

Coming Together to End Hunger Table Talk Responses

How is your church responding to hunger/poverty in your community? If your church brought a display, share it with the group.

- Community garden supporting “The Bridge”- Midland
- Food Pantry- (Memorial-Midland)
- Monthly Mobile pantry- (Hope/Edenville)
- Food Drive (St. Francis-Birch Run)
- Food “War” or “Food Fight”- inner church competition to collect food for local projects (Taymouth)
- Food of Faith- weekly drive thru meal serving 175-200 meals (Westminster-Bay City)
- Blessing Box on Main Street (Beverton)
- Food Box at church (Houghton Lake)
- Christmas gifts to schools- clothing/mittens/hats (HL)
- Hygiene items @ high school (HL)
- Ecumenical Food Pantry
- Provide single serve food for houseless
- Drive thru food ministry
- Seasonal food baskets (up to 100) – Westminster-BC
- Collect items for Outreach East, Shelter of Flint, Flint Eastside (St. Andrews)
- Provide quarterly meals for Family Promise program (St. Andrews)
- Two Coins a Meal
- Brown Bag Program with other churches (Taymouth)
- Soup Kitchen every 3rd Friday of the month (Trinity United)
- Blessing Box (Christ the King)
- Pilot program- Building food club to serve elderly- pts to purchase food at grocery stores (Countryside-Trinity)
- Kitchen and cooking demonstrations (Countryside-Trinity)
- Emergency Food Pantry (Westminster-BC)
- DIY Food Pantry (Kirkridge Presbyterian)
 - keeps and inventory of what they have and their needs; made connections at local stores to be alerted of sales items; got youth involved in food ministry

What are some of the challenges your church faces in its work?

- Location in a rural area (2 responses)
- Aging volunteers (5 responses)
- small congregation
- Number of volunteers (3 responses)
- knowing the current needs of the community
- limited funds
- “competition” with other food ministries
- volunteers can’t move easily- need easier, more accessible options
- timing of work schedules of volunteers
- stigma placed on those who need help
- lack of communication between programs
- transportation- getting help to those who can’t travel

What other churches or organizations do you work alongside in your hunger ministry?

- The Bridge (Midland)
- Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (4 responses)
- Other Food Pantries
- Hidden Harvest (3 responses)
- Other churches (3 responses)
- Salvation Army soup kitchen- Bay City
- North End Soup Kitchen- Flint
- Crossover Ministries- Flint
- Backpack programs with local schools
- DOW Chemical
- Rotary organizations
- Community College
- Scout troop

Who are some churches or organizations that you can start to collaborate with?

- Helping Hands Mission of Beaverton
- The Dale (Freemont Rd)
- Hope/Edenville
- Roscommon
- Hidden Harvest (2 responses)
- Food Bank of Easter Michigan
- Commission on Aging
- United Way
- Crossover Outreach
- Larger “Umbrella” Organizations
- Local Grocery stores
- Facilitate a gathering of other organizations
- Bring someone in from an agency- put a name/face to the agency/organization

Question was raised of how local churches can get tapped into some of these larger ministries and organizations?

If you read the book “I Was Hungry,” what were some of the insights you gained that might help you/your church in your ministry with the hungry?

- The idea of “createdness”
- Shame
- Transportation as an issue
- Stigma
- No income qualifier
- Availability of senior programs
- Needed organization of services
- Not realizing the “survival mode” those who are suffering through insecurity live in
- “Hunger brain”
- Federal and state programs that aren’t tackling the true problem

If you read the book “I Was Hungry,” what were some of the insights you gained that might help you/your church in your ministry with the hungry? (continued)

- people can’t see the “forest for the trees”; so stuck on what has been done; don’t want to get outside their walls
- starting small—inviting organizations along each month that you are already in relationship with
- Face to face/ in-person conversations; importance of building relationships

What is one thing you will do as a result of attending this event?

- Keep learning about my community; feeling convicted to get back to that work to provide partnerships
- Addressing policy
- Need a network of people who can work together and encourage each other
- Provide fresh, “perishable” foods in our pantries
- Provide recipe cards
- Calculate how much it costs to put together one of our food baskets
- Is there a way people can shop on their own? (15 min time limit, pantry/church shopper with them?)
- Look into “prescriptions” for fruit and vegetables
- Look into delivery options
- Sign the “Feeding America” petition
- Encourage volunteerism
- Attend local hunger/food policy council meetings to learn what others are doing
- Encourage partners to register with 211