

ANSWER THE CALL

by Jana Jackson, Director, Family & Community Ministries

Feeding hungry people is... both an act of obedience and worship for the Church. Thankfully, God provides us with many creative resources to do this. To start, churches can participate in one-time food drives like the Souper Bowl of Caring, or they can participate in a Day of Caring with the VNA's Meals on Wheels. As God calls people to respond to food insecurity on a more consistent basis, churches can provide teams to serve organizations that deliver nutritious food to homebound senior adults and persons with disabilities. They can participate in feeding children through summer meal programs, or teach young moms how to cook. Finally, they can provide resources for neighbors to grow their own food through community and container gardens.

Additionally, churches answering the call to improve food security in our city benefit from the Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions, the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering, Movement Day Greater Dallas, and Unite. These collaborative initiatives multiply our impact and show us new, innovative approaches to improving access to healthy food. Working together, we can all make significant progress in reducing hunger in our city.

Questions? Contact Jana Jackson at 214-319-1167 or janajackson@dba.net

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

LEARN (details at www.unitethechurch.org/home/upcoming-events)

- **Dallas Hunger Summit:** Fri., Sept 16, 9:00-1:30
- **Rethink Poverty: A Helping Without Hurting Weekend:** Fri. & Sat., Oct 21-22

SERVE

- Find a local food pantry that needs help at www.unitethechurch.org/coordinate/by-issue
- Look for ways to add an empowerment component to emergency food programs. Consider Faith & Finances (found at www.chalmers.org/our-work/us-church-training).

Resource: <http://web.ntfb.org/learn-more/learn-more-abouthunger/hunger-facts>



AP4C model was established in collaboration with
Movement Day Greater Dallas and is facilitated by Unite



SEPTEMBER 2016 PRAYER GUIDE

If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become like the noonday. The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Isaiah 58:10-11

This month's topic is **Hunger**

In Dallas County, *1 in 5 people are food insecure*. That means that more than 400,000 of our neighbors lack consistent access to healthy food. For most households, food insecurity is a measure of food access problems, anxiety and poor nutrition rather than "missing meals."

The consequences of food insecurity are many. Kindergartners who experience food insecurity learn less than their peers in school. Elementary school students who are food insecure typically have lower math scores and difficulty with peer relationships. Teens experiencing food insecurity are suspended from school more often than food-secure students. Food insecure women are at greater risk for depression. Sometimes seniors on fixed incomes must choose between paying for medications or purchasing healthy food.

Please prepare your heart before you begin to pray through the AP4C categories, so that these Scriptures and your time with God can renew your heart for our Metroplex.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, NIV translation.

SALVATION

Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31

- Pray that as churches and other organizations feed the hungry, those who are lost will recognize God's provision and will turn to Him for salvation.
- Pray that as we build relationships with people, we will always be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have in Jesus, and that we will do so with gentleness and respect.
- Please continue to pray for the salvation of those within your sphere of influence.

THE CHURCH

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1:27

- Thank God if you and your family are food secure—having access to enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle.
- Pray for God to bless the food pantries located at DFW churches and faith-based organizations.
- Pray that churches and organizations who offer emergency food would be connected to empowering programs to help people get on their feet.
- Pray that more churches and Christians would develop greater awareness of the hunger situation in Greater Dallas and would also work to raise awareness in their communities of this important issue.
- Pray that we understand that feeding the hungry is an act of worship.

OUR COMMUNITIES

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Matthew 25:35-36

- Ask God to open your eyes to hunger in your community and to open your arms in gratitude to those in need.
- Praise God for the success of the Summer Food Programs across Greater Dallas.
- Pray for access to healthy and nutritious food supplies within your community.
- Pray for God to raise up individuals, organizations, and businesses to provide supplemental food support for our low-income schools and for God to bless these partnerships.

TRANSFORMATION

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? James 2:14-16

- Pray for more employers to pay a living wage so that families can afford healthy food without having to sacrifice other necessities.
- Praise God for the increase in awareness of childhood hunger across the nation because of good marketing campaigns.
- Pray for city transformation so that safety and low income will no longer be barriers to entry for businesses such as grocery stores and farmers markets.