

# ACTIONGUIDE *for* CONGREGATIONS



The FedUp food truck serves good, healthy food with dignity to food-insecure communities in Southeast Michigan.



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we are called to share in God's work in the world. Through ELCA World Hunger and all our ministries, our church creatively and courageously works toward a world where all know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love.

Chances are that your congregation is already committed to accompanying your neighbors, raising funds and collecting in-kind donations. This guide will equip you with the newest and most popular ELCA resources to activate your congregation as you continue to serve your community. Through God's work and together as a church, we are achieving things on a scale and scope we could never do alone.

## FIND

Visit **Resources.ELCA.org** to find nearly all the resources you see here and more.

## CONNECT

Engage with the latest news and stories from ministries of the ELCA.

 **Facebook.com/Lutherans**

 **Instagram.com/ELCA**

Check social media for ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA Advocacy and ELCA AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities).

## TELL US

What is your congregation doing with ELCA resources this year? We'd love to hear about it! Send your photos and stories to **stories@ELCA.org**.

## LEAD

Do you want to become an advocate for the work of ELCA ministries in your congregation? Join a network of passionate leaders and receive monthly newsletters, exclusive event invitations, direct access to our newest resources and more.

Visit **ELCA.org/subscribe** to sign up today.

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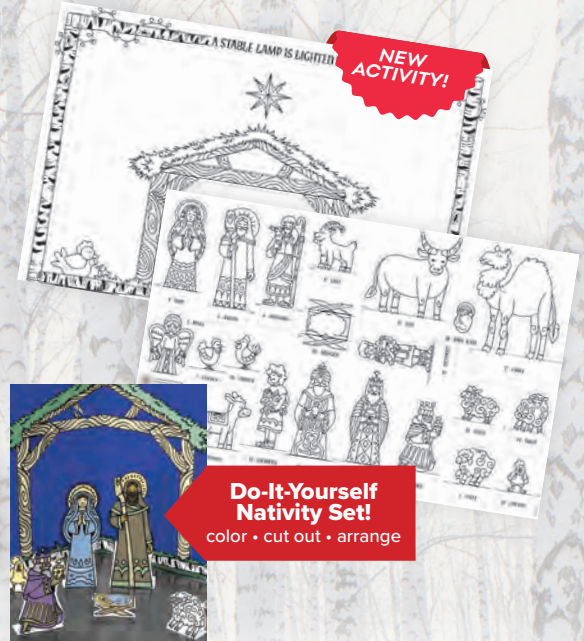
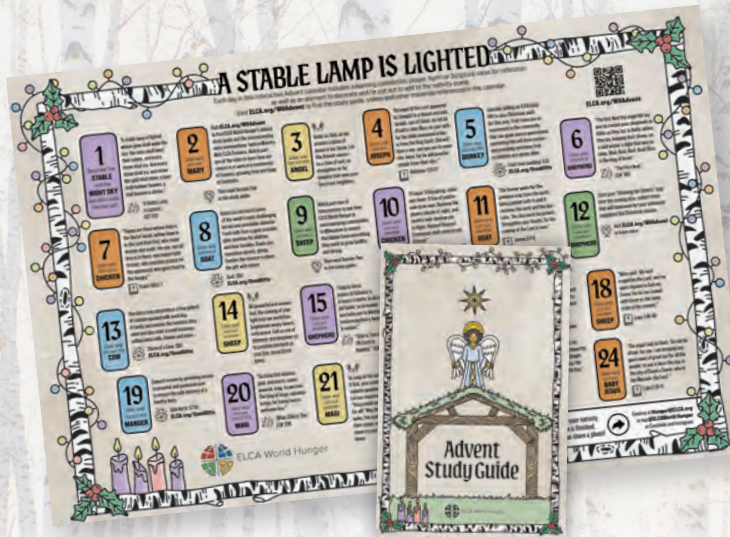
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# ADVENT RESOURCES



This season's Advent calendar and study guide from ELCA World Hunger invite you to prepare room in your home and hearth for yourself and your loved ones before going into the world to act on behalf of your neighbors. In a time of global suffering and anxiety, Richard Wilbur's hymn "A Stable Lamp Is Lighted" calls us to embrace the tension of the moment, the natural desire for a place of our own, and our call to care for the stranger:

**A stable lamp is lighted  
whose glow shall wake the sky;  
the stars shall bend their voices,  
and every stone shall cry.**

The simple act of making a hospitable, warm, cozy place — even in a stable — moves the sky, the stars and the stones to tremble.

ELCA World Hunger's seasonal packet has resources for creating a place of care, rest and reflection for you and your family so that you feel prepared to strengthen your community.

The Advent calendar evokes feelings of a welcoming hearth during the harsher months of winter. The activities inside start with a standing nativity scene, ready to be colored throughout the season. Alongside each day's craft activity, the calendar includes:

- Opportunities from ELCA Good Gifts to generously support the church's national and global work to end poverty.
- Everything you need to create "Stocking the Streets" bags for your unhoused neighbors.
- Scripture, prayers and hymns for seasonal reflection.

This season's ELCA World Hunger study guide provides reflection questions for engaging the brand-new ELCA World Hunger-produced short video documentary "Intersections: Justice Ministry With ELCA Partners." The video and study guide ask viewers to think differently about the root causes of hunger and poverty, making complex issues seem manageable through our collective action as the church.

We prayerfully invite your household and congregation to light your own stable lamp to warm you for your ministry under the starry sky and among the crying stones.

## New Lent calendar too!

Download it at  
**ELCA.org/WHLent.**



Download resources  
for free at  
**ELCA.org/WHAdvent**  
or scan the QR code.





# ELCA GOOD GIFTS *Catalog*

ELCA Good Gifts are a fun, interactive way to support ELCA World Hunger and other ministries. Spread the word in your congregation that there's a different way to give! With more than 60 options, your members are sure to find gifts that inspire them to help people in need.



**Scholarship for an international woman leader: \$100**

**Safe Birth: \$750**



Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth

## *Popular* ELCA Good Gifts!



**Abundant Community Bundle: \$1,020**



Howard Bigland/ACT Alliance

**Feed a Refugee Family: \$50**



Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth

**Goat: \$50**



## Fundraising posters

Order a poster to raise awareness for your congregation's ELCA Good Gifts fundraising events. Fill in the space at the bottom of the poster with information about your fundraiser or how to find an ELCA Good Gifts catalog.



## Advent tree

Decorate your congregation's Christmas tree with ornaments that represent donations to ELCA Good Gifts. Invite friends and family to take home an ornament as a reminder of the gift they'd like to give. Keep the tree full of ornaments to encourage participation and to celebrate the work the whole church is doing.



Visit **store.ELCA.org** to order a free pack of 34 assorted ornaments, or use a free pack of 10 matching ornaments to decorate a whole tree with bees, pigs or goats.



## Holiday Good Gifts cards

for Christmas, Easter and Valentine's Day

When you give an ELCA Good Gift in honor of a friend or loved one, send a card to tell them about it. Visit **ELCA.org/GoodGifts** to give online and personalize free, printed cards to be mailed to yourself or directly to your loved ones. You may also download a card to print at home or have cards delivered to recipients

by email. Or you can purchase Easter and Valentine's Day Good Gifts-grams at **store.ELCA.org** as a special way to celebrate the holidays while giving to ELCA World Hunger. Hand out the Valentine's Day-grams or stick the Easter-grams into plastic eggs.





# IDEAS FOR CONGREGATIONS

## Hang a poster

Hang a poster that tells the story of someone affected by your congregation's generous gifts to ELCA World Hunger, Global Mission, Lutheran Disaster Response or another ELCA ministry. Display these on a bulletin board or in a prominent spot to show your support for our neighbors.

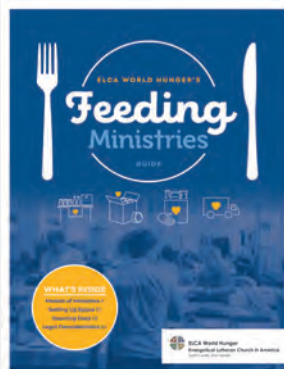


Order free posters at **store.ELCA.org**.



## Start or grow a feeding ministry

Passionate about addressing hunger in your community and eager to start a feeding ministry? This guide offers tips and strategies for planning, sourcing food, engaging volunteers and much more. Part of an existing feeding ministry? The guide provides ideas for growing, expanding or reimagining the work you're already doing.



## Housing guide

The United States faces a housing crisis sure to have long-term and far-reaching effects. But congregations have the power to curb the effects of this crisis in their communities. The

housing guide from ELCA World Hunger and ELCA Advocacy provides information and tools critical to accompanying neighbors who face housing insecurity.

This guide is perfect for experienced and aspiring advocates, congregations interested in developing housing ministries, and seasoned leaders looking for the next step in their ministry.



Order our free how-to guide at **store.ELCA.org**.



Download the guide for free at **ELCA.org/hunger/resources** under the "Hunger Education" subcategory.





## "Climate and Hunger Toolkit"

This resource from ELCA World Hunger features a variety of activities to teach your group how our changing climate impacts hunger. With handouts, easy-to-use instructions, and opening and closing sections, the "Climate and Hunger Toolkit" is perfect for groups of any size.



## "Health & Hunger Toolkit"

This toolkit will introduce your group to the intersections of health and hunger through a variety of activities that range from low to high involvement. The toolkit includes the necessary materials for activities, discussion and additional resources.

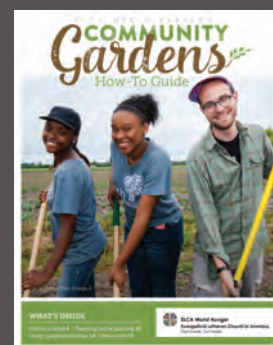


Download these tool kits and others at  
**ELCA.org/hunger/resources** under the "Toolkits" subcategory.

## Start planning a community garden

What makes a garden a community garden? How can growing food for ourselves and our neighbors transform our congregations? Learn all this and more from ELCA World Hunger's "Community Gardens How-To Guide." Its wisdom was harvested from ELCA congregations whose community gardens have become vital parts of their ministry. The guide offers practical tips on logistics, crafting a vision and incorporating your garden into the life of your congregation.

Download the guide for free at **ELCA.org/hunger/resources** under the "Hunger Education" subcategory.



Also  
available  
in Spanish

## Truth and Healing Movement

The ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement is an opportunity for Lutherans to increase their understanding of our colonizing impact on Indigenous people in the past and present. There are opportunities to learn, raise awareness and impact hearts and lives across this church. We believe that the truth, and our knowing and embracing it, is the first step toward healing for all of us.



## Practice land acknowledgments

Commit to acknowledging that the land on which we live, work and worship is Native land, and to showing gratitude for our Indigenous neighbors who have cared and continue to care for the land. The ELCA's office of Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations offers a guide with language for land acknowledgments in bulletins, church signage, worship and online events.

## Engage with the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery

In 2016, the ELCA adopted a memorial to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, with a call to repent from the church's complicity in the evils of colonialism in the Americas and adopt the practice of accompaniment with Indigenous communities. Read about the history of the doctrine and discuss ways in which your congregation can repudiate it.

## Listen to Native voices

In your congregation, watch past webinars on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Awareness Month, Indian boarding schools, powwows and the Land Back movement, and hear from Indigenous leaders in our church to learn more about the work of Indigenous ministries. Use this time to reflect on how you can get involved with the Truth and Healing Movement.



"Our dream with House of Prayer is that, yes, you can be a Native person and also be a Lutheran and also be connected to your culture — to be connected to many generations of teachings and cultural practices." —Patterson Yazzie, executive director of the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission (NELM) in Point Rock, Ariz., the only Lutheran presence in Navajo Nation. NELM's ministries include the Navajo House of Prayer, an ELCA congregation; a prep school; a food bank; and a café offering free hot meals.



Visit **[ELCA.org/Indigenous](https://elca.org/Indigenous)** to learn more about the Truth and Healing Movement and find other resources.

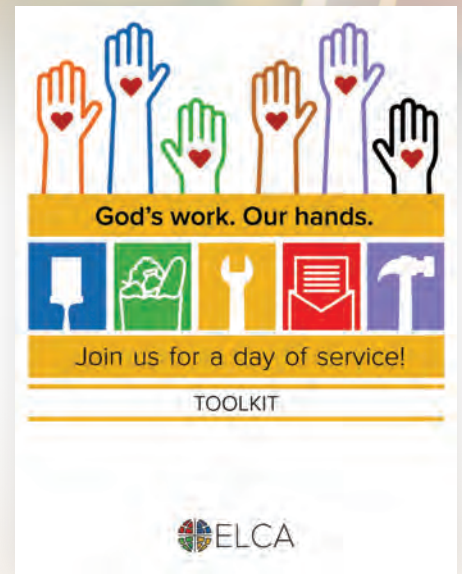


# "God's work. Our hands."

"God's work. Our hands." is an annual day of service to celebrate who we are as the ELCA — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. "God's work. Our hands." takes place in September, but the service projects can be performed year-round.

Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all life in Jesus Christ — every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life — flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

As you plan your day of service, think about the needs of your community as well as the capacity of your congregation. You might also consider partnering with other congregations or social service organizations in the area.



## Consider service projects focused on hunger:

**Volunteer  
at a local  
food pantry.**



**Pack  
meals for  
low-income  
families**



**Host a  
community  
food drive.**



**Organize a  
letter-writing  
campaign to  
lawmakers,  
advocating  
for just  
policies.**



Visit [ELCA.org/GWOH](https://www.elca.org/GWOH) to find a tool kit, worship resources and promotional materials.

# IDEAS FOR CONGREGATIONS

## Prepare your congregation for disaster

Before a disaster strikes, ensure that your congregation is ready for it. Through this guide, learn how disasters will affect your church, what assets your congregation has to support the community and how to react in the immediate aftermath. The guide includes worksheets to help develop your disaster preparedness plan.

Download the guide for free at [ELCA.org/disaster/resources](https://www.elca.org/disaster/resources) under the "General" subcategory.



Sign up for free

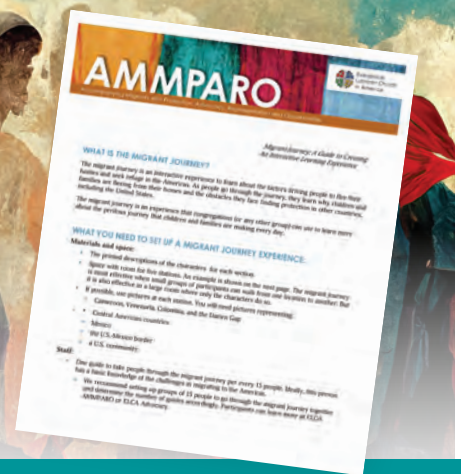
**Want to dig deeper?** Register for Lutheran Disaster Response's online learning platform. Covering topics from disaster preparedness to volunteer management, these free, self-paced courses help communities and congregations mitigate the impact of disasters. The platform also includes other resources and registration for in-person training on disaster response.

## Experience a migrant's journey

The AMMPARO "Migrant Journey" guide is an interactive experience, designed to educate participants about the factors that drive people to flee their homes and seek refuge in the Americas. As people go through the journey, they learn why families are fleeing from their homes and the obstacles they face in finding protection in other countries, including the United States. The Migrant Journey is an experience that congregations can use to learn more about the perilous journey that children and families make every day.



Download the guide for free at [ELCA.org/AMMPARO/resources](https://www.elca.org/AMMPARO/resources) under the "Synods and Congregations" subcategory.

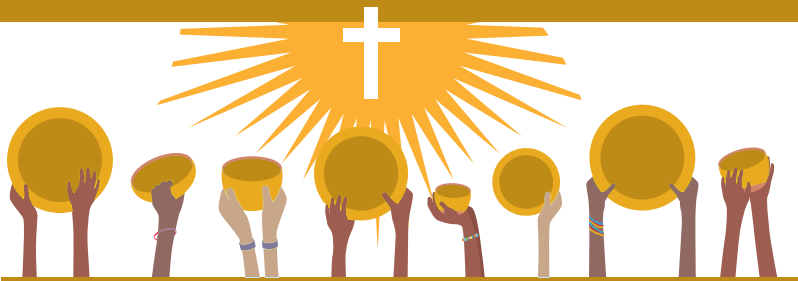


## Become a welcoming congregation

The ELCA is a sanctuary denomination, publicly declaring our commitment to walk alongside migrants. As a welcoming congregation, members can accompany migrant minors in immigration court, provide financial support for migrants or advocate for migrant rights on the local, state and national levels.

Learn more and download resources about welcoming migrants into your community at [ELCA.org/AMMPARO/resources](https://www.elca.org/AMMPARO/resources) under the "Sanctuary" subcategory.





## End Hunger Sundays

Show your congregation's commitment to ending hunger and poverty by dedicating an "End Hunger Sunday" once a month, once a quarter or every month with a fifth Sunday. During worship on these Sundays, offer prayers for those in need, collect a special offering with ELCA World Hunger envelopes and share stories of your gifts at work by showing ELCA World Hunger videos or using ELCA World Hunger stories in your bulletins.

## Special dates to consider

### World Food Day

**Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025**

Join ELCA World Hunger and people around the world in raising awareness and taking action toward food security for all. With hunger rising around the world after a decade of steady decline, these efforts are more important than ever.



### World Water Day

**Sunday, March 22, 2026**

Learn, donate, advocate and pray to ensure access to clean water for all.



### World Health Day

**Tuesday, April 7, 2026**

Hunger and health are interconnected, each affecting the other. Use ELCA World Hunger's "Health & Hunger" toolkit to learn about their intersection.



### World Refugee Day

**Saturday, June 20, 2026**

Learn how displacement intensifies hunger, and take action by donating to Lutheran Disaster Response and speaking out for justice.



### International Day of Peace

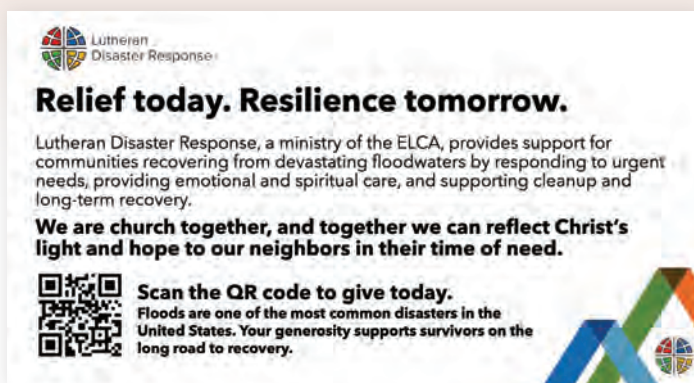
**Monday, Sept. 21, 2026**

Pray for peace, advocate for change and learn about conflict around the world and its impact on hunger.



## Support disaster survivors

When disaster hits, your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response allow us to accompany impacted communities in both the short-term and the long-term. Download bulletin inserts and PowerPoint slides to raise awareness in your congregation and provide opportunities to give to Lutheran Disaster Response. You can also download worship resources to lead prayer in times of uncertainty.

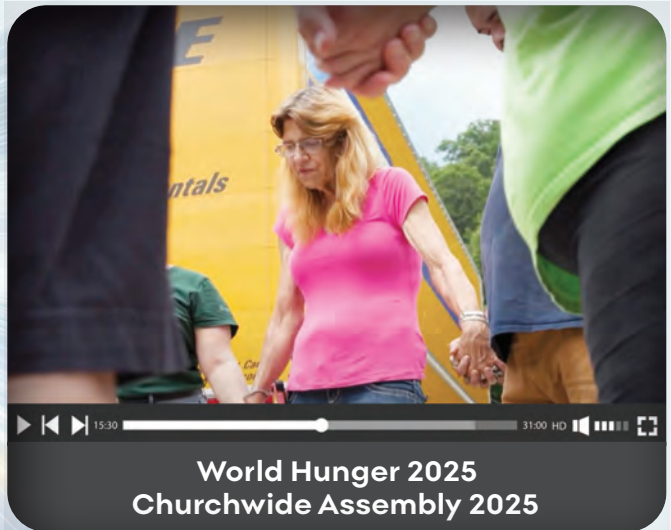


Download free worship resources at **ELCA.org/disaster/resources** under the "Worship Resources" subcategory.



## EDUCATE, ENGAGE, INSPIRE

Visit the ELCA's Vimeo and YouTube channels to find videos you can share with your congregation during worship, temple talks, youth lessons and Bible studies.



Check out the ELCA's videos at  
**YouTube.com/ELCA** or **Vimeo.com/ELCA**.







## Get started with advocacy

Eager to get involved in advocacy but unsure where to start? In this starter kit, find sessions including "What Is Faith-based Advocacy?" and "How Do I Approach Policymakers?" Each session includes a video posted at **YouTube.com/@ELCAadvocacy** and an accompanying study guide to introduce advocacy and start conversations about what it means in your congregation's context.



Download these free resources and others at  
**[ELCA.org/advocacy/resources](https://elca.org/advocacy/resources)**.

## "Advocacy for Young Adults"

Developed by young adults for young adults, this guide is an accessible way to dig deeper into advocacy. Its five sections can be used by individuals or groups of all ages who are ready to raise their voices and call for justice. With skits, activities and personal stories from advocates, decide what actions your group will take to make your voices heard.

## Listen to advocates

Do you wonder what Lutheran advocacy looks like in the context of current events? "Here I Pod," a podcast from ELCA Advocacy, offers insight and ideas for how to get involved. Available for both listening and viewing, episodes such as "Housing and Homelessness Trends and Policy Impacts" and "Migration Policy Changes and Their Impacts" provide a starting point for group discussion and action.



Listen to the podcast at **[YouTube.com/@ELCAadvocacy](https://YouTube.com/@ELCAadvocacy)** or anywhere you get podcasts.



## God's Global Barnyard

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need. It provides food to eat; fertilizer to grow crops; and milk, honey or eggs to sell at the market. Use the following ideas and resources about animals to educate people about God's global barnyard and to raise money through ELCA Good Gifts. From coloring pages to coin boxes, children have the opportunity to learn more about the significance of livestock and collect change to purchase ELCA Good Gifts on their own or with the congregation.



**GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD  
COLORING BOOK**



**GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD  
STICKERS**



**GOD'S GLOBAL  
BARNYARD  
COLORING PAGE**



**COLORING COIN BOX**



Order free coin boxes,  
coloring books and  
sticker sheets  
at **store.ELCA.org**.



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

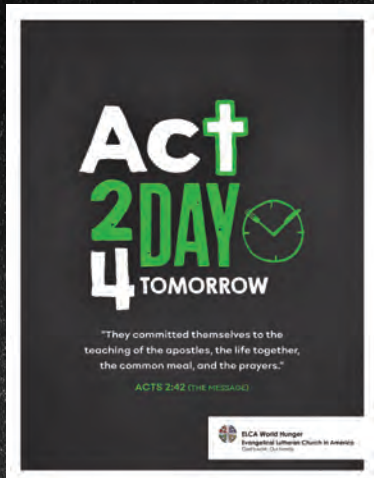
### "At the Table"

"At the Table" is ELCA World Hunger's newest Vacation Bible School curriculum, inviting your community to learn how storytelling can make a difference in your neighborhood and the world. "At the Table" is designed to be either a traditional VBS or an intergenerational program. Each day offers large- and small-group activities, crafts, games, snacks and more. Past VBS programs are still available as well.



Download supplemental materials and order or download the leader guide at **ELCA.org/hunger/resources** under the "VBS" subcategory.



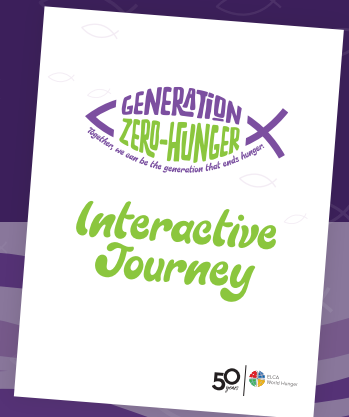


# Act 2Day 4 Tomorrow

Looking for an overnight program for youth or fun learning activities for people of all ages? Spend your next Sunday school series learning about the root causes of hunger around the world. This interactive overnight program brings youth together to understand the role they can play in eradicating hunger and poverty. As the group takes part in the spiritual practice of fasting during the event, they will explore questions of faith, hunger, hope and justice together.

## Generation Zero-Hunger

With your youth group or congregation, experience the challenges faced by a family in Nepal as they seek a sustainable livelihood. An interactive roleplaying guide offers a cast of characters, materials you should expect to use and setup instructions for the experience. Though this was modeled on the activity at the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering, we encourage you to be creative and adapt it for your own purposes.



## Global Farm Challenge



The **"Do-it-Yourself Field Experience" guide** is intended to help you set up your own Global Farm Challenge interactive track, an opportunity for youth and adults to experience the challenges smallholder farmers face bringing their crops to market as they aim to produce enough profit for food and savings.



**"ELCA World Hunger Global Farm Challenge Youth Action Guide,"** created specifically for youth, contains resources to activate and inspire youth in your congregation so they can join together in raising awareness and support for ELCA World Hunger.



Try out **Global Farm Challenge To-Go**, a card game from ELCA World Hunger. The game helps youth and adults to experience the challenges faced by smallholder farmers in bringing their crops to market. Take the game on the road or play it at home in your congregation.



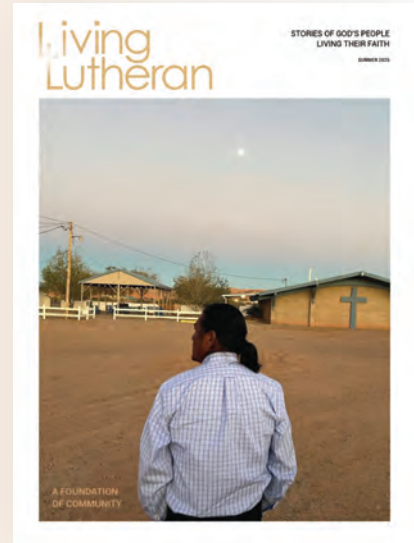
Order these youth resources for free at [ELCA.org/hunger/resources](https://ELCA.org/hunger/resources) under the "Hunger Education" subcategory.



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

# *Living Lutheran* is back in print!

Thanks to your loyal readership, *Living Lutheran* continues to share stories of God's people living their faith — online and, once again, in print. Visit [livinglutheran.org/subscribe](https://livinglutheran.org/subscribe) to choose an individual, group or gift subscription.



## SAVE THE DATE *ELCA Youth Gathering*

June 28–July 2, **2027**

Minneapolis

The next **ELCA Youth Gathering** will be held in Minneapolis, Minn., June 28–July 2, 2027. At the Gathering, teens will have the opportunity to engage with other youth from around the country, connect with their faith and learn about ministries such as ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, Sumud and AMMPARO. See you there!

Until the 2027 Gathering, be on the lookout for Gathering Expedition, a series of regional weekend retreats for youth from the eighth to the 12th grades and the adults who walk alongside them. Designed with volunteer leaders in mind, these experiences create sacred space where youth can step away from everyday life and dive into questions of faith, purpose, identity and calling.

Visit [ELCA.org/Gathering](https://ELCA.org/Gathering) to learn more about the events.