



Food For All

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At our September 22 Presbytery Gathering, we introduced the final theme of our six-segment Matthew 25 vision: food security. Drawn from the question, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you?”, we turn our attention to ensuring all have enough to eat. We also have a chance to dive into the topic of food sovereignty, or control over the means and outcome of food production.

Next week is an excellent kick-off: Oct. 10–17 is Food Week of Action. This year’s theme is **People and Planet First**, which includes prioritizing family farmers, fishers and others producing in harmony with nature – agroecologically – and achieving food sovereignty. As communities continue to face the pandemic and vulnerable food chains, we join with the Presbyterian Mission Agency in affirming the necessity of building resilient agricultural systems that protect and cool the planet and put farmers and workers first. This year’s Food Week highlights groups and initiatives that are building equitable and sustainable food systems, while also tackling the economic and racial drivers of hunger, poverty, and oppression.

Here are some ideas for how to get involved:

In Worship The Presbyterian Mission Agency created some [beautiful litanies and suggested hymns](#) for use. It also offers a [prayer for World Food Day](#), October 16. For those who want to continue prayer throughout the week, a [seven-day option](#) is available.

In Study Last quarter, we explored the topic of agricultural labor trafficking, and our exploration of food security is a natural transition. [Harvest of Justice 2021: Farm Workers & Food Justice](#) is an annual program of the National Farm Worker Ministry. The organization puts the problem bluntly: “In the U.S., farm workers uphold the agricultural industry while simultaneously being **400 times** more likely to experience food insecurity than the general public.” (emphasis added). They offer a [study guide](#) for faith communities on direct action opportunities, such as food banks, to help you assess the best ways of getting involved.

On the Land If you were inspired at the Presbytery Gathering by the [video of congregational community gardens](#) in Milwaukee Presbytery, you might want to take a deep dive into the possibility of starting your own. Through the collaboration of several food and faith organizations, you now have access to a detailed [handbook](#) on how to do just that. It covers everything from irrigation to fundraising. Using the experiences of actual congregations, they share best practices for a variety of options for growing and distributing food.

At the Intersection Since September 2020, the Presbytery has explored the intersection of poverty and racism in our topics of medical care, housing, criminal justice, fair employment, and now food security. This [article](#) demonstrates just how intertwined these issues are. For example, it cites a National Institutes of Health study finding that 91% of citizens returning from incarceration reported being food insecure. When we disrupt hunger, homelessness, cash bail, labor trafficking, and medical debt, we can also break down structural racism.

Thank you for engaging these topics in response to our Matthew 25 challenge. Happy eating!