

Handout #11 » Twenty Ways to Get Started

- 1 Organize a letter-writing campaign in your church or group of churches to local, state, or national government officials to express concern about hunger in your community.
- 2 Plan and promote a food drive in your congregation, its neighborhood, or in a group of congregations.
- 3 Organize a field trip for members of your congregation – or your church’s youth group – to visit a local food assistance program and see how it works and whom it helps.
- 4 Take up a special collection for a local food assistance program.
- 5 Plan a special worship service on the theme of hunger, including a special offering of nonperishable food items or money for a local food assistance program, and/or an opportunity to write letters.
- 6 Organize a community forum or series of forums to discuss how to increase food security in your community. Invite local experts to speak.
- 7 Convene a group to do a more thorough community food security analysis. Collaborate with other churches and local service and advocacy organizations.
- 8 Participate in a local CROP walk to raise funds to fight hunger. (<http://hunger.cwsglobal.org>)
- 9 Have members of your congregation (and/or your church’s youth group) participate in a “30-hour famine” (see www.30hourfamine.org).
- 10 Produce a series of bulletin inserts or church newsletter articles about the extent, effects, causes, and solutions to hunger in your community.
- 11 Submit letters to the editor, or an op-ed piece, to your local newspaper on the problem of hunger in your community.
- 12 Find out what volunteer opportunities there are at local food service organizations, and recruit volunteers from your congregation. Post sign-up sheets and offer transportation for volunteers to and from the site.
- 13 Set up a special bulletin board or display area at a prominent place in your church with information about hunger and food assistance programs in your community.
- 14 Investigate the possibility of your church serving as a meal site for a senior, after school, or summer nutrition program.
- 15 Turn part of your church grounds into a community garden where low-income people can raise their own produce. Start a program where experienced gardeners can work with children after school and weekends to learn about gardening and how to prepare meals with fresh produce.
- 16 Arrange for a small group to meet with your state legislators or congresspersons when they are in your district, to talk about hunger and poverty issues in your community.
- 17 Find out when a state legislative committee will be holding a hearing on a proposal having to do with hunger or a related issue (poverty, health care, housing, etc.), and offer testimony on behalf of the interests of low-income people.
- 18 Attend a candidates’ forum and ask those who are running for office how they would address food security issues in your community.
- 19 Offer a poverty or hunger simulation exercise for your congregation or community group.
- 20 Join the Wisconsin Council of Churches Public Policy Advocacy Network (visit www.wichurches.org and click the “Advocacy” menu tab, or call 608-837-3108).

Don't let yourself be limited by these ideas! They are only a sampling of what can be done. Think deeply about your community and your congregation, and you may come up with some fresh and original ideas that take advantage of the uniqueness of your situation.

For contact and resource information to help you act on these ideas, visit the “Hunger Resources Section” of the Council’s website, www.wichurches.org.