



'Tis the Season
September 15, 2021
Rachel Yates

“We want this to be a growing thing.” The pun was unintentional, but obvious to everyone on the call. Rev. Matt Lee of Kettle Moraine Presbyterian Church shared with the Planning Commission about the work of Food for the Journey, a collaboration of 5 Presbyterian congregations committed to growing and distributing food in Southeast Wisconsin. The garden, dedicated this past Sunday, is a literal “growing thing.” The harvest season is upon us, and their garden is bountiful. But, Matt also hopes the idea will take off and “grow” as others get involved in this or another community garden.

The participating congregations will share about their efforts at the upcoming Presbytery Gathering. We will be transitioning from our theme of Fair Employment to Food Security, and the Food for the Journey’s guidance is very timely. **General Assembly Co-Moderator Elona Street-Stewart is a featured speaker** as well, with her national insights on the Matthew 25 movement and food security in particular. We are privileged and blessed to have her with us. Our Presbytery commissions are bringing a lot of business for us to cover, but the educational pieces promise to delight. You won’t want to miss the Gathering, so don’t forget to [register](#) for this Zoom meeting!

Living in an agricultural state, food might appear abundant. According to the Wisconsin Council of Churches, however, hunger is prevalent here. More than one in nine Wisconsin households are food insecure, greater than the US average. More than one in twenty-one Wisconsin households experience very low food security, meaning at least some members (typically only adults) reduce the amount of food they eat below usual levels and below the amount they consider appropriate. In most of these households, the adult reports that in the past 12 months they were hungry and did not eat because there wasn’t enough money for food. In the most severe cases, children as well as adults have had to go without food. Due to other systemic disparities, Black and Latinx households experience greater food insecurity than white households. The [WCC study guide](#) offers a wealth of resources for you or your group to learn about and take action to alleviate hunger.

There is more than enough food to go around, and the barriers that cause hunger are unconscionable. Between our September and November Presbytery Gatherings, we will explore together the issue and response to hunger in our communities. Many, many of our congregations are engaged in food ministries, but we’re going to encourage you to go even deeper as we enter into the theme of Food Security. Look for a letter from Moderator Nicole Farley inviting and challenging you to continue what you’re already doing and take additional actions to be better informed and to respond even more generously.

On the next page, you’ll see a [Ten Commandments of Food](#) shared by the Presbyterian Hunger Program that might be a starting point for your personal action. They are simple steps to remind us of our relation to sustainable food. Thank you for your gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering, which supports this ministry of the denomination.

So much more is coming on this theme! I hope you’ll join us on 9/22 as we kick off our Food Security work together.



TEN COMMANDMENTS OF FOOD



I.

Give thanks for the food you eat.



II.

Eat food grown as close as possible to where you live.



III.

Strive for all people to have knowledge about and access to affordable, nutritious food.



IV.

Eat mindfully and in moderation.



V.

Do not waste food.



VI.

Be grateful to those who grow and prepare food for your table.



VII.

Support fair wages for farmworkers, farmers and food workers.



VIII.

Reduce the environmental damage of land, water and air from food production and the food system.



IX.

Protect the biodiversity of seeds, soils, ecosystems and the cultures of food producers.



X.

Rejoice and share the sacred gift of food with all.



www.oikoumene.org/foodweek

Photos: Paul Jeffrey, Mike Garcia, Nicole Benz, Sean Hawkey, Armin Paasch, Celestine Ngulube, WCC-EAA | Design: Nicole Benz

