! They decided to stay and explore. The local beach grabbed their attention. Unlike the beaches they had visited earlier on, the one in this community was almost deserted. There were only a few local people fishing. As the family walked down to the beach, they saw that what looked like a pristine beach from further away was actually covered with debris and garbage that had been washed up by the waves. "How can such a beautiful place be so filthy?" they wondered as they saw plastics, netting, metal, personal items, and too many other things to be named. The next morning, the family bought gloves and garbage bags and spent the afternoon picking up garbage off the beach.

Upon return home, one of the family's teenage children shared the story of the beautiful beach with her youth group. Her fellow youth group members were upset by her story and wanted to do something to help. They held a fundraiser and raised some money, allowing them to travel as a group to the beach with some of their parents.

They spent a day cleaning garbage up from the beautiful beach. The group then spent the rest of the time visiting the local area.

After returning home, they decided that they should go back to the beach a second time. This time, there was even more garbage on the beach. It took them a full two days to get the beach cleaned up again.

The group decided that they needed to return a third time. When they arrived, they discovered that even more garbage had washed up on the shore. As they collected it into garbage bags, members of the group began to talk amongst themselves.

"The next time we come, we need to bring more people."

"Where is all this debris coming from?"

“We should be coming more often to keep the garbage from piling up.”

“We need to figure out why the debris is washing up on this shore so that we can prevent this from happening in the first place!”

“Why aren’t the locals doing anything to keep the beach clean?”

When the group got together after supper that night, they decided to talk about what they should do. One person suggested that they needed to figure out why so much debris was washing up onto the beach. “But where would we even start? There could be so many reasons and we aren’t likely able to prevent it. Plus, we are already doing so much,” said another group member. A third person felt the most important thing the group could do was come back regularly and that trying to research a cause would just distract them from working to make money to be able to travel to the area.

What do you think? What would you decide to do?

The next morning at the hotel restaurant, one of the group members said, “I hope we come back, because if we don’t clean the beach, who will?” Their server heard the question. “There are three other groups like yours that come regularly to clean the beach,” he explained.

“Oh,” said one of the visitors. “We didn’t know that.”

“I’ve always wondered why the locals don’t keep the beach clean,” said another member.

We used to have a beach clean up team that was paid to clean the beach every month,” responded the server. “However, when groups like yours started coming, our government got rid of those jobs. There are still people from the community who try to keep it clean when they have spare time regardless, but there is just so much debris. A committee asked the government to look into the problem a few years ago. It seems that the waste is coming from elsewhere. I’m sure that the people who discard the trash don’t even think about where it ends up.”

The group thanked the server for that information. They left wondering why they were only learning that information now. As they left for home, they reflected on what they should do now that they have heard this new information.

What do you think the group should do now?



Photo: Colocho

DISCUSSION: USING BOTH FEET TO WALK TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT HUNGER

Text for leaders: Think about the scripture reading (Isaiah 58: 6-10). There are many things that we are called to do.

Isaiah calls us to loosen the chains of injustice. But what exactly does that mean? How can we provide for those who live in poverty? What kind of actions are we called to take?

(Give the group a few moments to answer)

To answer this question, it helps to think about how we are walking with Jesus. Most people walk with two feet, as they place one foot in front of the other. Likewise, many Christian groups who work alongside those experiencing poverty or other social problems equate the work that they do as walking with two feet. They use this analogy as a way to highlight the two types of responses that the Bible calls Christians to do: charitable giving and advocating for justice.

Charitable giving refers to helping people with their immediate needs. For example, seeing someone holding a sign that says “hungry, please help” and responding by giving them food or helping them find a food bank. If a child can’t play outside because they don’t have anything warm to wear, the first step would be to find the child appropriate clothing. In other words, the goal of charitable giving is to provide for a pressing need.

Can you think of some ways that we can participate in **charitable giving**?

(Give the group a few moments to answer. See below for some ideas.)

- Helping someone find local social services, such as a food bank or shelter
- Providing food to a food bank or soup kitchen
- Volunteering at a food bank or soup kitchen
- Donating to a toy drive for Christmas
- Volunteering at a homeless shelter
- Organizing an event for youth who live in poverty
- Giving money to someone who is experiencing homelessness

What are some examples of **charitable giving** in the Bible?

Advocating for justice means changing the structures in society that result in people experiencing poverty or social problems. After providing food for someone who is hungry, we should ask “*why* is this person hungry? Can we contribute to changing the situation?” We can then work with others to try to make long-lasting change. Advocating for justice requires asking lots of questions, working alongside and listening to those who are experiencing the problems, as well as listening to those who have been working for change already. The goals of **advocating for justice** are to address the underlying causes of a problem.

What are some examples of **advocating for justice**?

(Give the group a few moments to answer. See below for some ideas.)

- Understanding and accepting that those who experience social problems are equal to you in the eyes of Christ.
- Reading and learning about issues, telling others what you have learned.
- Making sure to listen to the voices of those that are affected by the issue without burdening them to retell their stories if they do not want to.
- Changing behaviours and encouraging others to do so as well (e.g. thinking about what you buy and where you buy it.)
- Communicating with elected officials (like your MP) and other authorities to voice your support for or against policies that contribute to injustice.
- Using social media to voice your concern about poverty and injustice and encourage others to seek change.
- Reaching out to your local news outlets to share you concerns about poverty and injustice.
- Donating money to programs, led by local experts, that are supporting changes (i.e., financing workshops so that people know their rights)

What are some examples of **advocating for justice** in scripture?

ACTIVITY: USING BOTH FEET TO WALK TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT HUNGER

Instructions for leaders: Have each group member trace both of their feet or the bottom of a pair of shoes on paper. Cut out the tracings. Invite group members to think about a social issue that is important to them (hunger in the world, poverty in their community, etc.). In one footprint, write an example of **charitable giving** to respond to the problem and in the other write an example of **advocating for justice**. Ask everyone to present their “Two Feet” to the group, explaining the importance of both actions.

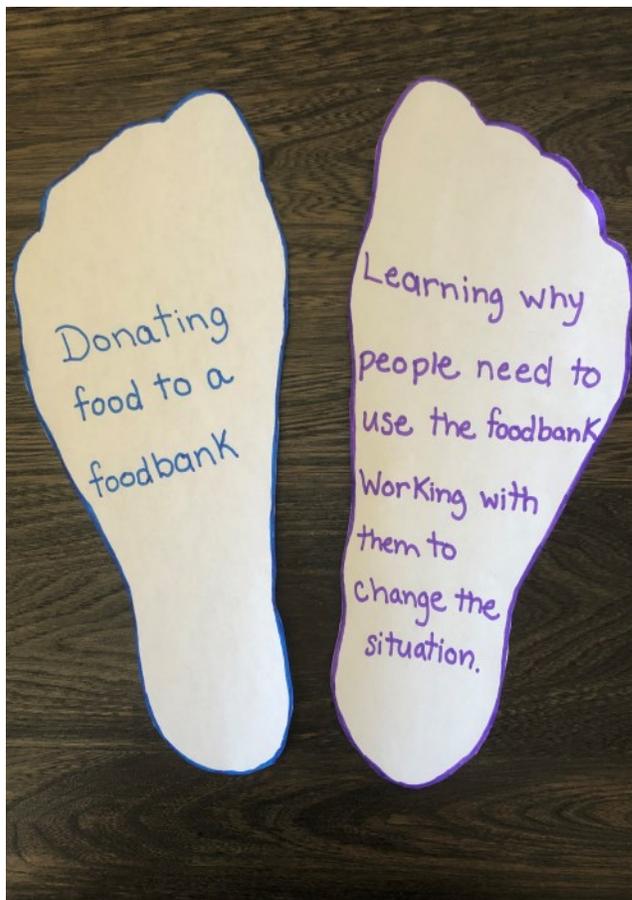
*This activity is based on similar activities which are promoted in many Roman Catholic church communities to better understand how to minister to people who experience poverty, hunger or another challenging situation. While these activities have different names (Two Feet of Social Justice, Two feet of Love in Action) the message is always the same.

What to do with your feet?

Don't throw your paper feet in the recycling bin just yet! Think about how you can share this message with others, in your community and beyond.

Some ideas:

- Use social media to share your “feet.”
- Post them to a bulletin board or the entrance to your church of other to see.
- Hang them as a piece of artwork.
- Use them as a reminder to commit to praying regularly for opportunities to do these actions.
- Other ideas?



VIDEO

One Human Family, Food for All

(Caritas Internationalis)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhU5JEd-XRo

Text for leaders:

Discuss:

What struck you about the clip that you just saw? What did you observe?

What message did you take away from the video?

How is this video connected to Isaiah 58:6–10? Does it make you think of any other passages from scripture?

FILLING THE BOWLS ACTIVITY

Instructions for leaders (for in-person gatherings):

Have the members of the group sit in a well-spaced circle on the floor. Give them each a plastic cup or small container of the same size (empty yogurt or sour cream containers that are 500g or less would work). Fill a bucket with rice (or another grain or something small that represents a grain) and place it in the centre of the circle. Hand out spoons and kitchen utensils of different shapes and sizes so that each person has one. Utensils can be different sizes and shapes, and it's good if at least one or two utensils have holes or are flat. Tell participants they need to transfer the grain they were given from the large bucket to their own container using their utensil. Stop after a few people have filled their containers.



Text for leaders:

Discuss:

How did the activity make you feel?

Why were some people able to fill their containers much quicker than others?

Some people in the activity had large, deep spoons that helped them fill their containers quickly while some people had small spoons or other utensils that made accessing the grains more challenging. Likewise, in real life, we do not all have access to the same resources. Some people have few difficulties in accessing food, others face many challenges. Can you name some of the challenges that some people in Canada and around the world may have when trying to access food?

Sometimes people who have many resources (like money) say that they are blessed. Does that mean that others are not blessed?

Were those who could fill their containers sooner more blessed by God than the others?

How do you think God wants us to respond to those who have less access to resources?

*Be sure to sanitize the utensils before and after the activity. Youth can take turns going to the bowl if you'd like to be physically distanced from one another.



Instructions for leaders (for online gatherings):

Have three plastic cups or small container of the same size (empty yogurt or sour cream containers that hold 500g or less would work well). Fill a large bowl with rice (or another grain or something small that represents a grain). Have three spoons / utensils of different types, shapes and sizes, such as a ladle, a teaspoon, and a pancake flipper. Use each utensil to transfer the rice from the large bowl to the smaller container. Have the youth observe and time how long it takes to fill the small container with each utensil.

Text for leaders:

Discuss:

What were you thinking while observing this activity?

Which utensils were able to fill their containers much quicker than others?

The large, deep spoons were ideal for filling the containers while small spoons or other utensils made accessing the grains more challenging. Likewise, in real life, we are not all accorded the same resources. Some people have very little difficulty in accessing food, others face many challenges. Can you name some of the challenges that some people in Canada and around the world may have when trying to access food?

Sometimes people who have many resources (like money) say that they are blessed. Does that mean that others are not blessed? Do you think that someone who is able to fill a container sooner means that he or she is more blessed by God than others?

How do you think God wants us to respond to those who have less access to resources?

PRAYER AND CLOSING OF SESSION

For this time of prayer, reflect on how people have walked alongside you in your life, or use the suggested prayer below.

A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort,
At easy answers, half-truths,
And superficial relationships
So that you may live
Deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression,
And exploitation of people,
So that you may work for
Justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears,
To shed for those who suffer pain,
Rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand
To comfort them and
To turn their pain to joy

And may God bless you
With enough foolishness
To believe that you can
Make a difference in the world,
So that you can do
What others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness
To all our children and the poor.

Amen

Original source unknown. Taken from www.franciscanfriars.ca.

SESSION 2



Make Room at the Table

SESSION 2 • Make Room at the Table

THEME

The Foodgrains Bank proposes four ways to respond to hunger: Give, Learn, Pray, Advocate. Today we are going to **pray** and explore why it is important to continually **learn** about issues to respond appropriately.



QUESTION

Why do people experience hunger? And why does it matter that I know?

OUTLINE

Welcome and group check in	10 minutes
Recap from last session	5 minutes
Scripture readings	5 Minutes
Food Security video	10 minutes
The Woman who is Hungry activity	20 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Breaking the Cycle of Hunger game OR Room at the Table Reader's Theater	30 minutes
Growing Her Future video	15 minutes
Prayer and closing	15 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bible verses:

- Bible(s) or a way to look up the suggested passages

Videos:

- The proper technology to show the videos

The woman who is hungry activity:

- The three scenarios ready to hand out or to be shared secretly for an online session

*Breaking the Cycle of Hunger Game:

- Download & print the game at foodgrainsbank.ca/breaking-cycle-of-hunger

*Readers' Theater:

- A way to share the script with those involved

*Choose one of these two activities

Resources for Session 2

WELCOME AND GROUP CHECK IN

RECAP FROM LAST SESSION

Ask someone to summarize what happened in the first session in case someone was missing.

Ask the group: What stuck with you from last session?

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Proverbs 1: 1-7, Matthew 25:35

Throughout the session, think about why wisdom, listening, being just, learning, and fearing God is important in the work to end hunger?



FOOD SECURITY VIDEO

Instructions for leaders: Before showing the video, ask what comes to mind when they think of “hunger”. After watching the clip, ask the group what was one thing that they thought was interesting.

foodgrainsbank.ca/food-security-video

Text for leaders: In order to achieve food security for all, we need to learn what is preventing people from accessing enough food in the first place. Even those who spend their lives or careers responding to hunger in the world must continually be learning, listening and adapting. We will spend some time today exploring some of the reasons why people experience hunger.

THE WOMAN WHO IS HUNGRY ACTIVITY

Text for leaders: How many of you have heard the saying “Give a Man a Fish, and You Feed Him for a Day. Teach a Man to Fish, and You Feed Him for a Lifetime”? We are going to do a short activity based on that saying, though you will notice that in this activity we will be talking about a woman, as women are more likely to go hungry than men.

Instructions for leaders: Break the group into three smaller groups. Give each group a scenario.

Do not let the other groups see the other scenarios. Have the groups discuss how they would respond to the scenario that they were presented. The three groups should then report back to the large group in the order of 1-3.

For a larger group, you can have more than three groups: make copies of the scenarios and distribute one scenario to more than one group. Keep in mind, that each group should receive only one. scenario

This activity highlights two things:

- How having as much information as possible is important to addressing the problem.
- The importance of addressing both short-term needs though charitable giving and long-term needs through advocating for justice.

SCENARIOS

1. There is a woman. She is hungry and has no food to eat. She is asking for help. How could you respond?

2. There is a woman. She is hungry and has no food to eat. She has saved seeds to plant for food but still has nothing to eat. She is asking for help. How could you respond?

3. There is a woman. She is hungry and has no food to eat. She has seeds to plant for food but doesn't have land on which to plant her seeds because her husband died. Despite her hard work, she tells you that she was forced from her land because women in her country cannot inherit land. She and other women have been working for many years to try to gain the right to own land. She is asking for help. How could you respond?

Text for leaders:

Debrief Questions:

Did the responses proposed by the groups differ? Why?

Is there anything that you would change or add to the “Give a Man a Fish” saying?

How does this activity connect to the *Using both feet to walk toward a world without hunger* activity that we did previously?

How does this activity relate to the passage from Proverbs that we read today?

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF HUNGER



Download & print the game at:
foodgrainsbank.ca/breaking-cycle-of-hunger

Text for leaders (before the game):

Did you know that most of the people who experience hunger globally are people who support themselves and their families by growing a crop on a small piece of land? Now you have time to play Breaking the Cycle of Hunger to learn more about why these small-scale food producers are food insecure.

Text for leaders (after the game):

- As a group, can we list some of the things that...
...contributed to the cycle of hunger?
...helped break the cycle of hunger?
- Did you learn anything about hunger than you did not know before?

ROOM AT THE TABLE: A DRAMA FOR SEVEN VOICES

Instructions for leaders: Arrange for seven people to perform this activity and share the text with them. Prepare a table that seats seven. Seven plates are set on the tabletop (they can be different styles and shapes) and seven chairs circle the table (again, these can differ from one another). If you cannot use a table and chairs, then it is no big deal. Be creative!

Text for leaders: We will now listen to some of our group members read a short drama for us called “Room at the Table.” The stories that you hear are based on true stories. You, the audience, are an integral part of the drama. You will have the opportunity to extend an invitation to each speaker to join you at the table. When asked, respond “We welcome you to the table”.

Narrator: Do you see it . . . right here . . . a table set for guests? A generously large table, A table that represents not only physical nourishment but a table that invites an exchange of ideas and a place to brainstorm new approaches to growing concerns. Plates in a variety of colours and patterns circle the perimeter, waiting to be claimed. Chairs – some contemporary, some ornate, some padded, some varnished, some well worn – all offer stable seating. This table is not our personal table. It is God’s table. And God, graciously and in good faith has entrusted the hosting of this table to us: To you and to me. We decide who will sit here. We determine who is welcome. Our actions establish the guest list. So...who will we invite? Our relatives? Our friends? People who can repay us? People who look like us? Believe like us? Think like us? Live like us? Or can we make room at this table, God’s table, for those who see with other eyes? Who have experiences unlike our own? Who challenge our perspectives? Who are just plain different?

Let’s meet some of them.

Guest #1: I am Yvette, a young woman in my late 20s. I live in Haiti. My ancestors planted gardens and grew crops to feed themselves. However, with climate change affecting rainfall and creating unpredictable seasons, it is becoming more and more difficult to find ways to continue farming. The past few years have brought one disaster after another. It is very frustrating when we work so

hard to support ourselves, but we have little to show for it. I don’t ask for much. All I want is to be able to provide for my family.

Narrator: Is there room for Yvette at the table?

People: We welcome you to the table, Yvette.

Guest #2: I am Adel and I am currently living with my wife and four children in Maashouk, a refugee settlement in southern Lebanon. We fled Syria when our home and dry-cleaning business were bombed. This is our third refugee camp. As refugees, we are not able to get decent jobs here. Providing food for my wife and children is a daily challenge. Our 3-month-old son died in the last camp when my wife could no longer produce milk for him. We are still trying to recover from his passing. It’s hard for me to imagine living a basic normal life again. Where can I find hope?

Narrator: Is there room for Adel at the table?

People: We welcome you to the table, Adel.

Guest #3: I am Grace. I am 12 years old. When rebel soldiers attacked my village in South Sudan in the middle of the night, everyone ran for their lives. I lost track of my family. I followed a group of people from my village but we have not seen my parents since then. I’m terribly lonely, especially at night. I miss my Mom and Dad and brothers and sisters so very very much. I always wonder about my family. Will I ever see them again? Are they alive or dead? Some of the other mothers that ran away from our village are taking care of me. But I can only eat after they have fed their own children. I am hungry and I feel dirty. This tattered clothing is all I have and it’s getting too small. I don’t know what will happen to me. I’m afraid and lonely.

Narrator: Is there room for Grace at the table?

People: We welcome you to the table, Grace.

Guest #4: I am Adise. I come from the village of Kudo in Ethiopia. In my village culture, women are totally dependent on their husbands. We have little power and almost never handle money. Many of us cannot count on our husbands to meet the needs of the family. Together with the other women in my village, we want to find a way to

sustain ourselves and to provide for our families.

Narrator: Is there room for Adise at the table?

People: We welcome you to the table, Adise.

Guest #5: I am Dagim. I live near the city of Lalibela in Northern Ethiopia. One of the great challenges we face is managing our water supply. There is either too little rain, which causes droughts, or too much, which sweeps the topsoil from the hills. However, we are blessed with many rocks. The rocks can help redirect the water and slow down the erosion. But knowing how best to accomplish that takes vision, machinery, time and money. We need help dealing with these challenges.

Narrator: Is there room for Dagim at the table?

People: We welcome you to the table, Dagim.

Guest #6: I am Tarij. In India, where I live, the daily temperature often exceeds 35 degrees Celsius. With the combined challenges of extreme heat and crop flooding from the monsoons, food is often scarce. It is also the custom here that men eat first and women and children receive what is left. With so little food to begin with, many children and women are severely malnourished. I want a better life for my family.

Narrator: Is there room at the table for Tarij?

People: We welcome you to the table Tarij.

Narrator: *(looking at the table and reflecting)*

There is still a vacant chair at this table. You and I are invited to commune at this table as well. Each one in this circle has a voice and each one is God's guest . . . and host. We eat together and we are invited to join each other's conversations, creatively brainstorming to ensure there is enough for all.

But if we think our seat at the table will fill the table, I suspect we would be wrong. For God always leaves space for one more at the table. There is always room at God's table.

(Addressing the guests at the table) To those of you already seated at the table, is there room for us to join the table as well?

Table People: Yes, we welcome you to the table. For this is God's table. *(someone from the table moves the chair so it angles open towards the audience)*

"Room at the Table" written by Connie Epp (2017) for Canadian Foodgrains Bank.



Instructions for leaders: You may wish to show this video or listen to this song at the end of the theater:

foodgrainsbank.ca/room-at-the-table

Text for leaders:

- How is everyone feeling?

OR

...ask people to draw something that reflects how they are feeling. Let them know that any type of art is acceptable.

...ask people to grab something in the room that is connected to how they feel after listening to the reader's theater.

- Was there a particular story that struck you? Tell us why...
- As a group, can we list some of the reasons that people were experiencing hunger? Aside from hunger, what were some of the other issues that people were facing?
- Did you learn anything about hunger than you did not know before?



GROWING HER FUTURE VIDEO

Text for leaders:

The more we learn about the complexity of hunger, the more overwhelming it can seem. But don't be discouraged! Change is possible. We'll watch a short video about an Ethiopian farmer named Asnakech (As Na Ketch) who shows us her thriving farm. In the last three years, she has built up her land through practicing a type of farming called conservation agriculture, and now grows enough food to feed her family and others. The work of improving soil fertility, adding crop diversity and developing marketing strategies are increasingly allowing the family to better cope with climate change. Asnakech's husband treats her with new respect—and works alongside her in a farming and life partnership. Asnakech is not alone. This film also introduces us to community leaders who are no longer dependent on outside help. New farming practices, co-operative Self-Help Groups (SHG) and greater gender equality bring widespread change.



foodgrainsbank.ca/growing-her-future

Text for leaders:

- Does anyone have any questions about what they saw in the video clip?
- How is everyone feeling now? OR

...ask people to draw something that reflects how they are feeling. Let them know that any type of art is acceptable!

...ask people to grab something in the room that is connected to how they feel after watching the video.

PRAYER AND CLOSING OF SESSION

For this time of prayer, consider “How is wisdom, listening, being just, learning, fearing God important in the work of ending hunger?” or use the suggested prayer below.

Prayer for Wisdom

God,

Give us the wisdom to accept that there is much in this world that we do not understand,

Give us a desire to learn and to listen to you, by listening to our Sisters and Brothers who face hardship, injustices and deceit,

Guide us to know how best to use the gift that you have given us, as we walk with others in their journeys.

Amen.

SESSION 3



Add Your Voice

SESSION 3 • Add Your Voice



PRAY



ADVOCATE

THEME

The Foodgrains Bank proposes four ways to respond to hunger: Give, Learn, Pray, Advocate. Today we are going to **pray** and use our voices to **advocate** for our sisters and brothers around the world who experience hunger.

QUESTION

The issue of global hunger seems so complex! Other than giving food, how can Christians respond?

OUTLINE

Welcome Group & Check In	8 minutes
Recap from last session	5 minutes
Scripture readings	5 Minutes
Reflection on our call as Christians to use our Voice	10 minutes
Readers Theater Unjust	15 minutes
Introduce Add your Voice – Video and Brainstorm Ideas	12 minutes
Energizer	5 minutes
Add Your Voice (including a break)	35 minutes
Amplify Your Voice	5 minutes
Debrief	10 minutes
End of Session Video and Prayer	10 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bible verses:

- Bible(s) or a way to look up the suggested passages

Add your Voice:

- Paper and pens, or computers and the ability to print
- Envelopes

Resources for Session 3

WELCOME AND GROUP CHECK IN

RECAP FROM LAST SESSION

Ask someone to summarize what happened in the second session in case someone was missing.

Ask the group: What stuck with you from last session?

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 1:17, Luke 18:1-8

REFLECTION: OUR CALL AS CHRISTIANS TO USE OUR VOICE

Text for leaders:

Think of a person in your lives who lives out the call in Isaiah 1:17. (If they can't think of one person, perhaps you can think of a group or even examples throughout history of Christian individuals or groups who have advocated for those who live in poverty and have limited power.)

READERS THEATER UNJUST

Three voice Readers Theatre based on Jesus' parable of the judge and the persistent widow from Luke 18:1-8.

Narrator: One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.

Judge: (enters wearing black robe, crosses to podium, pounds gavel) This court is now in session. Anyone having business before this court, draw near and be heard.

Widow: (enters carrying an armful of legal briefs) Your honour, I have business before this court.

Judge: (sigh) You again.

Widow: Yes, your honour. There has been a grave injustice to me, and I demand justice.

Judge: Why do you persist in wasting the court's time? I have already given my decision in your case.

Widow: You gave a decision, but justice was not served.

Judge: So, you brought another truck load of legal motions?

Widow: (smiles) Yes, your honour. I think you're going to like these. I worked on them all night last night. I'm sure that one of them will right the wrong that has been done.

Judge: My good woman, as I....

Widow: I am not your "good woman." My name is Ethel Goldstein. I am simply a poor, helpless....

Judge: Alright, alright! You may be poor, but you're far from helpless. I get the point, Mrs. Goldstein. But your name in no way influences the facts of this case.

Widow: The facts of this case are that my husband died, leaving me childless. And now, because I am a childless widow, I am being treated as a second-class citizen.

Judge: But in Israel a childless widow IS a second-class citizen, Mrs. Goldstein.

Widow: That is unjust, and you know it.

Judge: Just or not, that is the law of the land. We have been over this time and time again, Mrs. Goldstein...

Widow: You have the power to make this right, your honour. I'm not asking for the law of the land. I am asking for justice. Maurice Greenbaum stole my land from me and...

Judge: Maurice Greenbaum paid your taxes. The land is rightfully his.

Widow: I have crops in the fields that I could sell to pay the taxes. All I'm asking for is a chance to hire someone to harvest the crops and sell them for me so I can pay the taxes.

Judge: I have already ruled on that motion, Mrs. Goldstein, and the answer was NO.

Widow: Then, I have another motion. (hands one of the legal briefs to Judge)

Judge: What's this one? (opens brief)



Widow: This is a writ of habius corpus.

Judge: Habius Corpus?! Habius Corpus is a motion to have someone released from jail. What...

Widow: Since you have stripped me of all my rights, I am a prisoner of the system. I...

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: (hands Judge another brief) In that case, I have another motion.

Judge: (sigh) What's this one? (opens brief)

Widow: This is a motion denying transfer of the land to that crook Maurice Greenbaum on environmental grounds.

Judge: Oh, brother. I can hardly wait to hear the arguments for this.

Widow: There is an endangered species living on my land and...

Judge: Wait a minute. Endangered species? What endangered species?

Widow: My dog.

Judge: A dog is not an endangered species.

Widow: Mine is.

Judge: What kind is it?

Widow: It's a mutt and I've never seen another one like it.

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: (hands Judge another brief) In that case, I enter this motion to turn my property into a provincial park with me as the caretaker.

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: (hands Judge another brief) In that case, I enter this motion to turn my property into a national park.

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: (hands Judge another brief) In that case, I enter this motion to turn my property into a national monument.

Judge: Motion.... Wait a minute. A monument?! To what?

Widow: My husband. He was a really great guy. You would have loved him. I was thinking of erecting a bronze statue....

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: In that case, you leave me no choice. (hands Judge another brief) I hereby petition the court to have my property...

Judge: It's Maurice Greenbaum's property and you have until noon tomorrow to vacate....

Widow: Hereafter, I shall refer to my property as the "afore mentioned property." And I petition the court to have the transfer of the afore mentioned property delayed until such time as the criminal charges against Maurice Greenbaum have been adjudicated.

Judge: Criminal charges?! What criminal charges?

Widow: The petition clearly states that the afore mentioned property is evidence in a criminal complaint filed by a poor unfortunate widow who was ruthlessly robbed of her property...

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: You didn't let me finish.

Judge: Yes, I did. You just finished. (gavel)
Motion denied.

Widow: (hands Judge another brief) In that case, I petition you to remove yourself as the judge on this case.

Judge: Remove myself? Why would I want to disqualify myself from hearing this case? On what grounds?

Widow: On the grounds that Maurice Greenbaum is your wife's brother.

Judge: That has nothing to do with this case. (looks around, softly) How did you find out about that?

Widow: I overheard you talking to that thief Maurice Greenbaum out in the hallway. No wonder I can't get any justice in this court.

Judge: (gavel) Motion denied.

Widow: Fine. (turns to exit) I'll see you tomorrow.

Judge: Tomorrow?

Widow: (turns back) Yes, I'll be here first thing tomorrow with about a dozen new motions. We still have not explored expropriation, illegal search and seizure, the many aspects of due process of law. Then, of course, there's the appeals process, where I start all over again....

Judge: Alright! Alright!

Widow: Excuse me?

Judge: You can keep your stupid farm. Maury and I can find another piece of property to build our estate on. Go! Go! Get out of my court room! I never want to see you again!

Widow: Let's get this straight. You're giving me back my property?

Judge: Yes. But only if you promised never to come back here again. Now out! Get out! (shaking gavel at her). I don't want to see or hear from you ever again.

Widow: I'm going already. I'm going.



Narrator: Learn a lesson from this crooked judge. Even though he was dishonest and selfish, he acted justly toward the poor widow in the end. If such a man can act with justice toward the poor, don't you think God will defend and protect those who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? No, I tell you: he will grant justice to them quickly! But here's the question: how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on earth when he returns.

Text for leaders: How do you feel about speaking up to elected leaders about something that you believe is right? Have you done something like this before? Does it sound interesting? Make you nervous?

Unjust was written by Bob Snook, and posted on SermonCentral. It has been adapted slightly from the original. www.sermoncentral.com/drama2.asp?item_id=6 Copyright © 2001 Bob Snook. Conditions for use: Do not sell any part of this script, even if you rewrite it. Pay no royalties, even if you make money from performances. You may reproduce and distribute this script freely, but all copies must contain this copyright statement. Email: bobsnook@fea.net

INTRODUCE ADD YOUR VOICE & BRAINSTORM IDEAS



Watch the video with Musu which is found with your download or at this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/6cz3ksm7>

Text for leaders: We will now have the chance to use our voices to show that we care about those in our world who do not have enough to eat. Specifically, we will be writing to our member(s) of Parliament.

You have a few options for writing your letter, so let me know what you prefer. Whichever option you choose, we will brainstorm some ideas together.

Individually:

1. To each write a letter by hand or type a letter to our member of Parliament telling him or her that you care about people around the world who don't have enough to eat.
2. To use a letter builder on the Canadian Foodgrains Bank website that will help you formulate a letter to your member of Parliament.
www.foodgrainsbank.ca/online-letter

As a group (or in small groups):

3. To write a letter as a group, by hand or by typing the letter, to your member of Parliament telling him or her that you care about people around the world who don't have enough to eat.

Instructions for leaders:

- Because the Canadian government is responsible for international affairs, letters about global poverty and hunger should be addressed to a local member of Parliament in Ottawa (not a provincial MLA or MPP).
- Have the youth think about the questions below then discuss as a larger group.
- If they do not know the name & party of their member of Parliament use this website to help them verify:
www.ourcommons.ca/Members

Text for leaders: Before you begin writing, let's brainstorm what you would you like to say in your letter.

- Why do you care about global food insecurity and hunger? Maybe because you have just explored the issue with your youth group? You live on a farm and are concerned about farmers elsewhere? You have faced food insecurity yourself and know how challenging it is? As a person of faith, you believe that we need to take care of one another?
- What have you heard or learned at these sessions or elsewhere that was surprising to you? Are you surprised that most people who live with food insecurity are food producers? That the number of people who don't have enough to eat is rising?

ENERGIZER

Stand up (and dance if you wish)*, if you:

(Sit down if the scenario doesn't apply to you)

- Have ever helped someone
- Like pineapples on pizza
- Know the name of your MP
- Like to dance
- Have ever written a letter
- Think that we should do more about climate change
- Have ever spoken out about an issue that you care about
- Like to go to the beach
- Care about food security around the world
- Want to follow Jesus
- Care about the health of people around the world

*Those who can't stand can wave their arms or do another movement.

ADD YOUR VOICE - HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR MP

A few key points for letter writers:

1. Keep the message positive!
2. Make the note personal. Why is the issue important to you?
3. Be brief. One page or less is best. Organize key ideas into paragraphs.
4. Focus on one issue. This is not the time to bring up every issue you care about.
5. Be clear as to the purpose of the letter.
6. Include name(s), age(s), and a return address and postal code (which should be in the same riding as the MP) Note: If you wish not to use home addresses, you could include the name and address of your church if it is in the same riding as the MP.

Sample Message 1

Dear _____,

I am thankful to live in a great country with many resources. I am thankful that my family has enough food to eat. Recently, I was part of a group that was discussing hunger around the world. I wish that no child in the world ever go to bed hungry. I ask that Canada be generous and help people in other countries who don't have enough to eat.

From,

Name

Age, address, province, postal code

Sample Message 2

Dear _____,

With my youth group, I have been reflecting and praying about global hunger issues. I feel that Canada should do all that it can to assist people around the world who are facing difficult times. Our group learned that there are about 700 million people in the world who don't get enough to eat, and that number is rising because of the pandemic, changing climate and weather, conflict, and other causes. A surprise to me was that most people around the world who are food insecure are small-scale farmers and need support to be better able to feed their families.

I am writing to you to let you know that I would like the Canadian government to continue to generously provide assistance to people around the world who are hungry, especially small-scale farmers.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Name

Age, address, province, postal code

**Let us know if you need any support! We would be happy to help.
Please tell us if you have sent or delivered any letters.**

youth@foodgrainsbank.ca

Sample Message 3

MP Official Title

MP Address

YYYY-MM-DD

Dear _____,

I was recently part a small group that was learning about food security around the world. We learned about some of the reasons that people experience hunger, including COVID-19, conflict and discrimination.

I was surprised to learn that most people in the world who experience hunger are people in developing countries who rely on growing food on small plots of land to support and feed their families. While people everywhere are impacted by climate change, those who rely on predictable weather to feed their families and communities are particularly vulnerable to a changing climate.

I am pleased that Canada continues to be committed to supporting the world's poorest and most vulnerable. I am writing to you today to express my support for a generous international aid budget. I encourage further support for small-scale farmers, especially women. In particular, Canada should provide support for them to adapt to climate change and to build food systems that are better able to withstand other disruptions. By doing so, Canada can have a positive impact on food security and women's rights around the world as well as show our commitment to support developing countries in adapting to, and reducing, climate change.

Building more resilient food systems will help small-scale farmers respond to immediate crises, such as the health pandemic, and the longer-term crisis of climate change. This will help build a healthier, more prosperous and resilient world for all of us.

Please voice this important message to the Minister of International Development and Minister of Finance.

Sincerely,

Name

Age, address, province, postal code

Mail your letter to your Member of Parliament:

[Name of MP]
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

*No stamp is needed when mailing letters to the House of Commons

Alternatively, you can take the letter(s) for your local MP to the local constituency office.

AMPLIFY YOUR VOICE

Instructions for leaders: Share these ideas with the group to see if they are interested in doing one or more actions individually or collectively. One idea is to write the ideas out on sheets of paper and have your youth write their names or add stickers to the actions they'd like to take.

- ◆ Write and send a letter about global hunger to the editor of a local newspaper. Before writing, read letters that have been published in newspapers and research what makes a good letter to the editor. If it is printed, your message could be read by other members of your community, including decision makers.
- ◆ Ask to speak to members of your church community about what you have learned through these sessions. Ask the community to pray for those who experience hunger and food insecurity.
- ◆ Organize a special collection at church to be made in support of the many projects that are supported by Canadian Foodgrains Bank for the work of ending hunger.
- ◆ Most of the major church bodies in Canada are connected to the Foodgrains Bank in some way! Find out if your church community is connected to one of the members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. If so, find out about any special initiatives or campaigns that they are currently running. Learn about our members here: foodgrainsbank.ca/members
- ◆ Organise an activity or event that educates your friends and families about the issues of hunger around the world using some of the information in this guide and some of the resources and films available on our site: foodgrainsbank.ca/resources
- ◆ Raise money for the work of ending hunger via a fundraising event like a run to end hunger or a bake sale, perhaps on World Food Day on October 16th.
- ◆ Most members of Parliament use social media platforms, particularly Twitter. Explore how social media can be used to share ideas with elected officials. Find out which platforms the Prime Minister, your MP or other cabinet ministers use (such as the Finance Minister and the International Development Minister). Draft and share messages about global hunger on various social media platforms. Here are some ideas for Twitter or Instagram:
 - * *Write your message.*
 - * *Share a photo of the group and their letters or another relevant photo.*
 - * *Tag one or two MPs: your own, the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Minister of International Development. Remember that they may have different handles for different platforms.*
 - * *Use an appropriate hashtag or two, such as #CanadianAid #endhunger #foodsecurity #zerohunger*
 - * *For Twitter and Instagram posts, tag @Foodgrains so that we can share your message!*
 - * *Feel free to use or modify one of the sample messages.*

Don't be limited by what we've suggested here! Use whatever social media platform you like to share your concerns about global poverty and hunger in a way that makes sense to you.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

Our group cares about global #FoodSecurity. We want Canada to be generous and work to achieve #zerohunger #CdnAid @foodgrains

#DYK that around 700 million people don't get enough to eat? This is concerning! We wrote letters to @[TAG MP] because we want Canada to help increase global #foodsecurity. @foodgrains

We are about to send our letters to @[TAG MP] outlining why we care about #FoodSecurity for those around the world. @foodgrains [include a photo of the letters or group]

As young Canadians, we want our country to be compassionate and generous. @[TAG PM], let's work to achieve #zerohunger. @foodgrains

#climatechange #covid19 #conflict are major causes of hunger. @[TAG MP] let's do more to promote #foodsecurity around the world. @foodgrains

DEBRIEF

Text for leaders

- Was writing a letter to your MP a new experience for you?
- Would you be willing to take one of the other actions mentioned in the "Amplify Your Voice" section?
- Thinking back to the *Using both feet to walk toward a world without hunger* activity. Often people think of charitable giving (like donating to a food bank) but don't consider or don't want to advocate for justice. Why do you think that is?
- Would you consider using your voice like this again? Why or why not?

CLOSING SESSION

Watch the closing video with Roberta



Found with your download or at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/6cz3ksm7>

PRAYER

For this time of prayer, consider "How can you learn to do right and seek justice?" or use the suggested prayer.

A Prayer of Blessing

God of love, of peace, and of justice, You ask us to pray for all people.

Here we offer our prayer for a world where hunger and injustice persist. May your people boldly proclaim a vision for a human family where everyone has enough – enough food, water, and resources for a healthy community; not just for today, but for a sustainable future.

We recognize that all of us have a role to play in the proper use of the world's finite resources; We pray for those who suffer from poverty, hunger, and injustice;

We pray for those we have elected to public office and for political leaders everywhere, that they will

administer the tasks of government with courage and equity, and seek a strong voice for peace and human security; We pray for ourselves, for a better understanding of how we are connected to hunger, for our role in this democracy; for the voice we possess that can transform rules and policies to reflect compassion and a more humane world.

Bless the gift of our voices; Amplify our messages with your spirit of truth; May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven; May we be faithful travelers as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus who came to be our Bread of Life. Amen.

A final note

We hope that you have found this guide useful and informative! We would love to know what you thought of it.

Thank you for letting the Foodgrains Bank take your group on a journey of reflection and learning. We hope that you stay connected with us:



Email

youth@foodgrainsbank.ca



Twitter

@foodgrains



Instagram

@foodgrains



Facebook

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Canadian Foodgrains Bank is rooted in the belief that humankind is created in the image of God and that it is God's desire that no person should go hungry. The availability of food and access to that food is fundamental to life itself. Food is required to sustain life, to provide the strength for work, and to share in the fellowship of one's family and community.

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank network is guided by the following values:

Compassion to love and stand in solidarity with those who are hungry;

Equality to uphold the value, equality and rights of all women, children and men as creatures bearing the image of God;

Generosity to recognize God's generosity and the abundance of creation, and to respond with gratitude and generosity;

Human Dignity to respect the dignity of people and their desire to be able to feed themselves;

Justice to recognize the powers and structures that perpetuate hunger for some, and an over-abundance for others, and to address those imbalances;

Peace to foster a culture of peace and respect for diversity;

Right to Food to affirm God's desire and the right of each person to have access to adequate food and to be free from hunger; and

Right Relationships to work with a spirit of humility and mutuality and to act in an honest and transparent manner.



Our Story

Our story starts in the mid-1970s when Canadian farmers were looking for a way to share their grain with people facing hunger around the world. Government policies at the time did not make this easy so the farmers called on Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC) to find a way to help. MCCC decided to create a food bank that could receive grains from Canadian farmers and sent to those experiencing hunger around the world. This bank was based on the **“Joseph principle” from the Old Testament** which promotes the storing of grain in good years for use in bad times. The Canadian government agreed to provide matching funds for this new food bank and encouraged the MCCC food bank to invite other churches to join. Other Christian denominations and agencies began to join resulting in the **establishment of Canadian Foodgrains Bank in 1983.**

Initially, grains were shipped from Canada. However, following advocacy efforts led by the Foodgrains Bank, the Canadian government ended the condition that stated that food for aid internationally must be purchased in and shipped from Canada. Since then, money raised by grain donated by farmers in Canada, cash donations from the public and the **matching funds from the Canadian government** are used to purchase food closer to the area of need.

Today, the Foodgrains Bank is a **partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies** who are working together to end hunger. It is **one of the largest multi-denominational Christian agencies in Canada** and Canada’s **leading agency for delivering emergency food assistance around the world.** Our network supports dozens of partners around the world to deliver emergency assistance (for instance when food is not available due to a natural disaster or a crisis) and to work with people to grow more food and improve their livelihoods in the longer-term. Together we learn from and with our members and partners as we navigate complexities in our changing world.

We connect with Canadians through speaking events, workshops and learning resources so that they are engaged to take **informed action for change.** When it is safe to travel internationally, we invite Canadians to travel with us on Food Security Learning Tours and host international visitors so that Canadians can learn more about the international projects that we support and deepen their understanding of food security.

We welcome you to join us in **our mission to end hunger.**



This resource is produced by Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a partnership of 15 Canadian Churches and Church-based agencies working together to end global hunger through:

- Emergency food assistance in times of crisis
- Long-term responses to improve household food security
- Engaging Canadians and governments toward meaningful change

