



# Worship Resources

*for the Thrive Campaign*



ONE Members around the country will be taking action on World Food Day, October 16, to call on world leaders to end hunger and childhood malnutrition. The Sunday before is a wonderful time to educate your faith community and pray together for those who struggle with hunger. The readings used correspond to October 14, but you can use these resources at the time that works best for your congregation. For more information, or with any questions, e-mail Marisa Vertrees at [marisa.vertrees@one.org](mailto:marisa.vertrees@one.org).

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## Readings

### **Job 23:1-9, 16-17**

Job complains of his suffering.

### **Psalm 22:1-15**

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me.

OR

### **Amos 5:6-7, 10-15**

Hate evil and love good, and establish justice.

### **Psalm 90:12-17**

Let the favor of the Lord be upon us.

### **Hebrews 4:12-16**

The word of God is alive in Jesus.

### **Mark 10:17-31**

Jesus counsels a man to give all he has to the poor.

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## Prayers

*O Lord, giver and source of all things,  
We give you thanks for the food that we eat  
Gift of God and work of human hands  
We pray that all those who work and toil in the fields  
May have  
The seed they need  
The rain and sun they need  
The food they need  
The chance they need  
To live lives of dignity  
Always  
Amen*

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## Intercessory Prayers

For the millions who are facing extreme poverty, hunger and malnourishment, that they may be fed.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those who have struggled for so long and have lost hope, that they may be once again know Your love and promise to your people.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those struggling to lift themselves out of poverty, that their efforts may be rewarded.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those local and international agencies working to help farmers overseas, that they will succeed.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those of us who have as much as we need, and do not go hungry, that we may always be thankful.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For our government and leaders around the world, that their hearts may be filled with love and mercy for our struggling brothers and sisters in Africa and elsewhere.

*Lord, hear our prayer.*

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## Suggested Hymns

### **I Hunger and I Thirst**

by John S.B. Monsell

I hunger and I thirst;  
Jesus, my manna be;  
Ye living waters, burst  
Out of the rock for me.  
Thou bruised and broken Bread,  
My lifelong wants supply;  
As living souls are fed,  
O feed me, or I die.

Thou true life-giving Vine,  
Let me Thy sweetness prove;  
Renew my life with Thine,  
Refresh my soul with love.

For still the desert lies  
My thirsting soul before;  
O living waters, rise  
Within me evermore.

### **We Plough The Fields and Scatter**

By Matthias Claudius,  
trans. by Jane Montgomery Campbell

We plough the fields and scatter  
The good seed on the land,  
But it is fed and watered  
By God's almighty hand:  
He sends the snow in winter,  
The warmth to swell the grain,  
The breezes and the sunshine,  
And soft, refreshing rain.

Refrain:  
All good gifts around us  
Are sent from heaven above;  
Then thank the Lord,  
O thank the Lord,  
For all his love.

He only is the maker  
Of all things near and far;  
He paints the wayside flower,  
He lights the evening star;  
The winds and waves obey him,  
By him the birds are fed;  
Much more to us, his children,  
He gives our daily bread.

We thank thee then, O Father,  
For all things bright and good,  
The seed time and the harvest,  
Our life, our health, our food.  
Accept the gifts we offer  
For all thy love imparts,  
And what thou most desirest,  
Our humble, thankful hearts.

Refrain

### **Come Ye Thankful People, Come**

By Henry Alford

1. Come, ye thankful people, come,  
Raise the song of harvest home!  
All is safely gathered in,  
Ere the winter storms begin;  
God, our Maker, doth provide  
For our wants to be supplied;  
Come to God's own temple, come;  
Raise the song of harvest home!

2. We ourselves are God's own field,  
Fruit unto his praise to yield;  
Wheat and tares together sown  
Unto joy or sorrow grown;  
First the blade and then the ear,  
Then the full corn shall appear;  
Grant, O harvest Lord, that we  
Wholesome grain and pure may be.

3. For the Lord our God shall come,  
And shall take the harvest home;  
From His field shall in that day  
All offences purge away,  
Giving angels charge at last  
In the fire the tares to cast;  
But the fruitful ears to store  
In the garner evermore.

4. Then, thou Church triumphant come,  
Raise the song of harvest home!  
All be safely gathered in,  
Free from sorrow, free from sin,  
There, forever purified,  
In God's garner to abide;  
Come, ten thousand angels, come,  
Raise the glorious harvest home!

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## Sample Sermon

Clearly, our Creator calls us to care for the Hungry of the Earth.

In the Old Testament, God commands the Church to NOT make an idol out of efficiency, productivity and profit, but rather to care for the hungry by not harvesting every single grape (Lev 19:10), and to leave them for the poor. When we reap the harvest of our crops, we are not to reap right up to the very edge of our land (how inefficient!), but instead we are to leave them for the poor to glean—that is, to obtain food through the work of their own hands (Lev 23:22).

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul takes up an offering of cash from less-needy churches during a severe famine and delivers it to the suffering so that they could buy food (Acts 11:27-30).

Jesus simply says to the “sheep” who were consistent in living out the Amazing Gospel of Grace, “I was hungry and you gave Me food.” Jesus is telling us that if we have been gripped by grace—if we have been shown favor in our desperate spiritual hunger—we will, in turn, SHOW GRACE to those who are both spiritually and physically hungry through a variety of means.

In Acts 6:1-7, the apostles faced the delicate situation of meeting both “spiritual” and “physical” needs with wisdom and grace. The solution was that the elders would give their primary attention to the ministry of the Word and to prayer; deacons would be created and organized to make sure that there was proper supply and distribution of food. An entire group of officers/leaders in the church was created SPECIFICALLY to address peoples’ physical needs. The Bible knows nothing of a church that is only focused on the so-called spiritual needs of the soul while neglecting the “real life” needs of the body.

As James points out: “If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘God in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for body, what use is that?” (James 2:15-16)

In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, Paul says that the church then and the church now must remember the poor (surely including the hungry). So, what does it really MEAN to “Remember the poor”? It can’t mean to merely send money or temporary food supplies, so that they can eat today and starve tomorrow. It can’t mean entitlement programs that often put only a Band-aid on their deep hunger-wound without addressing the real disease. Surely “remembering the poor” MUST include remembering them not only in prayer, not only in giving, but also in equipping the poor themselves so that they can feel and experience the full dignity of reflecting their Creator through work and productive contribution.

When it comes to humanitarian service, we must guard against dehumanizing others in seeking to salve our own consciences. We are not merely to relieve suffering; we are to relieve suffering IN THE MANNER that most preserves the dignity, the glory and the honor of fellow image bearers. We are not to relieve suffering to soothe our guilty consciences or to take pride in our “do-gooding.” We are to relieve suffering in a way that honors God, dignifies His creation and most redeems and restores the cosmos.

Finally, the Gospel also surely calls us to political engagement. We are called to honor the King—the government and those in authority (1 Tim 2:1-4; Titus 3:1-2). Part of honoring those in authority is engaging with them (across party lines) concerning the needs of others. Honoring those in authority must involve informing them of problems and opportunities and kindly and winsomely “pressing” them to do

what governments can do to promote mercy and goodwill in the most effective means possible.

As pastors and teachers, it is critical that we put aside our commitment to political parties, “camps” and “labels” and get back to the LARGENESS of the Gospel. And in this LARGE Gospel, we must indeed confess that the Work of Jesus Christ is about ushering in the Kingdom of God. Ushering in God’s Kingdom is about inviting people from every tongue, tribe, nation and language into citizenship of the New Jerusalem, but it encompasses much more than that as well. We are to communicate and live out the reality that the Work of Christ and the Call of Christ engages us to nothing less than full restoration of the entirety of creation.

We must guard against a “Titanic Christianity” that sees meeting the physical needs of food, clean drinking water, clothing, sanitation and health as “re-arranging the deck chairs on a sinking ship.” Godliness and Christ-likeness surely includes personal piety and high moral behavior, but Godliness ALSO includes a social consciousness and feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and bringing clean water to the thirsty. For far too long, Christ-followers have neglected either one for focusing on the other. On all sides, from all quarters, our Gospel has been TOO SMALL.

For all the appropriate concern over immorality and personal piety, the Old Testament tends to give us a BIGGER GOSPEL than many Christ-followers hold to in our day. Just look at the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. In most peoples’ minds today, fire destroyed those cities because they failed to follow the “holiness ethic” of the Epistles and engaged in various sorts of immorality. But when we look at Ezekiel, we discover a different disease:

“Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:49).

How many suffering moms and dads around the globe are indeed crying out to God for help, for deliverance, yet fail to see their prayers answered? How are WE to become the means of God for answering their prayers? How many hungry people in the world are willing to believe, but have not seen the evidence of God’s goodness in the feeding their children? How are WE to be the help they desperately seek from God?

We must caution our people against a creeping fatalism that adopts a “let go, let God” attitude. God’s people are His instruments for good and for change in this world. If God is going to end hunger, He intends on moving His people to create or to support the means for doing so. We cannot rest content in grieving the plight of the hungry, yet do nothing (again, James 2:15-16). We must give our money; we must send our food; AND, as we are emphasizing this year, we MUST become aware of, support and engage with organizations that are on the cutting edge of “exporting” agricultural development.

Jesus says that He desires MERCY, not sacrifice (Matt 12:7). Simply put, Jesus is not as impressed with as much of our Christian spirituality as we might like to think. Certainly He desires true, heart-felt worship; clearly He enjoys our quiet, reflective, contemplative personal devotional commitments. He rejoices over faithful stewardship as it relates to giving of our money and possessions. But we must remind ourselves that what He truly DESIRES is mercy. He has shown us what God requires of us: but love mercy and to do justly and to walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). Part of loving mercy and doing justly is to do all we can to alleviate and eradicate world hunger. May God establish the work of our hands and establish the work of the hands of those who are hungry as well (Ps 90:17).