

Who is my neighbor?



Worship resources for the creative church
Hunger emphasis 2013

Sacred Seasons, a series of worship packets with a peace and justice emphasis,
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Sacred Seasons:



Worship Tools with an Attitude—Toward Justice, Peace & Food Security for All of God's People.

These unique resource packets are available for the liturgical year, three packets a year for \$100 (\$125 for non-US subscriptions), one packet for \$50 (\$65 outside of the US).

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Business Manager: Kathy Gardner
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Editorial Assistants: Natalia Alas, Poplar Yuan
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Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope, Inc., is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to

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- and **Who Is My Neighbor?**
A Hunger Emphasis Placemat

be optional. For 22 years, the group has sought out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

Editorial Address

The Seeds of Hope ministry is housed by the community of faith at Seventh and James Baptist Church. The mailing address is: 602 James; Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax: 254/753-1909; E-mail: seedseditor@clearwire.net. Web address: www.seedspublishers.org. Copyright © 2013.

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art by Sharon R. Rollins

A word about this packet

The theme of this packet, the 16th Hunger Emphasis packet from Seeds of Hope, was inspired by a song by Marsha Martie titled “A Little Bit of You.” The song was recorded in 1976 on vinyl, when Marsha was singing with a folk-gospel/roadhouse rock group called Freedom Road. We were recently able to obtain a digital copy of it, with her blessing. We are sending the digital recording to our subscribers via email, along with the pdfs of this packet. If you have come across this material and would like to hear the song, please contact us at seedseditor@clearwire.net, and we will send you a copy. The lyrics are printed in the sidebar on this page.

You may have also noticed Marsha’s name in the byline for the sermon we’re including, beginning on page 7. She is pastor of CrossTies Ecumenical Fellowship, a small but vital congregation of Christians who have worked in one of Waco’s most poverty-stricken neighborhoods, just across Interstate 35 from Baylor University and the Seeds office, for 25 years. The folks at CrossTies have been friends of the Seeds ministry since we first opened our doors in Waco 22 years ago.

You will find art in this packet from many of our favorite artists, including two new pieces, created just for you by Sally Lynn Askins, a design professor in the Baylor Department of Theatre Arts. Sally has created something like 92 pieces of art for *Sacred Seasons* over the past 15 years. The new pieces are on the cover and on pages 10 and 15.

We are deeply grateful for all of you who subscribe to *Sacred Seasons*, and who make use of these gifts in your worship and work. We are also grateful for the many people who continue to contribute their work and ideas to our worship resources.

We are especially grateful to Deborah Harris, also a member

of the Council of Stewards, who proofreads almost everything that comes out of the Seeds office, and whose nested meditation you will find on page 18. Deborah is a acclaimed freelance writer and lyricist.

As always, we want you to feel free to play around with these liturgies and services, and adapt them to your congregation’s needs and resources. If you come up with something creative and different, we would love to hear about it.

The contents of this packet are your congregation’s to use freely and share with others as the need arises. We really do pray that our materials, and this packet in particular, will help you and your congregation to observe a meaningful hunger-emphasis season.

—Gratefully,
The Seeds Staff and Council of Stewards

Little Bit of You

by Marsha C. Martie

See the children playing in the streets
While their mamas try to make ends meet,
Oh, where is love?
See the junkie lying in the street;
Reality he just couldn’t meet,
Oh, where is love?
See the baby cryin’ in the center,
Is there a day when it’s gonna get better?
Oh, where is love?

Do you care enough to share just a little of your time?
Do you care enough to share just a little of your mind?
Do you care enough to share something old
or something new?
Do you care enough to share just a little bit of you?

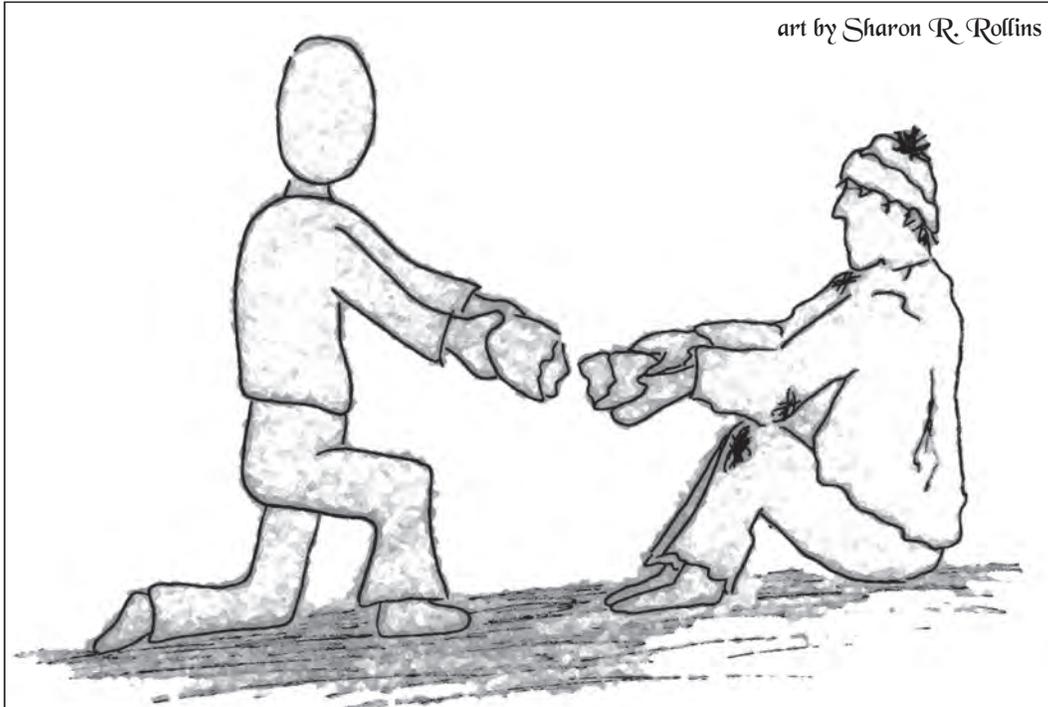
Do you care enough to take a child by his hand?
Do you care enough to show him what it’s like to be a man?
Do you care enough to reach out and touch some social dirt?
Do you care enough to reach out and mend a social hurt?

Do you hear the tender voice; won’t you take up the cue?
Oh, won’t you care enough to share just a little,
Oh, just a little bit of you?

—From the album *Little Bit of Us*, by Freedom Road, 1976. For an audio copy of the song, email seedseditor@clearwire.net.

art by Curtis Cannon

Theme interpretation



art by Sharon R. Roffins

When Jesus said to love your neighbor, a lawyer who was present asked him to clarify what he meant by *neighbor*. He wanted a legal definition he could refer to in case the question of loving one ever happened to come up.

He presumably wanted something on the order of: "A neighbor (hereinafter referred to as the party of the first part) is to be construed as meaning a person of Jewish descent whose legal residence is within a radius of no more than three statute miles from one's own legal residence unless there is another person of Jewish descent (hereinafter to be referred to as the party of the second part) living closer to the party of the first part than one is oneself, in which case the party of the second part is construed to be the neighbor of the party of the first part and one is oneself relieved of any sort or kind whatsoever."

Instead Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the point of which seems to be that your neighbor is to be construed as meaning anybody who needs you. The lawyer's response is left unrecorded.

—Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*

Who is my neighbor?

A hunger emphasis liturgy

by Katie Cook

Processional hymn

“God of Justice, God of Mercy”

Words: Jane Parker Huber, 1983

Music: Rowland Hugh Pritchard, 1855

Tune: HYFERDOL

A Singing Faith #63

Call to worship

ONE: God of all creation, earth, grain, water, yeast,
sun, grapes and air,

MANY: *Gather us together like the ingredients of bread
and wine.*

ONE: We are crushed under foot like grapes in a
winepress.

MANY: *Let the Spirit of grace ferment in our church
and relationships.*

ONE: Knead our lives together in this moment
through pain and joy.



art by Sally Lynn Askins

MANY: *Let your creative fire transform us into the Body
of Christ.*

—Lucas Land

Invocation

Meditation of contemplation

Let us sit down soon to eat
with all those who haven't eaten;
let us spread great tablecloths,
put salt in the lakes of the world,
set up planetary bakeries,
stables with strawberries in snow,
and a plate like the moon itself
from which we can all eat.

—Pablo Neruda, Chilean poet and Nobel Laureate

Hebrew scripture reading

Deuteronomy 10:12-19

Responsive word from the prophets

ONE: This is what God says: I don't want all of
your fancy worship.

MANY: *This is what I want from you: to break
the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the
workplace, free the oppressed, to cancel debts.*

ONE: This is what I want from you: to share
your food with the hungry, invite the homeless
poor into your homes, put clothes on people
who are shivering, to take care of your own
families.

MANY: *If you do this, your lives will be full of
sunlight. Then, when you pray, I will answer. Then,
when you call for help, I will be there.*

ONE: I want you to get rid of your unfair
practices, quit blaming victims and quit
gossiping about other people's sins. I want you
to be generous with the hungry and start giving
yourselves to the people who need you.

MANY: If you do this, your lives will begin to glow in the darkness, and where once there was shadow, there will be bright sunshine.

—adapted from Isaiah 58:6-10 in The Message and the NRSV

Hymn

“Come Celebrate the Call of God”

Words: Brian Wren, 1989

Music: Hal H. Hopson, 1993

Tune: ALIDA’S TUNE

Chalice Hymnal #454

Epistle reading

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Gospel reading

Luke 10:25-37

Drama

“What Am I Supposed to Do about Hunger?”

a dramatic project for children & youth

by Katie Cook

(see page 11)

Sermon

“Go and Do Likewise: Hearing the Good Samaritan Story as Adults”

by Marsha Martie

(see page 8)

Invitation to the table

We welcome all to this table, which is the table of our Lord. As we gather at the table, let us remember that the ones with whom we share are the daughters and sons of God, and so, too, are the people outside these walls who need our help.

The bread

The celebrant lifts the bread and says,

As we share this bread, we thank you, God, for our daily bread, for the food that delights and nourishes us and for the companionship that sustains us.

The celebrant breaks the bread and says,

On the night before his death, Jesus was at supper with his friends. He took bread from the table and blessed it, and gave thanks for it. Then he gave it to his friends, saying, “Take this and eat it, for it

is my body.” As we take this bread, we remember that he also said, “Whenever you give bread to the least of my brothers and sisters, you have given it to me.”

The cup

The celebrant lifts the cup and says,

We thank, you, God for the cup that quenches our thirst and for the Living Water with which you surprise and enrich and transform our lives.

The celebrant pours the cup and says,

On the night before his death, Jesus also took a cup of wine from the table; and when he had given thanks, he gave it his friends, and said, “Drink this, all of you.” In drinking from this cup, we remember that he also said, “Whenever you give something to my brothers and sisters to drink, you have also quenched my thirst.”

Communion blessing

Giving God, bless all who have gathered around this table. May we know the fullness of your presence at every meal and in all our sharing times. Amen.

Meditation of commitment

If you haven’t already played it, this would be a good place to play “A Little Bit of You” by Marsha Martie (see page 3).

Hymn

“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”

Words: Omer Westendorf, 1976

Music: Robert E. Kreutz, 1976

Tune: FINEST WHEAT

Chalice Hymnal #429

Benediction

May God bless each of us as we make our way from here, and as we continue our journey. In our times of need, may we find a table spread in the wilderness and companions on the road. In our times of plenty, may our eyes be open to the hungry one lost in the wilderness. God, give us the grace to share our plenty with him. In our times of plenty, may we see the one who needs our companionship, and may we have the courage to reach out our hands to her.

—Katie Cook is the Seeds of Hope editor.

Go & do likewise: Hearing the good samaritan story as adults

by Marsha C. Martie

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [Jesus] 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, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and

wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' 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 10:25-37

This passage of scripture, the story of the Good Samaritan, is a passage that is quite familiar. It's a story that's been told to us since childhood, and so I think the difficulty with it is learning to hear it with adult ears.

The author of Luke tells us this is something that happened on "one occasion." So he is, at this time, telling stories that are not necessarily in order; he's just making sure this event, one that he considered important, got into the manuscript. And so he tells this now-familiar story.

continued



art by Gertrud Nelson

As a child, I was taught to focus on the parable. The parable told me to love my neighbor and my neighbor meant those in need. And indeed, this is an important story and point.

But now as adults we need to look more deeply at the whole story and gain knowledge for action. That's one very important reason we need knowledge—so we know how to act.

But that's not why this lawyer wanted Jesus' answer, was it? He wasn't seeking knowledge for

How often do we use our knowledge to keep us from living—to keep us from a deep love relationship with God and from caring for those in need?

action. He sought knowledge for justification.

It's important that we look carefully at this man, because he did what we so often do. He started out with the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus' answer was simple for one who knew and worked with the law everyday.

Jesus essentially answered his question with a question: "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" In other words, "What do you already know?"

And the lawyer answered with what he already knew, and knew well. For his answer came from the Shema, which is a command, but it is more than a command:

*Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.
Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and
with all your soul, and with all your mind, and
with all your strength.*

He knew the Shema well; all of his life he had known this prayer, the prayer of all Israel. It was the first prayer he breathed in the morning, and it was the last prayer he whispered at night. For every observant Jew, day began and still begins with these words. To the Shema, the lawyer, with his vast store of knowledge, added and aptly summed up the rest of the law with "Love your neighbor as yourself." Clearly he was knowledgeable.

But Jesus' answer gave the lawyer away. There was a problem—a gap between what he knew and what he did. Jesus told him his answer was right and, if he would apply his knowledge in *doing*, he would live.

But the lawyer gave himself away when, to justify himself, he asks, "And who is my neighbor?"

I hate to think how often this happens: how often we know what to do—our knowledge is equal to the challenge—but our hearts too often seek justification for not acting. And so Jesus, apparently unperturbed by the lawyer's question, told the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The notion that one's good deeds are building up capital that can be cashed in on the judgment day is common in Western culture. Jesus' radical ethic, however, refuses to recognize as real life anything that is not a life of self-giving love toward neighbor and God. In other words, we are not even considered alive from a divine perspective until or unless we are living-as-love. True life, in God's reign, is predicated on love of God and neighbor.

How different is this image of life from the options presented to us by our culture and often by our religious leaders. On the one hand, a life of self-giving love is a far cry from "the good life" of "grabbing all the gusto" one can get. On the other hand, it is very different from the life of legalistic and ritualistic perfection in which one lives according to certain rules and doctrines, never straying from certain safe patterns of action. Somewhere just around the corner from hedonism and legalism we encounter, like the lawyer, the simple love-ethic of the Bible. In discovering this ethic we begin to see that it may actually constitute the one true "alternative life-style" that will breathe life into ourselves and into the world in which we live.

—John S. McClure, *Pentecost 1, Proclamation 5, Series C, Interpreting the Lessons of the Church Year*, Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress: 1994, page 57.

How often do we use our knowledge to keep us from living—to keep us from a deep love relationship with God and from caring for those in need? We need to be intentionally about the business of closing the gap between what we know and what we do. How?

Carry this passage of scripture with you this week. Pray with it and try to live it with the help

of the Spirit of Jesus in you. Each time you are stopped by fear (1) remember that love casts out fear; (2) examine your fear; (3) determine strategies for overcoming your fear. Celebrate every victory

This story teaches us that life is not found where our culture teaches us to look for it. It isn't in self-preservation and indulgence. Rather, life is found in self-giving.

over fear! Tell someone who will rejoice with you; pray in thanksgiving; dance—like Rocky Balboa at the top of the stairs in the movie *Rocky*.

This story teaches us that life is not found where our culture teaches us to look for it. It isn't in self-preservation and indulgence—rather, life is found in self-giving.

And finally, be careful not to use your knowledge to talk yourself out of life.

—Marsha Martie is pastor of CrossTies Ecumenical Fellowship in Waco, TX, a small but vital congregation of Christians at home in one of the city's most poverty-stricken neighborhoods. Marsha was mentored by the late Gordon Cosby, founder of the Church of the Saviour in Washington, DC, a large network of Christian activists and ministries focused on living out faith in practical, everyday service to their neighbors.

Defining 'neighbor'

Just then a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. "Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?" He answered, "What's written in God's Law? How do you interpret it?"

He said, "That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself."

"Good answer!" said Jesus. "Do it and you'll live."

Looking for a loophole, he asked, "And just how would you define 'neighbor'?"

Jesus answered by telling a story. "There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.

"A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man's condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I'll pay you on my way back.'

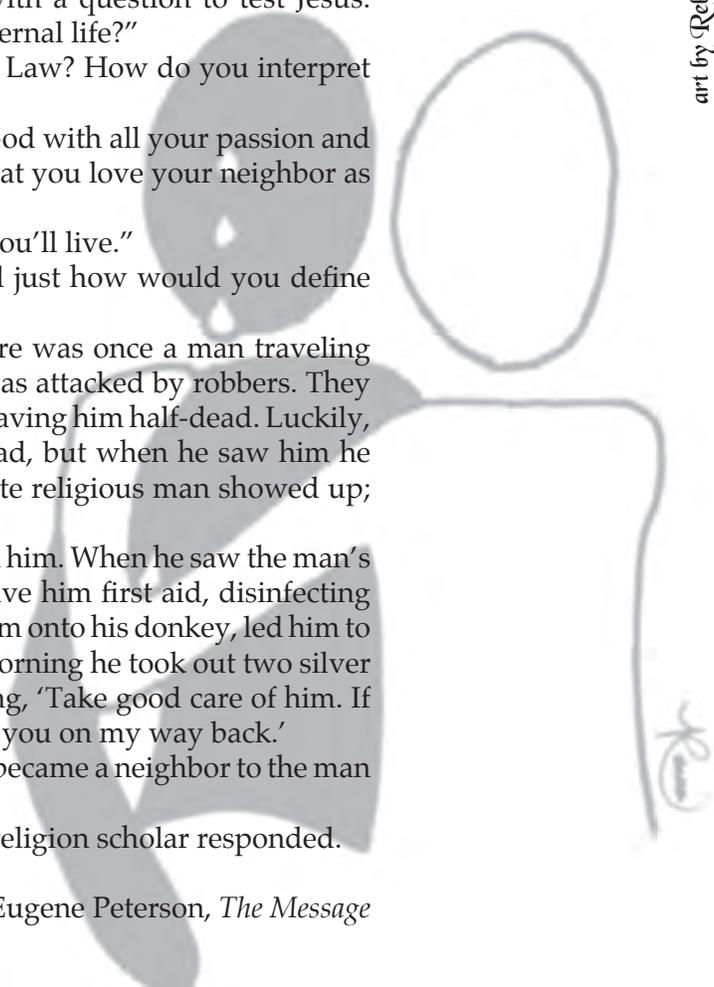
"What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?"

"The one who treated him kindly," the religion scholar responded.

Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

—Eugene Peterson, *The Message*

art by Rebecca S. Ward



What am I supposed to do about hunger?

A dramatic project for children and youth

by Katie Cook

This trio of monologues was first used with youth and children in a small church in Shamrock, Texas. The three readers were teenagers. While they read, a pantomime was performed in the center of the worship platform by older children (ages 8-12.)

The children were part of a small mime group called the Parable Players. One of them, whose attire was inspired by the character of Jesus in *Godspell*, also wore clown-like pants and a Superman shirt. The others wore black T-shirts and jeans, with colorful accessories that evoked their individual characters. Older teenage girls had skillfully applied mime make-up on the actors' faces.

Below is an adaptation of the Parable Players' interpretation of the Good Samaritan parable.

Before the readers begin, the Jesus-like player (PP1) comes onto the stage with an empty bowl and sits dejectedly on the floor. The readers are in the congregation, near the front but not sitting together.

First monologue

This reader evokes cynicism and perhaps some angry defensiveness. As he/she begins to read, the second player (PP2) begins walking down the aisle to the stage. He/she is wearing a colorful ipod with earbuds, moving a little to the music. When PP2 sees PP1, he/she makes a wide arc around him/her, visibly agitated—perhaps fearful—but pretending not to see anything. As the first reader finishes, PP2 leaves the worship area.

First reader: I see it on television all the time—pictures of kids in Somalia and homeless people in Detroit, and they're supposed to be starving, and I'm supposed to do something about it. And all of these bleeding-heart people come to me and say things like, "If you are a Christian, you have to do something." And they say, "If you are really a Christian, you will care about all of these hungry people."

Well, this is my answer to all of them—the ones who try to lay a guilt trip on me, just because I happen to be more fortunate than other people.

It is my right and privilege to have good things, because I am an American and because I am a Christian. Didn't God say in the Old Testament, "If you obey me, you will become rich"?

I hear preachers on television say it all the time. God wants me to have good things. So why should I feel guilty because there are starving people somewhere? I didn't make them sick. It isn't my fault that they are poor. They ought to get out and find a job. They ought to stop having so many babies.

And besides, I have heard that the money we send to Africa and other countries doesn't get to the starving people at all. It just goes into the pockets of the government over there.

And most of those governments are Marxist, anyway. So why should



art by Sally Lynn Askins

we help them? They are our enemies. No, I am not responsible for those people. It is not my problem. If they're going to die, let them do it. The world is getting too crowded with people anyway.

Second Monologue

As this reader begins, a third player (PP3) comes down the aisle, notices PP1, and stops a short distance from PP1, looking toward him/her. As the reader continues, PP3 continues looking at PP1, who holds out his/her arms to PP3. As the reader says, "and so I do nothing," PP3 goes back up the aisle and out of the worship area.

Second reader: I came to talk to you about the problem of hunger in this world. I don't agree with the person who just spoke to you.

I can't watch reports from Haiti on the news or see a picture of a hungry child in a magazine without breaking down and crying. It is such a dreadful problem. It is such a terrible thing to have people in our world, even people in our own country, who are starving to death.

But I feel paralyzed. I feel helpless. What can I do? It would take millions and millions of dollars to collect the grain and then ship it all the way across the world, and then to get it from the ships to the people.

It would take millions of dollars and thousands of people to get the starving people back on their feet, to help them start growing crops again, and find clean water to drink.

And will there be enough water, after all? Will there be enough food? It would take hundreds and hundreds of doctors to take care of the diseases that chronic hunger causes. And it would take who-knows-how-many experts to make sure that the food and supplies get to the people who need them.

I don't know what to do. My heart breaks every time I think about it. But what can I do? I'm only 14 years old, and I have to go to high school. I have no money of my own. My parents have no money to spare. What can one person do? I don't know what to do. And so I do nothing.

Third Monologue

As the third reader begins, the fourth player (PP4) begins to come down the aisle. He/she sees PP1, makes eye contact, turns around and goes back out. He/she re-enters at the words "we can find a way" with a loaf of bread and a cup of water. He/she takes it to PP1, sits companionably next to him/her while PP1 eats and drinks.

Third reader: I have been listening to the first two speakers, and hoping that I can respond to both of them in the right way. My second friend is right; the problem of hunger in the world is so huge that it's hard to even think about it. And it's hard to imagine what one person can do.

But I think Jesus was pretty clear when that man asked him, "Who is my neighbor?" and he told the story of the Good Samaritan. It sounds to me like my neighbor is anybody who needs me. And Jesus also said, "When you did it for one of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me." If we are going to listen to Jesus at all, then we should realize that each face of every hungry person is also the face of Jesus Christ.

And if that doesn't make us want to do something, then we could look at the Old Testament. The prophets kept saying, "You're going to be in trouble because your laws make the needy people suffer."

The people of Israel didn't listen, and look what happened to them! The Assyrians wiped them off the face of the earth. And the people of Judah didn't listen, and the Babylonians came in, destroyed the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and sold the people into slavery.

I think the same thing could happen to us. But still we don't listen. Maybe it's because those hungry people are all the way around the world—at least, I guess most of them are. Maybe it's because we've heard so much about people stealing hunger offerings and governments not letting the donated food get to the people. Maybe it's because somebody told us they aren't worthy of our help—and we are so anxious for excuses, we choose to believe it.

But those excuses are not good enough. What will we say when Jesus asks us why we didn't help?

We can find ways to get the food to the people. There are missionaries and relief workers in those countries, or near them, who can help get the donations where they need to go.

We just have to make the effort to find out who they are. There are ways of knowing which organizations can be trusted, and which ones can't. There is no excuse. Even if we aren't rich by US standards, we have more than those children ever dreamed of. We can give our "coke" money for a month. We can wash cars and raise money. We can pray every day for hungry people. We can do it.

I may just be one young person, pretty unimpressive by myself, but I can do something. It doesn't matter how small it is. The boy with a few

fishes and loaves didn't have much to give. But he gave it. And I will give what little I can. I can make a difference, and with God's help, I intend to do it.

Epilogue

As the third reader ends the monologue, PP4 and PP1 remain where they are, and the song "A Little Bit of You" by Marsha Martie plays over the speakers. (See page 3 to find out how to get a copy of the song.) As the song reaches the words "Do you care enough to share just a little of your time," PP3 comes back in

and joins the other two. At "Do you care enough to take a child by his hand," PP4 comes back in. They all embrace. At "Do you hear the tender voice," the players all exit slowly.

—Katie Cook is the editor for *Seeds of Hope*. A version of this activity was printed in the Sacred Seasons Hunger Emphasis 1999 packet, "The Bread of Deliverance," and a version was included in *Hope Is in Our Hands: Lessons & Activities for Children & Youth*, published in 2008 by *Seeds of Hope and the Alliance of Baptists* (go to www.seedspublishers.org/worship).

Entertaining Strangers

by Kayla McClurg

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

She showed up without a reservation, as most of God's emissaries do. Clutching two plastic shopping bags, scattered look in her eyes, she said quickly, "I was sent by Father Such-and-So. He gave me money and told me to come here."

Rats. The good Father had beat me to it—I, too, would have liked to suggest another "here." I wanted to say, this isn't a shelter. I wanted to say, one of the rules in life is you don't show up unknown at someone's door and expect to be taken in. Yet here she was. Late at night. Alone.

I like the idea that "entertaining strangers" might bring "angels unaware" into our lives; I just don't care for the practice. It's truly lovely, that God sends us the stranger, the interruption, as gift. But what to do with my love of order and stillness, living within my resources, keeping a respectable distance from disruptions?

The rest of you, I imagine, are so much better at the Jesus life. Right away you would spot the angel at your door, right away you would know that the unoccupied bed in your house is meant for her. You surely would have ushered in the angel with curiosity and delight, but I felt only trepidation as she walked through the door.

Have you noticed that scripture doesn't spend a lot of time telling us how to *feel* as we live as a new creation? It simply says, here's what you do: entertain strangers, put yourself in their skin, walk in their shoes—prisoners, too, and people being tortured, the whole of suffering humanity. And it says, don't try this alone. Yoke yourself to Jesus and to one another. I keep forgetting that part—that the "you" in scripture is more often plural than singular.

I keep forgetting that living the Jesus life on my own isn't difficult. It's impossible. Alone, I stumble. Alone, I overthink and overdo. Only together will we freely, even joyfully, have the heart to meet the angels that come, whatever their distressing disguises. Only together will we become whole.

—Kayla McClurg manages and does much of the writing for *Inward/Outward*, a project of the Church of the Saviour in Washington, DC. The meditation above was posted on *Inward/Outward*. To see the writings and/or sign up to receive these insightful and often challenging daily meditations, go to <http://inward/outward.org>. To contact Kayla, write to inwardoutwardeditor@gmail.com.



art by Helen Siegf

Quotes, poems & pithy sayings

The Arabs used to say,
When a stranger appears at your door,
feed him for three days
before asking him who he is,
where he's come from,
where he's headed.
That way he'll have strength
enough to answer.
Or, by then you'll be
such good friends
you don't care.
—Naomi Shihab Nye, *19 Varieties of Gazelle*

You can't get into heaven without a letter of
recommendation from a homeless person.
—Miguel de la Torres

We build walls around our hearts, around our
homes, around our land, around our borders to
keep out strangers, the different, the other; to protect
ourselves from getting hurt or from having to share
our space with others. We guard our hearts, our
land, and our country with great vigilance until the
very guarding obsesses us and we
become so outwardly focused and
defensive that we lose touch with
ourselves and our humanity. In
our efforts to protect and defend
we become disconnected and
fragmented.
—Edwina Gately, *A Mystical Heart*

The first words about the Christian
life are not about what we as
individuals can experience, but
about the kind of society God
intends. The gospel, or good
news, is that in Christ, God's
coming kingdom is breaking into
the here and now—in the depths
of the believer's heart, but also
in the world itself. This kingdom
encompasses economic, material,
psychological, political, social and
spiritual existence.
—Charles Moore, "Why I Stopped
Going to Church," posted in the
Daily Dig

Whatever else the true preaching of the word would
need to include, it at least would have to be a word
that speaks from the perspective of those who have
been crushed and marginalized in our society. It
would need to be a word of solidarity, healing and
love in situations of brokenness and despair and a
disturbing and troubling word of justice to those
who wish to protect their privilege by exclusion.
—Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round*

If we wait for some people to become agreeable
or attractive before we begin to love them, we
will never begin. If we are content to give them a
cold impersonal 'charity' that is merely a matter of
obligation, we will not trouble to understand them
or to sympathize with them at all. And in that case
we will not really love them, because love implies
an efficacious will not only to do good to others
exteriorly but also to find some good in them to
which we can respond."
—Thomas Merton,
No Man Is an Island

Anytime we see somebody who is pushing a shopping
cart and talking to themselves or apparently drunk
on the sidewalk, we know they didn't start out that way....
Something happened to them, probably something awful,
probably more than once, that broke them and brought
them to their sorry state. They were once children who
didn't get a fair break. So let's honor who they were. Let's
at least give them a fair break now.

—John Records, *Leave the Light On*



art by Curtis Cannon

Love your neighbor as yourself: The call of shalom

by Stephen Jones

Scripture: Mark 12:28-34; John 2:1-12

“Love your neighbor as yourself.” Five words. Actually, five revolutionary words. “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus was asked one day by a receptive scribe.

Jesus answered, “...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. And the second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12: 28ff).

For Jesus, this sums up what God expects of us: Love God, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Love your neighbor as yourself. There is an assumption behind this second commandment: you must first love yourself. It’s assumed in the commandment that you already love yourself. Indeed, one might draw the conclusion from Jesus that you cannot truly love your neighbor if you don’t also love yourself. Elsewhere the New Testament states that you can’t love God unless you also love your neighbor. (I John 4:19-20)

As a small child, I was taught that we are to:

First, love God.

Second, love our neighbor.

And third, love ourselves. In that order of importance: put yourself and your needs last. But that isn’t the order in which Jesus placed these commandments. Loving yourself precedes loving your neighbor. Love your neighbor as you already love yourself.

What Jesus couldn’t have known is that loving ourselves has become such an over-arching issue for

our contemporary age. So many of us are caught up in self-loathing:

I do not like myself.

I find all kinds of fault with myself.

I do not like how I look, how I appear, how I act, how I respond, how I’m aging.

I dislike so many things about myself.

Today, many of us are lousy at loving ourselves.

What’s interesting, however, is that we also live in an era in which so many people are trying to love themselves, or to discover themselves. In fact, we live in a narcissistic age. Some scholars maintain that we are living through a narcissistic epidemic in which everything revolves around me: around meeting my individual needs, around reaching my personal goals.

Why do CEOs of so many American corporations pad their own paychecks while laying off workers or denying benefits to their workers? It’s the age of narcissism: look out for Numero Uno, Number One, me, myself and I. All through the recent Great Recession, the income of the upper class has risen steadily while the incomes of the 95 percent of the rest of us have been stagnant or declining.

It’s the age of narcissism. Look out for myself, and let others take care of themselves. It ignores the simple truth that if we raise the standard of living for all of us, then we all benefit. But if we raise the standard of living for only a few, only a few benefit.

Two authors were talking at a party. One went on and on about all



art by Gertrud Nelson

the great reviews his most recent book had received. Then, checking himself, he said to the other author, "Well, enough about me. Let's talk about you. What did you think of my latest book?" (p. 64, Leonard Sweet, *The Hardest Three Words in the World to Get Right*)

Truly, we have become self-absorbed. If you want to write a bestseller, make sure it speaks to self-improvement, the search for the authentic self, the search to get ahead, the pathway to loving yourself. You'll find a receptive audience.

Often, when we go inward, we get lost. I know people who have walked away from their marriages, from healthy friendship circles, from life-giving careers, simply to "find themselves." Is it possible to "find ourselves" merely by looking within?

When we go on an inward search for ourselves, we will most likely get lost. Christianity is a relational faith, and we "go inward" to discover the image of God in which we were created, to find the Christ-like presence within us, to find God's Holy Spirit leading us out of ourselves.

I would argue that the self-loathing so common to our age, as well as the search for self-love, result from the failure of Christianity to highlight the wisdom of Jesus: we must love ourselves.

We go inward for a connection to something transcendent, something beyond us, something more than us. If we go inward merely for a solitary journey—we will likely only become self-absorbed—narrowing, rather than expanding, our search.

I would argue that the self-loathing so common to our age, as well as the search for self-love, result from the failure of Christianity to highlight the wisdom of Jesus: we must love ourselves.

Our failure to include our own selves in the gospel of compassion has resulted in a "selfless slumber" in modern Christianity. We have been far too concerned about pride, or vanity, or the sin of being egotistical, to focus upon healthy self-love.

Perhaps the most classic commentary for mainline Protestants is *The Interpreter's Bible*

published by Abingdon-Cokesbury (1952). I looked at this multi-volume commentary, once found in nearly all pastors' libraries, to see how they interpreted "Love your neighbor as yourself." Below is what I found.

- Leviticus 19:18: no mention of loving oneself.
- Mark 12:28: no mention of loving oneself, only loving neighbor.
- Matthew 19:19: no mention of loving oneself.
- Matthew 22:39: explores self-love, but warns of the difference of false self-love (selfishness) and true self-love (unselfishness).
- Luke 10:27: Here's a direct quote: "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and "thyself" seems to imply the duty, as well as the fact, of self-love—and this Jesus certainly did not intend. (p. 194)
- Romans 13:9: no mention of loving oneself.
- Galatians 5:14: no mention of loving oneself.
- James 2:8: no mention of loving oneself.

Biblical interpreters do not know what to do with "as thyself," and tend to overlook this part of Jesus' message and focus exclusively on "love thy neighbor." In fact, this concept has been largely overlooked throughout Christian history.

Jesus' idea or vision of shalom is the corrective to this silence. It is a vision of seeking the well-being of everyone, including ourselves. A person devoted to shalom cares for herself. A person devoted to shalom loves himself. A person devoted to shalom practices self-love and self-care as well as love and care for others.

Shalom—seeking the well-being of ourselves and others, seeking the well-being of society and of the created order—brings all of this together in a holistic vision. Because our historic presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ has ignored this central vision of shalom, we've lost Jesus' core idea of loving ourselves, or of addressing our own well-being.

For over 40 years, I've used the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis with young couples in pre-marital counseling. I've been struck by how it identifies high levels of hostility within many of us. We have so much inner hostility, directed at ourselves, setting unrealistically high bars of performance and attainment, as well as directed at those we love.

I urge anyone with high hostility scores to "unload their backpack" of unprocessed hurts, losses, embarrassments and violations before they have children, because you do not want to project all

that hostility and its unreasonable standards upon your children. You will create sons and daughters who also hate themselves and cannot possibly earn their parent's love.

For similar reasons, others go the opposite direction and set no standards for their children, practicing *laissez-faire* parenting, which results in narcissistic children who are convinced that the entire world revolves around them, we all exist to meet their needs.

Self-absorption isn't the answer. Neither is an unending inner journey that never leads outward. Jesus' Good News to our self-absorbed, narcissistic era is this: love yourself as God loves you. And love your neighbor as yourself. It's the shalom-idea of inter-connectedness.

Seeking shalom is a unifying journey of discovering the path to our own well-being and the well-being of others and of God's created order. Shalom is God's intention for the world. If my well-being involves your undoing, then it cannot possibly be shalom.

If my well-being is at your expense, it cannot possibly be shalom. If our seeking well-being for ourselves is at the expense of God's created order, that cannot possibly be shalom. Shalom represents complementary wellness and wholeness.

Well-being is complementary by nature. When I lack well-being, it is nearly impossible for those around me to be full and well and whole. How can my colleagues feel well in their lives if I am spewing hurt and division and narcissism?

How can my family feel well in their lives if I do not attend to my own well-being? How can a congregation be a place of well-being if the pastor's well-being is absent?

Self-care was of extreme importance to Jesus. Look at all the times that he went off into the mountains by himself to pray and to attend to his own well-being. He was constantly attentive to his own spiritual and relational needs. He practiced what he preached: he loved his neighbor as he loved himself.

One of the most challenging stories of Jesus' ministry is his first miracle reported in the Gospel of John, changing the water into wine at a wedding in the village of Cana. (John 2:1-12) What's challenging is not the obvious fact that Jesus drank wine, but the more important note that the miracle took place even though no one was dying, no one was blind, no one was hurting and no one was healed. Only a wedding party was saved embarrassment.

The wedding at Cana was among peasant Jews. Resources were limited. You began the wedding party with your best wine and then you served your cheapest wine and finally only water. This family at Cana was likely related through kinship to Mary and Jesus. Jesus showed up to the wedding with 12 friends, and Mary brought the rest of her family. Just the Nazarenes alone could have strained the wedding budget for wine.

Mary takes charge in this parable, pointing out to Jesus that their hosts have run out of wine. Jesus tries

Jesus' idea or vision of shalom ...is a vision of seeking the well being of everyone, including ourselves.

to dodge the issue saying, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My time hasn't come yet." (John 2:4) The curious use of the title, "Woman," instead of "Mother," might suggest a distance between the two. They are not on the same page.

Mary ignores Jesus' statement and tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (2:5) She affirms confidence in Jesus' ability. Why is Mary so concerned? She cares for the well-being of her relatives, and she wants their wedding day to be long-remembered, centered in a vision of abundance, of completeness, of shalom.

Mary could easily have said back to Jesus, "Son, for the well-being of these whom we so dearly love here in Cana, can you address this need?" Because shalom has to do with seeking the well-being of others—even those in our extended family—his was surely Mary's concern.

And thus, Jesus' first miracle, which "revealed his glory" (2:11b), also revealed his passion for shalom. If there was separation between Jesus and his mother, immediately following the wedding "Jesus and his mother, his brothers, and his disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there for a few days" (2:12).

In the spirit of shalom, it isn't selfish to spend time with family, with loved ones, with friends. It is a part of seeking the well-being of ourselves and those around us. If there was tension between Jesus

and his mother, the family retreat in Capernaum could easily have restored the harmony.

The call of shalom is to love yourself as God loves you and to love your neighbor as yourself.

In 1986, after a terrible auto accident for our family, we returned home as broken a family as we could be. My wife's injuries were so extensive that much of the parenting of our two little children fell to me. I was stretched beyond anything I had known.

And I'll never forget the day my secretary at church took me aside and said, "As a friend, Steve, I have to tell you that you are not taking care of yourself. You aren't dressing well. You aren't looking good. You look out of control."

I wasn't delighted to hear her say that, but as soon as she spoke those words, I knew she was right. I was taking care of others, but I wasn't taking care of myself. Without self-care, without self-love, we are not tending to the vision of shalom. We cannot get out of balance and think that we are following Jesus' way.

In my case, I was little good to my family or my congregation by ignoring my own well-being. This was an automobile accident that I caused, and I as yet wasn't far in my journey of forgiving myself. Hating myself and what I had done was a true obstacle to shalom.

"Love your neighbor as yourself" is first found in the Bible in Leviticus (19:18). It's also found in Romans (13:9), in Galatians (5:14), and in James (2:8).

Well-being is complementary by nature. When I lack well-being, it is nearly impossible for those around me to be full and well and whole.

Similar teachings are found in many of the world's religions. It's found twice in Matthew (19:19; 22:37-39) once in Mark (12:30-31), once in Luke (10:27). This is no after-thought, no footnote. As Jesus said, it is the central commandment of God.

The call of shalom is to love yourself as God loves you and love your neighbor as yourself.

— Steve Jones, a pastor since 1972, currently serves the First Baptist Church of Kansas City, MO. He is the author of *Peaceteacher: Jesus' Way of Shalom*, published in three languages by the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. Go to www.bpfna.org for information about the book and a free teacher's guide for group study.

The hardest spiritual work in the world is to love the neighbor as the self—to encounter another human being not as someone you can use, change, fix, help, save, enroll, convince or control, but simply as someone who can spring you from the prison of yourself, if you will allow it.

—Barbara Brown Taylor,
An Altar in the World



art by Gertrud Nelson

Love the Lord, your God

by Deborah Harris



art by Gertrud Nelson

Love.

Love the Lord.

Love the Lord, your God.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer
and muscle.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer
and muscle and intelligence.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer
and muscle and intelligence—and love your neighbor.

Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer
and muscle and intelligence—and love your neighbor as yourself.

—Adapted from *The Message*, Luke 10:25-37

—Deborah Harris is a freelance writer and lyricist living in Waco, Texas. In addition to serving as a member of the Seeds Council of Stewards, she is the copy editor for *Sacred Seasons* and *Hunger News & Hope*.

Helping my neighbor: 12 things for kids, their parents & their ministers to do

by Emily Benton Ryan

12 things kids can do

1. Whenever your stomach growls, pray for the 870 million people in the world who have to go to bed hungry.
2. Give one of your favorite garments to a thrift store or a clothing closet for low-income people.
3. At each meal, offer thanks for the food that you have (even if it's not your favorite) and pray that God will help you do things for people who don't have enough.
4. Try not to eat junk food.
5. Find out if there is a weekend backpack program in your community for kids who don't have food at home. If there is, ask if you can help fill the backpacks. If there isn't, write a letter to your local newspaper and ask why there isn't one.
6. Ask your parents, teacher, or Sunday school leaders where the food you eat comes from. Why do so many people go hungry in countries that export food products to other countries?
7. Make a list of things you have and a list of things you would like to have. Talk to your parents about which of these are necessities and which are luxuries.
8. Don't eat between meals for a week.
9. Ask your parents or pastor about hunger organizations and donate some of your allowance to your favorite one.
10. Ask your children's minister what the Bible says about hungry people. Encourage him or her to spend some time teaching you and the other children about this.
11. Ask your Sunday school teacher about the country of Syria in the Bible. Find it on a map of Bible lands. Then pray for the millions of refugees who are trying to escape the violence in Syria, and who need food and shelter.

12. Read the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Why do you think the first two people didn't help the man who was in trouble? What do you think you would do? Talk to your parents about this.

12 things parents can do

1. Take your children grocery shopping with you. Buy extra canned foods, peanut butter, or other staples for your local food pantry. Have your children pick out their favorites, so that a hungry person can enjoy the foods that they enjoy.
2. Take your children to a farmer's market and talk to them about eating healthy food grown by local farmers.
3. Have a meal that is just soup and bread or beans and tortillas. Get your kids to help you plan it.



art by Gertrud Nelson

4. Take your children with you to volunteer at a soup kitchen or deliver Meals on Wheels.
5. Work with your children to organize a canned food drive at your church. Kids can motivate a congregation better than anyone.
6. Find a copy of the *Simply in Season Children's Cookbook* by Mark Beach and Julie Kauffman. Help your children learn where their food comes from.
7. Teach your children about the importance of recycling.
8. Get your children to help you put toiletries or fruit and granola bars in baggies, and give them to people who stand on street corners with signs.
9. Encourage your children to collect some of their blankets and warm clothing. Then take the kids to deliver the items at a local shelter.
10. Help your kids write a letter of concern to Congress or the President about hungry people. Let them write or draw on a paper plate, and then fold it and put it in an envelope to mail. (Go to www.bread.org for help in wording the letter. A salad-size paper plate will go, folded once, in a small standard envelope.)
11. Talk with your children about those guys who stand on busy street corners holding signs.
12. Talk with your children about all the luxuries you have compared to the necessities that some lack.

12 things a children's minister can do

1. Find out what materials your denomination produces for children about hunger. If you need help, contact Seeds (254-755-7745 or seedseditor@clearwire.net) and we'll help you find materials that are appropriate for your church.
2. Ask your church to collect canned food for a local food pantry, and get the children to promote it.
3. Encourage your children to be involved with a UNICEF collection for Halloween.
4. Talk with the children about what it must be like to be homeless. Ask someone to dress up like a homeless person and come in and talk to the kids.
5. Get a list of homebound church members and ask the kids to write and decorate cards to them. Or ask them to write and decorate cards for Meals on Wheels recipients.
6. Conduct a Bible drill with the children using verses about taking care of poor people. Tell them that these verses have a theme, and get them to

guess what it is. (You can use the 40-day calendar that comes with this packet to get the references; each day includes a scripture about what God thinks of poor and marginalized people and what believers are commanded to do.)

7. During a time when your children usually have a meal together, pass out one piece of bread and a cup of water to each of them and talk with them about how hunger feels.
8. Help your children assemble relief kits for people in war zones or disaster areas. Either the Mennonite Central Committee (www.mcc.org/respond/kits) or Church World Service (www.church-worldservice.org) will tell you how.
9. Set up a church-wide recycling center and get the children to promote it with announcements and skits.
10. See if there is a CROP Hunger Walk in your community. If there is, get your children involved in walking. For more information, go to www.churchworldservice.org and click the "CROP" button. If there isn't, organize your own walk.
11. Give each child one-fourth cup (two ounces) of rice in a baggie and tell them to take it home and think about the fact that 870 million people only have this much to eat on most days.
12. Before it gets cold this winter, encourage the children to donate blankets, coats, gloves and scarves to a homeless shelter.

—Emily Ryan is the mom of Nathan and Jack, and is a grant writer for the Baptist Health Foundation of Little Rock, AR. She lives in Roanoke, VA, and is a former Seeds of Hope intern. This is an updated version of the one she wrote in 2008.

**Breaking down the barriers
between the givers and the
receivers of aid, between those
who have and those who have
not, is an essential expression of
the solidarity that liberates the
privileged from their blindness
and the marginalized from their
invisibility.**

—Theodore W. Jennings,
Good News to the Poor

2013 Facts about Hunger

compiled by Natalia Alas

Hunger Around the World

- The vast majority of hungry people (98 percent) live in developing countries, where almost 15 percent of the population is undernourished. Around three-quarters of these undernourished people live in low-income rural areas, principally in higher-risk farming areas. *World Food Programme (WFP)*

- Approximately 870 million people in the world do not eat enough to be healthy. That means that one in every eight people on Earth goes to bed hungry each night. However, there is hopeful news: the number of people living with chronic hunger has declined by 130 million people over the past 20 years. *United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)*

- Hunger is number one on the list of the world's top 10 health risks. It kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. *Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)*

- Between one-third and one-half of all deaths in children under the age of 5 in developing countries are linked to poor nutrition. Some studies estimate this to include 3.1 million children. *WFP, UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME)*

- The first thousand days of a child's life, from pregnancy through age 2, are the critical window in which to tackle undernutrition. A proper diet in this period can protect children from the mental and physical stunting that can result from malnutrition. *IGME*

- It costs just US\$0.25 per day to provide a child with all of the vitamins and nutrients he or she needs to grow up healthy. *WFP*

- If women in rural areas had the same access to land, technology, financial services, education and markets as men, the number of hungry people could be reduced by 100-150 million. *FAO*

- It would cost US\$3.5 billion to feed every hungry schoolchild in the world. That's around two times

the takings from the movie *Titanic*, which grossed US\$1.8 billion worldwide. *WFP*

- Asia and the Pacific have the largest share of the world's hungry people (some 563 million). *WFP*

- One out of six children in developing countries is underweight. *WFP*

- About 180 million children under the age of 5 suffer from stunting and are not reaching their potential. About 80 percent of the these stunted children live in just 20 countries. *WFP, UNICEF*

- 66 million primary school-age children across the developing world are hungry when they attend classes, with 23 million in Africa alone. US\$3.2 billion would feed all of the hungry school-age children in the world for one year. *WFP*

- Under-nutrition among pregnant women in developing countries leads to one out of six infants



born with low birth weight. This is not only a risk factor for neonatal deaths, but also causes learning disabilities, mental retardation, poor health, blindness and premature death.

—*World Hunger Education Service (WHES)*

- There is enough food to provide everyone in the world with at least 2,720 kilocalories (kcal) per person per day. The principal problem is that many people in the world do not have sufficient land to grow, or income to purchase, enough food. *FAO*

- As of 2008, the World Bank has estimated that there were an estimated 1,345 million poor people in developing countries who live on \$1.25 a day or less. *WHES*

- By causing poor health, low levels of energy, and even mental impairment, hunger can lead to even greater poverty by reducing people's ability to work and learn, thus leading to even greater hunger. *WHES*

- One out of three people in developing countries are affected by vitamin and mineral deficiencies. *World Health Organization (WHO)*

- A child dies from hunger-related causes every 13 seconds. That's as many as 7,000 children younger than 5 killed every day. *30 Hour Famine*

Hunger in the US

- Nearly 49 million people in the United States are living in food-insecure households or a household where the members are unable to consistently access the adequate amount of nutritious food necessary for a healthy life.

—*USDA*

- A key cause of food insecurity in the United States is the lack of sufficient resources to cover the cost of food in addition to meeting other basic needs. —*Feeding America*

- Ninety percent of all counties in the US have a majority of food-insecure children living in households with incomes at or below the federal poverty line.

Feeding America

- One in six people in America face hunger.

Do Something

- Households with children reported a significantly higher food-insecurity rate than households without children. *Do Something*

- Food insecurity exists in every county in America. *Do Something*

- In the US, hunger isn't caused by a lack of food, but rather the continued prevalence of poverty. *Do Something*

- One in seven people are enrolled in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Nearly half of them are children.

Do Something

- Forty percent of food is thrown out in the US every year, or about \$165 billion worth. All of this uneaten food could feed 25 million Americans. *Do Something*

- More than one in five children is at risk of hunger. Among African-Americans and Latinos, nearly one in three children is at risk of hunger.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- Of the more than 20 million children who receive free or reduced-price lunch each school day, less than half receive breakfast and only 10 percent go to summer feeding sites. *USDA*

- About half of all American children will receive SNAP benefits at some point before age 20. *Bureau of Labor Statistics*

- Low-income households spend a greater share of their income on food. Food accounts for 16.4 percent of spending for households making less than \$10,000 per year compared to the US average of 12.7 percent. *Bureau of Labor Statistics*

We want to take people's success stories and re-write the "story" of hunger. There are things that have been working, and things we know can work. It may once have seemed like a hopeless story, but we're changing it to a hopeful one.

—*Bill Ayres, cofounder of World Hunger Year*

How much do you know about hunger?

compiled by Natalia Alas

Test your hunger knowledge by taking the following quiz.

1. One in ___ Americans do not have access to enough food.
A. 5 B. 2 C. 6 D. 8
2. True or False: The lack of adequate nutrition affects a child's cognitive, physical and behavioral development.
A. True B. False
3. Approximately how much of the population in developing countries is undernourished?
A. 15 percent B. 20 percent C. 10 percent D. 5 percent
4. How many US dollars does it cost per day to provide a child with all of the vitamins and nutrients he or she needs to grow up healthy?
A. \$1.00 B. \$5.00 C. \$0.25 D. \$10.00
5. How many people in the world do not have enough to eat?
A. 50 million B. 100 million C. 500 million D. 870 million
6. What percentage of deaths in children under the age of 5 in developing countries is linked to undernutrition?
A. one-third B. one-half C. one-fourth D. one-eighth
7. 1,345 million people in developing countries live on \$___ per day or less.
A. \$0.40 B. \$1.25 C. \$1.00 D. \$0.75
8. True or False: A key cause of food insecurity in the United States is the lack of sufficient resources to cover the cost of food in addition to meeting other basic needs.
A. True B. False
9. How much do low-income households spend on food?
A. 18.5 percent B. 20 percent C. 16.4 percent D. 10 percent
10. One in _____ people will go to bed hungry tonight.
A. eight B. six C. ten D. five

—Natalie Alas, a native of Pearland, TX, is a Professional Writing student at Baylor University and a Seeds of Hope intern.

Correct answers: 1c, 2a, 3a, 4c, 5d, 6a, 7b, 8a, 9c, 10a

Benediction



art by Helen Siegl

Among people everywhere, sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship. For the sake of our redemption, we say together the ancient words which join us with our own people and with all who are in need, with the wrongly imprisoned and the beggar in the street.

For our redemption is bound up with the deliverance from bondage of people everywhere.

This is the bread of affliction,
the poor bread,
which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

Let all who are hungry come and eat.

Let all who are in want
share the hope of Passover.

As we celebrate here,
we join with our people everywhere.

This year we celebrate here.
Next year in the land of Israel.
Now we are all still bondmen.
Next year may all be free.

—from the Yahatz, the portion of the Passover Seder in which the middle matzah is broken and shared. This passage is taken from the New Union Passover Haggadah, published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.