



Activities for Children and Youth

About These Activities

- Children are interested in helping families who are poor or who need food. These activities help them learn about hunger and provide ways for them to take action to erase it from their community.
- Children are also interested in being faithful. These activities not only provide ways to help others but interpret that helping as faithfulness to God's vision.
- Some activities are for children who can read.
- Some activities any child can do with a little guidance from an older child or an adult.
- While the activities are not specifically tied to the adult study sessions for "Hunger No More," consider using them in the order they are in the packet to connect with the adult study.
- Supplement whatever you do with hands-on activities for the children and introduce them to people who are making a difference in your community.
- Consult the "Hunger No More: Leader's Guide" for additional activities that can be adapted to children and youth.



Ways to Use These Activities

- Add them, one at a time, to your regular church school or mid-week sessions.
- Combine several of the activities to plan a session for children while their parents are otherwise occupied.
- Give the stand-alone sheets, such as "God's Vision for All People" or "Making It Through the Month Maze," to the children to do on their own.
- Set up centers with the activities and invite the children to select the one they want to do. You might begin with the stories and go from there or the stories might be the beginning point for each center.
- Set up one or two activities for children (and their parents, if they wish) to do during fellowship time on Sunday morning.

- Set aside a bulletin board in the church hallway where all members can see it as they walk to worship. Give it a name, e.g. “Trinity’s Children View Hunger.” Post some of the children’s activities on the bulletin board.
- The children might prepare their own “children’s sermon” or Minute for Mission. They could act out some of the stories in Activity #2, do a mini-drama of Activity #6 or perform Activity #8 (perhaps with a dance).

Other Resources

- Go to www.bread.org and under “Find it here” click “Church resources; then click on “Teach children about hunger with our Sunday School resources” for “Make Hunger History: Teaching Children About Hunger, Grades 4-6,” and links to other relevant sites.
- Go to www.churchworldservices.org/resources.html for “Build a Better World,” (children’s materials, “Hungry Decisions” (a simulation game) and an audiovisual lending library.
- Go to www.feedingminds.org for age-graded materials on world hunger in six languages. The site includes general topics on why we need food, why are people hungry and what can we do.
- Many other websites and resources are listed in the “Hunger No More: Leader’s Guide,” especially the sixth leaflet “Go and Do Likewise.”
- Browse the web, using “hunger U.S.” to see what you find or ask an older child to do it for you.



Giving Food to Others

Materials

- Lists of food to bring for a food pantry or bank
 - Colored markers or crayons
1. Tell the children about a food pantry or bank in your community. If possible, invite a representative from the organization to describe it to the group or go visit the organization.
 2. Talk with the children about what they can bring for the food pantry.
 3. Provide them with lists to take home and to distribute to the congregation. They can decorate the lists with drawings.
 4. Plan a way to keep track of the amount of food they collect. Here are some ideas:
 - ◆ Fill brown paper grocery bags as the food is brought in. See how many bags of food you can make.
 - ◆ Draw cans of food on a piece of poster board for every five (or ten) food items collected by the children.
 - ◆ Set aside a corner of the learning area to collect the food. Count the number of items each week.
 - ◆ Ask the children how they would like to keep track of the food they gather.



Activity 3



Stories About Hunger

Based on true stories

Ray, who is eight, has one brother, who is nine. He lives with his mother and her new husband. His mother works in a factory, but his stepfather is often unable to work.

Ray's favorite food is pizza. His mother makes it two or three times a month. Usually, they have hamburgers, hot dogs or spaghetti. For breakfast, they eat cereal. They almost never have dessert, not fruit or cookies, much less ice cream.



The closest grocery store is three miles from Ray's house. Sometimes they do not have enough money to put gas in the car and to buy groceries. Then his mother puts gas in the car and goes to a food bank, where the food is free. But there isn't much choice of food and everything is canned. Ray's mother would like to provide a healthier menu for her family.

Jane, who is twelve, lives with her mother and her grandmother. Also in the house are her brother Tom and sister Cherry, who are teenagers. Her grandmother does not work, so she does the cooking.



Jane remembers when her mother had a good job and the family would go to a restaurant once or twice a month. No more. Her mother lost her job and now has a low-paying job. Before her mother found this job, the family sometimes waited at the back door of a nearby restaurant. They took the food that was thrown into the dumpster.

They don't do that now, but some days they have only rice to eat. Her mother's salary doesn't go far when there are also bills for electricity, clothes and food. Jane remembers the nice restaurant meals with her family and wishes they could do that again.

Not everyone who is hungry lives with a family. **Nina** lives alone. She cannot work because she fell and can no longer walk without a cane. Although she enjoys cooking for her grandchildren, she doesn't bother to cook for herself. When she eats alone, it is usually cereal or some canned food like spaghetti or soup.

Because Nina worked as a maid, she doesn't get a pension. Every month she worries that she will be unable to pay her bills or that she will get sick and need expensive medicine.



Olivia is five and lives with her mother and her brother (7) and her sister (8). All three children are in school. On school days they have enough to eat because they eat breakfast and lunch at school. On other days and during vacation time, they don't always have enough money to buy food for three meals every day.

Their mother works but sometimes there is not enough money in her paycheck to pay all the bills and buy food before the next paycheck comes. Olivia's sister has a school friend who often invites her for the day when there is no school. Often Olivia's sister brings snacks home for Olivia and her brother. Olivia wishes she were older and could visit a school friend when there is no school.

Ways to Use These Stories

Read all or one of the stories to the children. Then:

- Ask them if they have ever been seriously hungry or known someone at school who doesn't have enough to eat.
- Ask them to think of ways they might help the hungry person.
- Have them act out the story and what they hope will happen next. Then talk about ways to help the hungry person.
- Provide art materials for the children to draw pictures of hunger in the United States.
- After talking about the story, select another activity from this packet for the children to do.
- Think of your own way to use these stories.

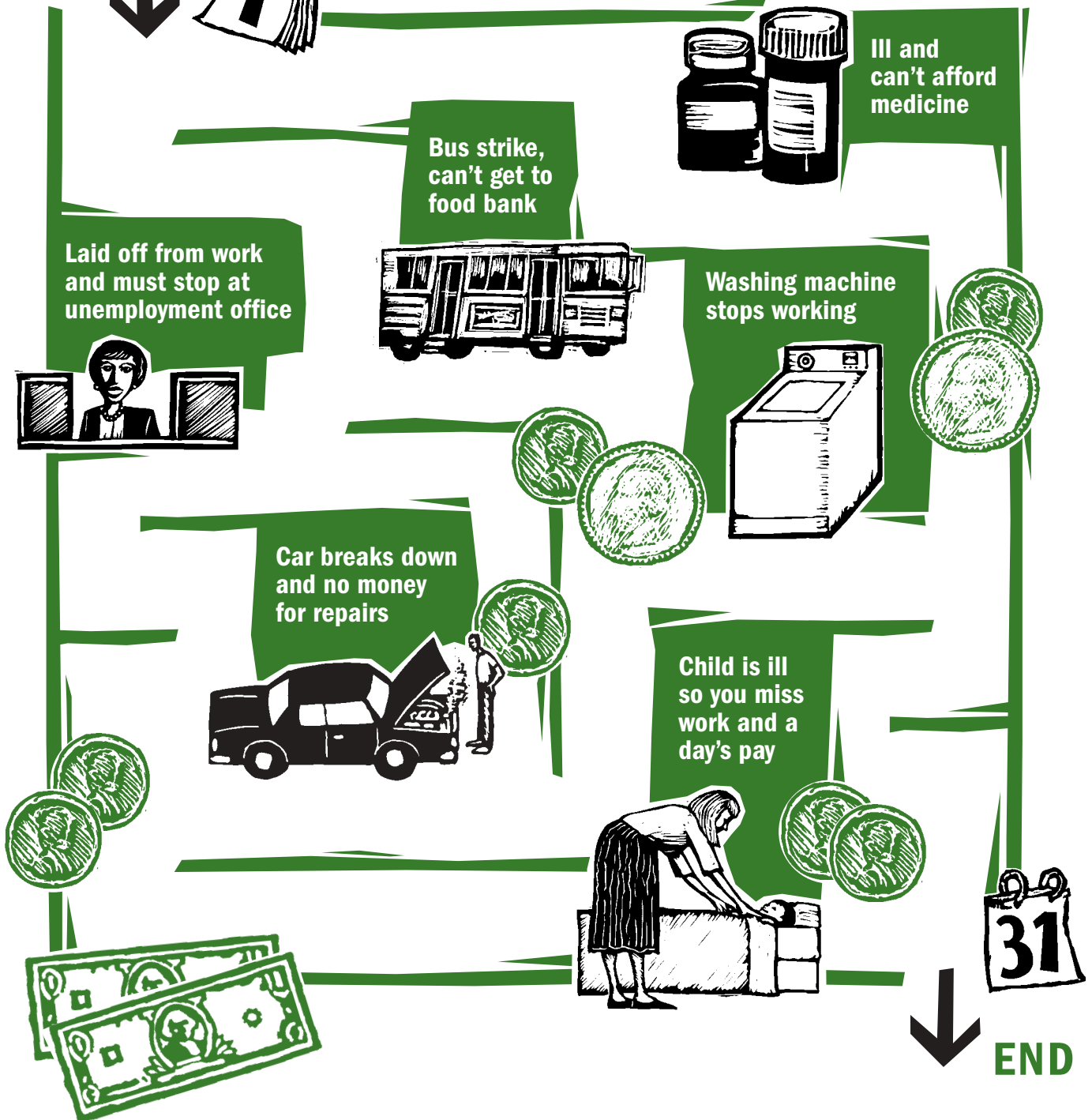
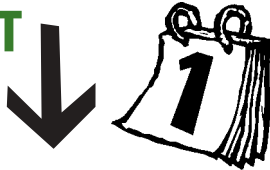
Activity 4



“Making It Through the Month” Maze

Many families have to live with very little money. If something happens, like someone gets sick or the car breaks down, there is no money to pay for it. Start at Day One below and see if you can get all the way to the end of the month.

START



“Let Others Know” Posters

Materials

- Poster board or cardstock, at least 8½ × 11 inches
- Markers (not permanent)
- Magazines with lots of photos and illustrations for cutting
- Scissors
- Glue sticks



1. Print the following saying on a chalkboard or newsprint:

A person who has food has many problems.

A person who has no food has only one problem.

– Chinese saying

2. Ask the children to read the saying together and to think about it for a moment, without talking about it.
3. Invite their ideas of what this saying means. If you need a question to prompt the conversation, ask: “What kind of problems might people who have enough to eat still have?” After they have named some possible problems, ask: “What problem would a person with no food have?”
4. Provide art materials for the children to make posters to bring the plight of hungry people to others.

Activity 6



“Feeding a Family” Game

(adapted from *Make Hunger History*)

Form four groups of children (or children and adults). Give each group a paper describing its family and income. Each group is to plan a nutritious menu for one day, based on the money it has.

When they have finished, have them present their menus. Invite them to talk about the ease or difficulty in making the decisions and to compare the results.

Then read Matthew 14:14-21 to the group. Ask, “Why do you think Jesus wanted food for the people?” After they have talked about this question, encourage them to think about what God wants for all people.

From this point, move to a prayer for people who are hungry or a discussion of ways the group can work to help hungry people, using another activity from this packet.



Family 1: There are three people in your family. You have \$18 to spend on food for one day. How can you use this money to provide a nutritious menu? (Costs are for the meal for the whole family.)

Breakfast for three people

Cereal and fruit: \$2

Frozen waffles and fruit: \$3

Toast: \$1

Lunch for three people

Cheese sandwiches: \$2

Ham sandwiches, apples and cookies: \$4

Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches and carrots: \$2

Dinner for three people

Spaghetti, salad and bread: \$5

Hot dogs and soup: \$4

Dinner at a pizza place: \$15

Snacks for three people

Ice cream: \$4

Fruit: \$2

Cheese and crackers: \$2

Circle your choices. How much will your menu cost:

per day _____, per week _____, per year _____?

Family 2: There are five people in your family. You have \$18 to spend on food for one day. How can you use this money to provide a nutritious menu? (Costs are for the meal for the whole family.)

Breakfast for five people

Cereal and fruit: \$4
Frozen waffles and fruit: \$5
Toast: \$2

Lunch for five people

Cheese sandwiches: \$4
Ham sandwiches, apples and cookies: \$6
Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches and carrots: \$4

Circle your choices. How much will your menu cost:

per day _____, per week _____, per year _____?

Dinner for five people

Spaghetti, salad and bread: \$8
Hot dogs and soup: \$6
Dinner at a pizza place: \$20

Snacks for five people

Ice cream: \$6
Fruit: \$3
Cheese and crackers: \$4

Family 3: There are four people in your family. You have \$8 to spend on food for one day. How can you use this money to provide a nutritious menu? (Costs are for the meal for the whole family.)

Breakfast for four people

Cereal and fruit: \$3
Frozen waffles and fruit: \$4
Toast: \$2

Lunch for four people

Cheese sandwiches: \$3
Ham sandwiches, apples and cookies: \$5
Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches and carrots: \$3

Circle your choices. How much will your menu cost:

per day _____, per week _____, per year _____?

Dinner for four people

Spaghetti, salad and bread: \$7
Hot dogs and soup: \$5
Dinner at a pizza place: \$18

Snacks for four people

Ice cream: \$5
Fruit: \$2
Cheese and crackers: \$3

Family 4: There are four people in your family. You have \$30 to spend on food for one day. How can you use this money to provide a nutritious menu? (Costs are for the meal for the whole family.)

Breakfast for four people

Cereal and fruit: \$3
Frozen waffles and fruit: \$4
Toast: \$2

Lunch for four people

Cheese sandwiches: \$3
Ham sandwiches, apples and cookies: \$5
Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches and carrots: \$2

Circle your choices. How much will your menu cost:

per day _____, per week _____, per year _____?

Dinner for four people

Spaghetti, salad and bread: \$7
Hot dogs and soup: \$5
Dinner at a pizza place: \$18

Snacks for four people

Ice cream: \$5
Fruit: \$2
Cheese and crackers: \$3

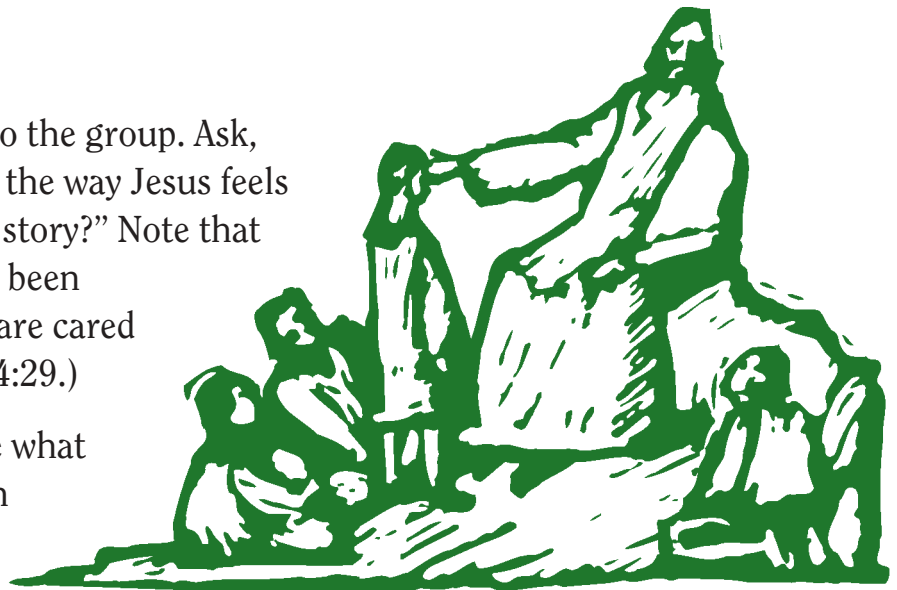
“All That Children Need” Mobile

Materials

- Cardstock or lightweight cardboard, cut into 6” circles or squares
- Colored markers
- String or yarn
- Stapler and staples or masking tape
- Scissors
- Wooden dowel

1. Read Matthew 14:14-21 to the group. Ask, “What can you tell about the way Jesus feels about children from this story?” Note that God’s people have always been concerned that children are cared for. (See Deuteronomy 14:29.)

2. Ask the children to name what children need so they can be healthy. List their ideas on newsprint.



3. Begin the mobile by tying a length of string or yarn to the middle of the wooden dowel.
4. On the cardboard pieces, print or draw the items on the list the children made.
5. Tie the pieces to the dowel rod.
6. Hold the dowel rod by the string hanger and move the cardboard pieces until the dowel rod is balanced.

Activity 8



“Love God and One Another” Rap

Read Luke 10:25-28 to the group. Invite their ideas about how they can show their love for God. When they get to the idea that we show our love for God by loving others, have them name ways to do this. List their ideas on newsprint.

Write a rap with their list of ideas and this refrain: Love God and love your neighbor as yourself.

Clap a steady rhythm and chant the words. Make adjustments and try it again.

Rehearse it to present to the congregation during announcements or Minute for Mission or to the Social Action Committee or another adult group.

A sample rap

Take a can of soup
to the food bank.
Give your outgrown coat
to the clothes closet.
Love God and love
your neighbor as yourself.
Love God and love
your neighbor as yourself.
Write a letter
to your senator
and to your
representative too.
Tell them to give help
to the hungry.
Love God and love
your neighbor as yourself.
Love God and love
your neighbor as yourself.



Activity 9



“Telling Others” Announcements

One way that children can help put an end to hunger is to ask for help from others.

After the children have heard about the problem of hunger in the United States and have talked about what the response of Christians might be, have them write announcements or “advertisements” soliciting help for a local food pantry.

Have them make a list of the information that they want to give other people, writing it on newsprint. For example, what sort of food or cash is needed or disbursed, how much, where, when, how many people are served, and such. Then have them work in pairs or alone to write their announcements.

Be sure that the announcements give the information needed for others to contribute as well as reasons why they should do so.



Here are ways to use the announcements:

- Print them in your church newsletter.
- Send them to local radio stations for public service announcements.
- Read them during the service of worship as a Minute for Mission.
- Read them to other church school groups.
- Send them along with drawings to local cable and television stations.
- Post them on the children’s hunger awareness bulletin board.



Activity 10

Show Your Concern by Writing a Letter



- When families are poor, children may not get enough food to eat. They get sick more often.
- When families are poor, children may not have a warm place to sleep at night. They fall asleep in school.
- When families are poor, children may not have warm clothes to wear in cold weather. They may stay home instead of going to school or to church.
- When families are poor, their parents may be so upset that they easily get angry with their children. The children may have no one to talk with about problems.

One way to help families who are poor is to write to your government officials asking them to provide assistance to families who are poor. Here are some things to think about when you write your letter:

- What do children need to do well in school?
- What do children need to be healthy?
- What do children need to grow strong?
- What do families need to help one another?
- What do families need to take part in the life of the community?
- What do families need, to know they are important to the community?



Here are steps to follow to help you write your letter to the official who represents you:

- Find the names of the people serving your federal and state elected officials. Ask an adult to help you. You can also find their names by entering your zip code at *www.Congress.org* on the Internet.
- Write a draft of what you want to say. What do you want to see changed? Do you have personal stories to tell? To get started, look at the sample letter.
- Read your letter. Is there something else you want to say? Did you explain why you are writing?
- Check your letter again for spelling and punctuation. Perhaps an adult will help you.
- Sign your letter, put it in an envelope. Address it and put it in the mail.

Sample Letter

Your name and address

Date

Representative _____	Senator _____
U.S. House of Representatives	U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515	Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative _____, or Dear Senator _____,

I have been learning about hunger in our nation. Do you know twelve million children live with hunger or are at risk of hunger just in our country? I believe that we have to change that. Children who are hungry get sick more easily. They are not able to do good work in school.

It is time for our country to do something about hunger. I write to ask you to support laws that help hungry people. Everyone should have enough to eat. If we work together, we can end hunger in our nation. Thank you.

Sincerely,
(your name and age)