Where Is the Balm?

art by Rachel Farris

40-Day Hunger Calendar

1 — 1 John 3:16-18

Challenge a group at your church to read all of the scriptures on this calendar in 40 days. Check in with each other every week to share your insights.

2 — Luke 1:46-55

Hold a prayer vigil for the people of Gaza, Sudan, South Sudan, Haiti and Mali. These countries are in or on the brink of actual famine.

3 — Luke 10:25-37

Pray for aid workers who are trying to provide humanitarian aid in the world's many areas of conflict and famine.

4 — 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Go to map.feedingamerica.org and look up the number of food insecure people in your community.

5 — Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Read *Healing Affluenza and Resisting Plutocracy* by Ched Myers.

6 — Mark 10-17-22

Ask your church to assemble school kits, hygiene kits, welcome backpacks and emergency cleanup buckets for refugees and victims of disaster. Go to cwskits.org to find out how.

7 — Exodus 22:21-27

Volunteer to help serve a meal at Salvation Army or another soup kitchen. Then sit down and visit with the guests.

8 — Luke 16:19-31

Today, write down the number of times you turn on the faucet, flip a light switch or reach into the refrigerator. Think about where that water, power and food come from.

9 — Amos 8:4-7

Find out if your community has a CROP Hunger Walk to raise money and hunger awareness. If so, get involved. If not, consider organizing one. For more information, go to https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2024.

10 — Psalm 82:1-4

Find the 2014 film *Cesar Chavez* on a streaming channel and gather a group to watch it.

11 — James 5:1-6

Borrowing from the idea of Little Free Libraries, some churches have started Little Free Pantries. Read about the grassroots movement at www.thelittlefreepantries.org.

12 — Luke 7:18-23

Go to the UN World Food Programme site at www.wfp.org and download the latest hunger map. Use it to pray for hungry people in the countries with the most need.

13 — Amos 2:6-8

Find out where the food at your grocery store comes from. Many stores try to use locally grown food and locally manufactured goods, because they use less energy and incur lower transportation costs.

14 — Isaiah 61:1-4

Thank God for your meals each day (even if it's not your favorite) and pray for those who don't have enough to eat.

15 — 1 Samuel 2:1-8

Ask your children's group to write encouraging "love notes" to people who come to a local pantry for food. Slip the notes into their food boxes.

16 — Ezekiel 16:48-50

Find out if anyone in your community helps with school uniforms for unhoused students. Ask a school official what you can do to help.

17 — Matthew 25:31-40

Better Banking Options is a network of banks and credit unions that bring capital into low-income neighborhoods neglected by traditional banking. See how you can help at www.betterbankingoptions.com.

18 — John 6:1-14

Get a copy of *A Duet for Home*, a middle-grade novel written for kids ages 8 to 12, by Karina Yan Glaser, and read it with your kids or children's group.

19 — Isaiah 10:1-4

Find ways you can support small businesses that are owned by people of color and religious minorities.

20 — Luke 19:1-10

Read about the Cuban Food Crisis in *Hunger News & Hope*, Vol 25 No 1, Spring/Summer 2025, beginning on page 6. Lead a discussion group about what you can do to help.

21 — Romans 12:9-21

Sit in the waiting room of a local emergency assistance program and talk to the clients.

22 — Psalm 107:33-43

When you go grocery shopping, buy extra staples for your local food pantry. Before you go, call the pantry's staff and ask them what is most needed.

23 — Isaiah 32:1-8

Look at the labels on your clothing. Did any of it come from a sweat shop? (See www.sweatshops.org).

24 — Deuteronomy 10:12-19

Start °your Christmas shopping now. You can pick from a wide variety of gifts of honor for your loved ones: a warm meal for a child, books for seven children, fruit seeds, financial training for a woman, a household water filter, and many more. Go to www.cwsbestgifts.org to shop.

25 — Matthew 22:34-40

Go to www.frac.org and learn about the importance of SNAP benefits in keeping people from going hungry.

26 — Isaiah 1:11-17

Volunteer to do chores or pick up groceries or medicine for someone in your church who can't get around very well.

27 — Jeremiah 7:1-11

Find out if anyone in your community is sponsoring a refugee or refugee family. Ask what you can do to help.

28 — 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Install a recycling bin at your church and set up a team to transfer the materials to a city-wide recycling center.

29 — Deuteronomy 14:28-15:6

Drink only water for a week and give thanks for clean, safe, accessible water.

30 — Micah 6:6-8

Volunteer to deliver food to homebound seniors for Meals on Wheels.

31 — James 2:1-9

Look a homeless person in the eye.

32 — Zechariah 7:8-13

Using more energy than we need drives up food prices. Talk to your church and family about ways you can use less energy.

33 — Proverbs 31:8-9

Ask your church members to write to US leaders and tell them that it is important that we make sure everyone has enough to eat. Ask participants to bring the letters to church and bless them before you mail them. Go to ol.bread.org to learn more.

34 — Luke 12:16-21

Skip lunch today and give the money you saved to a local hunger project.

35 — Isaiah 58:6-12

Organize a blanket and warm clothing drive in your church. Give the items to a local shelter.

36 — Job 31:16-28

Read the story about Habitat for Humanity in the Spring/Summer 2024 issue of *Hunger News & Hope*, and find out if there is a Habitat affiliate in your community. Go to www.seedspublishers.org/news.

37 — Malachi 3:5

Get a group to put together emergency kits for unhoused people, containing toiletries, hand sanitizer, warm gloves, feminine hygiene products, a bottle of water and protein bars.

38 — Luke 14:15-24

Find out if there's a weekend backpack program for food-insecure schoolchildren in your area. If there is, volunteer to help. If there isn't, google "backpack programs," and see what you can do.

39 — Acts 4:32-35

Don't eat between meals today.

40 — Isaiah 65:17-25

Never, ever, forget that you can make a difference in the world. Do what you can, when you can, and ask God to bless your effort. To someone it may mean more than you dare to think.