

Lori Sluder

Subject: Ever consider doing a Food Drive?

Start your food drive today!!!!



Here are two simple ways you can donate to Second Harvest Food Bank to Help feed the Hungry in ETN

Virtual Food Drive

1. Visit our website at www.secondharvestetn.org
2. Click on the "Join Our Virtual Food Drive" link on the main page
3. Start a virtual food drive with teams. This will allow different departments to participate

Food Drives

Brainstorm and Plan. Choose a theme and set a date(s). In a public setting a Single-day food drive can be very successful because the focus is on one particular day. In a work place environment consider a multi-day drive. This gives employees multiple opportunities to contribute.

Once you have the dates you want to host your food drive all you have to do is e-mail me and we will set up times for the barrels to be delivered and picked up.

Thank you for your support!

Mark Aranda

Food Drive Coordinator

mark@secondharvestetn.org

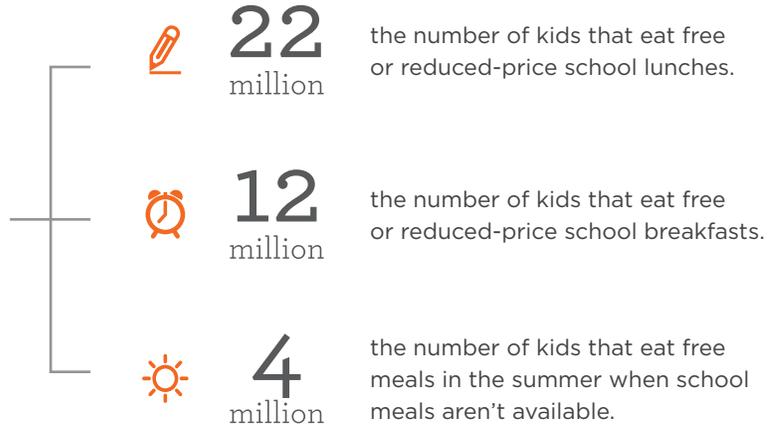
HUNGER DEVASTATES CHILDREN

FACTS ON CHILDHOOD HUNGER IN AMERICA



1 in 5

THE NUMBER OF KIDS IN AMERICA LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CONSISTENT ACCESS TO FOOD. **THAT'S 16 MILLION CHILDREN.**



44%

Percentage of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) participants are children. That's nearly half.

\$1.46

the average SNAP benefit per meal.

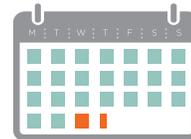


3 out of 4

public school teachers say they see students regularly come to school hungry.

81%

say it happens at least once a week.



+1.5 days

average increase in school attendance for students who regularly start the day with a healthy breakfast.

+17.5%

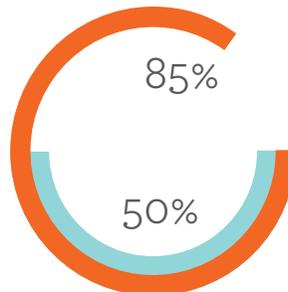
average increase in standardized math scores by students who regularly start the day with a healthy breakfast.



\$300 more

spent by low-income families for groceries when kids are out of school for the summer.

That's almost \$1,000 more each summer that families must pay for food.



85% of low-income families want to make healthy meals at home for their kids, but only 50% do so most nights a week.

The perceived cost of healthy groceries is cited as their number one obstacle.

HUNGER DEVASTATES CHILDREN

Ethan's family struggles to put food on the table; this takes a toll as he grows up.



When Ethan starts school he has a hard time learning to read.

Undernourished children **don't learn as fast or as well** as nourished children.

RTI International



The school nurse tells Ethan he needs to eat better because he's heavier than other kids.

Children struggling with hunger are **more susceptible to obesity** & its health consequences.

Jama Pediatrics



Ethan must repeat algebra. He can't keep up with the kids in his class. He has a hard time focusing.

Lack of healthy food can **impair a child's performance** in school.

Harvard School Breakfast Research Summary

When the flu spreads through Ethan's high school he ends up in the hospital & falls so far behind he must repeat 10th grade.



Children who struggle with hunger are **sick more**, recover slowly, & are **hospitalized more frequently**.

Children's Health Watch



Ethan doesn't finish high school.

Teens who regularly face hunger are **more likely to be suspended** & have **difficulty getting along with others**.

Harvard School Breakfast Research Summary

Today, Ethan has a job, but makes less money than his friends from high school & has fewer opportunities.



High school graduates typically earn \$10,000 more annually & enjoy a **4% higher employment rate than those that don't graduate**.

Deloitte Social Impact Study for No Kid Hungry

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|----------------------|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| AB | Damascus UMC | Backpack Program RVES | Existing | Children in need at Rhea Valley Elementary in Damascus, VA | Provides weekend food for children through a backpack program |
| AB | State Street UMC | Youth Spiritual Development | Existing | Youth from low-income families in Bristol, VA | Seeks to provide transportation and meals on Sunday nights; activities include youth fellowship, service projects, mission trips, fun outings, spiritual retreats, and fun outings. |
| BS | Church and Community | Shepherd's Stuff Cooking Class and Kids Cook! | Existing | Children and low-income families in Big Stone Gap, VA | Seeks to expand 6-week cooking/nutrition class to offer it to children; existing program provides food and instruction, empowers caregivers, and builds relationships in community. |
| BS | East Stone Gap UMC | Christian Book Outreach | New | Children living in Ponderosa Trailer Park and nearby homes in East Stone Gap, VA | Seeks to provide Bibles, Bible story books, and other children's literature to children living in hardship due to poverty and drug abuse in the home; program would expand existing ministry that provides food and school supplies |
| CH | The Bethlehem Center | After School Program | Existing | Alton Park neighborhood in South Chattanooga, TN; 98% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch | Provides academic support--literacy and math; enrichment activities to develop healthy and creative minds and bodies; spiritual growth--Bible verse memorization, weekly chapel, daily prayers |
| CH | East Ridge UMC | East Ridge Cares 4 Youth | New | Impoverished middle school and high school age children who live in nearby extended stay hotels (Chattanooga, TN) | Meet physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of homeless youth by providing tutoring, mentoring, food, clothing, and school supplies; sponsor outings and Resurrection; modeled after successful East Ridge Cares 4 Kids program |
| CH | Tyner UMC | TASK Literacy Program | Existing | Children at Bess T. Shepherd Elementary in Chattanooga, TN | Provides tutoring in reading and math for students in grades 1-3; after-school program includes Christian education, Bible stories, songs, and snacks; school is predominantly African-American and lower income level |
| CH | St. Luke UMC | Children's Hunger Project | Existing | Children and families in the Rivermont Elementary neighborhood in Chattanooga, TN | Provides 220 snack packs per month for students; provides 18 monthly food vouchers for needy families; 80% of students at the elementary school qualify for free or reduced lunch. |
| CH | St. John UMC | Wonderful Wednesday Worship (WOW) | Existing | Children in the church and surrounding community in Chattanooga, TN | Seeks to provide meals for 35-40 children on Wednesday night; would provide each child with Bible and book bag; would provide multicultural curricula. |
| CH | Trenton UMC | The Fish Project | Existing | Elementary age children in Dade County, GA, whose meals are insecure | Provides weekend sack lunches for elementary age children. |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|--|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| CL | Broad Street UMC (Unity Center) | DAWN mentors (Disciples Acting with Nobility) | New | At-risk K-12th graders in East Cleveland, TN | Youth members (ages 14-17) mentor elementary age students during after school program, helping with homework and interacting during free time; provide food and supplies for youth leadership development events; provide academically themed gifts, such as books and science experiments; emphasis on empowering disadvantaged youth to engage their own communities in a positive manner |
| CL | Wesley Memorial UMC | Wesley After- School Program (WASP) | New | Children ages 4-12 in Etowah, TN, of all economic backgrounds | Program costs \$30/week for those who can pay; free for those who cannot afford it (purpose of grant); program includes snack, devotion, tutoring, homework help, and special activity |
| CL | Keith Memorial UMC | Nourish One Child: Operation School Break | Existing | Children who are hungry in Athens, TN | Provides nutritious foods to hungry children during extended school breaks lasting more than three days; children qualify for free/reduced breakfast and lunch and/or are identified as homeless/transient. |
| CL | Wesley Memorial UMC | Sack Pack Program | Existing | Children in poverty in area elementary and middle schools | A meal and nutrition based program that supplies nutritional meal supplement and replacement. |
| JC | Gethsemane UMC | Summer Lunch and Learn | New | Children at Camp Creek School in Greenville, TN | Seeks to build community relationships by providing reading enrichment activities and a nutritious lunch one day per week during summer months; students will have access to the library, computers, and one- on-one reading time; they will be given a book to keep; also, parents will have access to an adult library at the school and parenting resources to take home. |
| JC | Asbury UMC | Asbury Student Assistance Project | New | Children in Poverty at West View Elementary School | The ASAP Ministry will begin this summer by providing supplemental food to children and families through a partnership with our local elementary school. Over time as we build relationships we will intentionally share the gospel. |
| JC | Mt. Wesley UMC | Books for Brains | New | Partnership with West View Elementary School | Provide books for a rotating library at West View Elementary School. As well as provide some supplies for a Back-to-School Bash. |
| JC | Jonesboroug h UMC | Children of Note | New | Children in poverty from Jonesborough Elementary School | An after school music program for children in poverty from the local elementary school. One day a week for two hours with first graders. |
| JC | Telford UMC | West View Kids Summer Program | New | Children in poverty at West View Elementary School | A summer food box program for each week of the summer. |
| JC/KI | Camp Bays Mountain | Camp Scholarships | New | Children living in poverty in Ki and JC Districts | Seeks to provide full tuition scholarships and transportation to camp. |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|--|
| KI | Holly Springs UMC | Spring Break VBS | Existing | Poor families in Sullivan County, TN | Feeds children (who rely on free school breakfast and lunch) during spring break; program includes transportation to/from school (pick up location), meals (breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack), VBS lessons, and other games and activities |
| KI | Wheeler UMC | Various | New and Existing | Children who are economically disadvantaged in Blountville, TN | 1) Holston School Partnership - seeks to meet increasing demand for school supplies and backpacks; currently provides elementary and middle school students in need with school supplies; hosts Christmas banquet for 12 families; provides space for basketball practice; hosts Sullivan County Summer Feeding Program; participates in clothing drive; 2) Wheeler Childcare Center - seeks to offer emergency tuition scholarship funds to support families in crisis due to job loss or other transitions; 3) Christmas Blessings Ministry - seeks to add 3 or more families to existing ministry; currently provides food boxes, clothing, and Christmas gifts to 13 or more families. |
| KI | Glen Alpine UMC | Free Community Breakfast | Existing | Children and families in Sullivan County, TN | Provides Fourth Saturday Free Community Breakfast; seeks to be in ministry with K-8 students at Sullivan Gardens School, Second Harvest families, and King's Kids families; feeding ministry will supplement other spiritual outreach and programming that church currently offers. |
| KI | Mafair UMC | Kidz Helping Kidz | Existing | Children in need at Lincoln Elementary in Kingsport, TN | Provides snack bags full of healthy snacks for the weekend; 3rd-5th-graders at Mafair UMC assemble <u>the bags and learn about giving.</u> |
| KN | Church Street UMC (Beacon of Hope) | Beacon of Hope Children's Ministry | New | Underserved families of South Knoxville, TN | Would build on existing relationships established through the Beacon of Hope ministry; program seeks to expand, specifically in the area of children's ministry; provide specific programs that address the unique developmental needs of children--focusing on self-worth and self-image, modeling and encouraging Christian values, and providing a neighborhood "safe haven" where children can learn, have fun, and receive support; emphasis on invigorating the Vestal UMC congregation by adding children's ministry programs where none currently exist |
| KN | Wesley House Community Center | Children's After-School Recreational and Educational Support (CARES) | Existing | Children ages K-8th grade in Mechanicsville, Lonsdale, and Beaumont areas of Knoxville, TN; 90% qualify for free/reduced school lunch | Provides transportation from 11 area schools, snack, devotion, homework assistance, story time, tutoring, games, and activities; enrichment opportunities include piano and guitar lessons, choir, step and dance teams, and music class; emphasis on achieving academic excellence |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| KN | Central UMC | Fulton High Ministry | Existing | Students at Fulton High in Knoxville, TN | Seeks to expand current partnership with Fulton High School to include an internet café that students could use 2 days per week with research assistance, tutoring, and snacks provided. Current ministry includes feeding students, parents, and staff during freshman orientation; providing lunch for 9th-grade teachers; providing Thanksgiving baskets; providing tutoring and dinner before a Friday night football game; and hosting Baccalaureate. |
| KN | Cokesbury UMC (Susannah's House) | Susannah's House | Existing | Mothers and children ages birth to 5 years in Knoxville, TN | Provides spiritual, physical, and emotional support for mothers and babies; striving to eradicate Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (baby has painful withdrawal symptoms after being exposed prenatally to opioid drugs); provides childcare for toddlers and preschoolers to age 5; social, medical, and dental services are provided at no cost to these mothers and children, many of whom do not have insurance and are often homeless. |
| KN | Fountain City UMC | Celebration Place | New | Children (ages 0-17) of parents in the Celebration Recovery program | Provides age-appropriate ministry in healing and wholeness while parents are exploring same topics in Celebrate Recovery; program includes lessons, arts and crafts, physical activity, and visual aids; meals during meetings are provided to whole family. |
| KN | Inskip UMC | Roxie Davis Price Scholarship Fund | Existing | Children in "free lunch" category in the Inskip area of Knoxville, TN | Partners for Children Child Care Center; grant would provide scholarships for low-income families that do not quite qualify for tuition assistance through the state; the Center emphasizes quality educational care over just babysitting. |
| MA | First UMC Maryville | Lanier Project | New | Needy children at Lanier Elementary School in Blount County, TN (teachers will identify 2 students per grade) | Offer two meals per week to children and their families, tutoring for students, and interactive educational play for younger siblings; emphasis on helping parents/guardians learn how to assist their children with homework (partnership with Williamson Chapel UMC and New Providence Presbyterian) |
| MA | Camp Wesley Woods | Camp in the Community 2016 | Existing | Children who are normally not served by the camp due to economic constraints (MA, KN, MO, OR districts) | Provides opportunities to experience camp; partners with local churches to serve children and to provide outreach in their communities; provides leadership development opportunities for youth, who are mentored and supervised by youth development professionals. |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| MA | New Salem UMC | After School Tutoring and Meal | New | Freshmen at South Doyle High School | Seeks to partner with South Doyle High School to provide tutoring to freshmen who are failing math; would provide transportation and a meal to those in need; most of these students must ride the school bus home and therefore must leave immediately after school; the church's program to provide transportation and a meal opens the ministry to these students. |
| MA | St. John UMC | School Supplies and the Gospel | New | Students in Blount County, TN, especially Rockford Elementary School | Seeks to provide backpacks filled with school supplies to 50 students at Rockford Elementary School in addition to students who attend a Free Community Breakfast at the church in August; school supplies will be accompanied by Bible booklets and Gospel tracts in English and Spanish. |
| MO | Saint Clair UMC | Saint Clair Kids | New | Students and teachers at Saint Clair Elementary School (Bulls Gap, TN) | Provide classroom materials for teachers as well as school supplies, coats, shoes, etc., for children; provide snacks to teachers during in-service days |
| MO | Shiloh UMC | Kid Connect | New | Children in poverty in Rutledge, TN, schools | Provide Wednesday night meal to families, Bible study for all ages, homework help for students, and recreation for children; emphasis on building community relationships |
| MO | Romeo | Feeding Bodies and Souls | New | Families with children ages 0-5 years who are living in poverty in Bulls Gap, TN | Seeks to provide fellowship, food, and instruction; Community Baby Shower - welcome community members and distribute baby/toddler/preschool items; Family Activity Days - worship, Bible story time for children, instruction on cooking, building, and gardening for parents. |
| MO | Strawberry Plains UMC | Abundant Life Day Camp | New | Children ages 11-14 from economically disadvantaged homes in the Strawberry Plains community of Jefferson County, TN | Seeks to identify 75-85 students to participate in summer day camp; would include recreation with outdoor activities, mission/service projects, and Bible study/worship; grant funds needed for purchase of equipment, admission fees for attractions, transportation, curriculum, and supplies. |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|---|
| MO | Baileyton UMC | Various | New and Existing | Children in poverty, esp. at Baileyton Elementary School and North Greene High School (Greene County, TN) | 1) Kids Helping Kids Backpack Ministry - provides backpacks filled with school supplies to those who register through Northern Greene County Ministries food bank; 2) Christmas for Kids - adopts 3-7 families in need as identified by teachers at elementary school; 3) Class Trip for a Dragon or Two - sponsors one or more 8th-graders for class trip to Nashville or Washington, D.C.; 4) Summertime Books (new) - seeks to distribute summer reading material to students of Baileyton Elementary; 5) Hungry Husky program (restarting) - would provide sack meals to needy students at North Greene High. |
| MO | Beeler's Chapel UMC | Peace for Life Youth Camp Program | New | Middle and High School students in Washburn, TN | MISSING SIGNATURES OF PASTOR AND DS; Partnership with Narrow Ridge Earth Literacy Center; seeks to provide 5-day overnight camp for 8 student and 4 adult (staff/volunteer) participants; would teach participants to communicate and learn to build peacemaking processes into their daily relationships; activities include doing chores, gardening, and discussion. |
| MO | Christ UMC | Building Life | New | Children from economically disadvantaged homes in Greeneville, TN | Seeks to expand existing Life Tree Ministry; would offer enrichment activities, such as robotics team; visits to colleges and technical schools; tutoring in reading, math, and school projects; would become internet partner with Greeneville City Schools to allow students to come to the church to do online work |
| MO | First UMC Morristown | Sparkle | Existing | Children from economically disadvantaged homes in Hamblen County, TN | Application describes the Sparkle program, which includes music, reading, crafts, recreation, scripture, and discussion; program serves children who qualify for free and reduced lunch; however, grant request is for funding of camp scholarships for 10 of these children. |
| MO | First UMC White Pine | Little Blessings | Existing | Children in White Pine, TN | Provides Parents Day Out (PDO) ministry in White Pine; only such program in town; some of the mothers are court-ordered to attend the Recovery house, where they attend classes and work towards a GED; children of these mothers attend this PDO at no charge |
| MO | Jubilee Project | Youth Program | Existing | Middle and High School youth from low-income families in Hancock County, TN | Seeks to extend school-year programs into summer months; teaches basic life skills, such as nutrition and cooking; encourages college or vocational programs to break the cycle of poverty; provides weekend food; would like to offer a work camp to do light construction |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| MO | Russellville UMC | Food Backpack Program | Existing | Students at Russellville Primary, Russellville Intermediate, and East Ridge Middle schools | Provides weekend food bags to needy children; provides family meals 3-4 times per school year; seeks to meet other needs as they arise, such as warm clothing, electrical assistance, Christmas presents, and food boxes. |
| OR | First UMC Oak Ridge | Fall/Spring Break Camp | New | Families in Oak Ridge City School System | Offer childcare during fall/spring breaks when it will not be provided by the schools; emphasis on relieving childcare burden for low-income and single-parent families. |
| OR | Morgan Scott Roane Parish | Morgan Scott Project | Existing | Children in Morgan and Scott Counties, TN | Provides monthly food boxes to needy families, backpacks filled with school supplies, and Christmas packages; partners with several other agencies to provide summer meals for children as well as seeds, plants, and fertilizer for family gardens; 30% of families live in poverty. |
| OR | Kingston, Luminary, Midtown Valley UMC | Getting Ahead | Existing | Families in poverty in Roane County, TN | Churches seek to subsidize parents' participation in the Getting Ahead program, which is managed by Roane County Cooperative Ministries; program is 45-hour workshop to help guide parents out of poverty; parents would receive \$20 per session to defray travel costs and encourage continued involvement. |
| TZ | Church and Community | Elk Garden School Community Ministry | New | Communities of Russell County, VA; serves all children, but focuses on those who are economically disadvantaged | Seeks to provide spiritual, social, physical, and mental support through a variety of programs: After-school program - reading program with reading tutors, guest readers, and homework help; nutrition and physical activity program (cooking, exercise, gardening); and play time; Summer Reading Program - collaboration with Russell County Public Library; Community events (seasonal celebrations, VBS, Summer Fun Days). |
| TZ | Narrows First UMC | Reach First | Existing | Poor & Disadvantaged children in Narrows, VA | Personalized tutoring and one-on-one interaction, Reach First seeks to break the cycle of poverty by helping children overcome learning barriers. |
| TZ | Rich Creek First UMC | Mullins Neighborhood Ministry | New | Children in Trailer Park on State Line Road | We will rent a trailer with Mullins Trailer Park and provide structured school activities for the children during which we will share Christ and break the cycle of their circumstances. |
| WY | Jordan's Chapel UMC | Feed My Lambs backpack program | Existing | Needy children at Critzer Elementary School and Pulaski Elementary School in Pulaski, VA | Provide backpacks filled with food for children to eat over the weekend when school is out; includes food for siblings in household; students qualify for free/reduced lunches at school; 200-225 backpacks are distributed each week |

| DISTRICT | CHURCH/ MINISTRY | PROGRAM TITLE | NEW or EXISTING ? | PROGRAM TARGET | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION |
|----------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| WY | Out of the Box UMC | Backpack Buddies | New | Children in poverty at Carroll County Middle School | Seeks to provide weekend food for children through a backpack program; eligibility based on family income and federal poverty guidelines; partnership with Hillsville Presbyterian Church. |
| WY | St. Paul UMC | Hope Packs | New | Children who are hungry at elem. schools and head start programs in Wythe and Bland Counties, VA | Seeks to provide weekly food packs to any child who wants one; many of the children qualify for free or reduced lunch; food packs include such items as pasta, oatmeal, vegetables, peanut butter, soup, and granola bars. |
| WY | First UMC Hillsville | The Book People of FUMC | New | Every child in Carroll County, VA | Seeks to provide a book to every child in Carroll County, which has recently been named the poorest town in VA; would serve 7 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school. |

8 Ways Your Church Can Fight Domestic Poverty

By [Chad Missildine](#)



"Meet needs, but teach personal responsibility."

I realize society has dealt with poverty since the beginning of time, *but I still am young enough to believe the church can do something about it.* According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, **hunger is at a high point** with one in six families going hungry this past fall (49 million people). The [New York Times](#) reported in August that unemployment for men under 35 may be at the highest rate in 61 years! The homeless count, though difficult to track, is off the charts ([article from Guardian.co.uk](#)).

Below are some things [our church](#) is doing to help. Items 1-4 are more general in nature, and items 5-8 specifically deal with empowering volunteers to fight poverty. Help the rest of us figure out how to break the vicious cycle of poverty in our country. **Here are 8 Ways Your Church Can Fight Domestic Poverty:**

1. Fight spiritual poverty. One of the best places your church can start is by helping people who are spiritually broken. I believe spiritual poverty is the root cause of all other forms of poverty. Help people understand that they have hope and help them meet and grow in Jesus, and many times, the other pieces will begin to fall into place for them.

2. Educate the young. Empower young children to be successful and get an education. Give them a chance to be the first in their family to graduate high school and go to college. Our church is currently working with 40 volunteers to figure out how to help high-risk students at a local elementary school. Most of the kids are stuck in a vicious cycle of poverty. One by one, we are helping them get an education.

3. Be a voice for those that don't have a voice. What platform do you or your church have? Is it one of influence? Millions around the world have no platform, no voice. Be the voice they need. "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed." Proverbs 31:8

4. Meet needs, but teach personal responsibility. Instead of just giving away meals, teach on parenting, help someone find a job, ask questions that will help. Coach people into becoming more responsible. Help them find the resources they need until they can become more independent. Realize that many cannot become independent without some significant help. Don't put conditions on what you do to help (you won't give someone a meal unless you get to teach them something). Just keep this in mind as a goal you would like to accomplish.

5. Empower your people to believe in someone else. Often, a person has never believed in themselves enough to get out of a tough situation. Not only do they not believe in themselves—neither does anyone else. Let them borrow the faith of your church for a while. Encourage those you believe to believe in someone else. Start by believing in those you lead! Believe in them until they can believe in themselves. Tell them what you see in them. Encourage them. Show them the love they may have never had. Then ask them to go and do the same with others in the community!

6. Partner with those already fighting poverty. Chances are there are dozens of well-established organizations in your area that are fighting poverty and doing it well. Find out who they are and see what type of help they need. Ask how long they have been established, what their objectives are, and what you can do to help. Then dig in and get dirty!

7. Be aware, so you help your church be aware. Get out of your own little world and look around, then help those you lead to do the same. You'd be amazed to see what needs are out there! Read the paper, get news apps on your phone, whatever you can do to become more aware of what is going on. My two-year-old daughter prays for the people that "sleep in trees" and "don't have food in their refrigerator" simply because we get out of our house and try to open our eyes to the realities in our city. You can become aware, too, then you can help your church become aware of what needs are out there.

8. Help people discover their vision and passions. Don't just tell those you lead to look for an organization where they can serve. Help them first discover their life vision and passions. (We use a tool called Chazown.com.) This passion will fuel them over the long haul as they serve the community. What do they value? Is it family? Help them serve to build up families. Is it injustice? Help them by partnering with someone fighting injustice. Are they good at tutoring? Help them connect with a local school.

All right, help the rest of us broaden our perspective. Do you or your church resonate with any of these? What other thoughts do you have? What else can the church do to help fight domestic poverty? 🇺🇸

50 Ways Your Church Can Fight Poverty



By Jennifer Johnson

Most Christians want to do something to address the problems of poverty. But many of us just don't know where to start.

Here are 50 ideas, shared by 15 Christian leaders from around the world, to help you show the love of Jesus to those who are poor.

Almost any of us could try at least one of these strategies.

Get Practical

PRAY

1. Create a community garden. Each year ours produces thousands of pounds of healthy food that is distributed to hundreds of families in our community who live below the poverty line. They are invited to help harvest the food, which allows us an opportunity to connect with them spiritually.

—**Kirsten Strand**, *Community 412, Aurora, Illinois*

2. Bank your money (checking and savings) in a fund that does healthy development work locally or internationally.

—**Ryan Hayes**, *Christian Missionary Fellowship/Namikango Mission, Malawi*

3. Provide multiple entry points for people to serve in the community. Not everyone will have the same level of commitment, dedication, gifts, abilities, and interests.

—**Rick Grover**, *East 91st Street Christian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana*

4. Work with organizations like Fuller Center for Housing **that make it possible for people to own a home.** Fuller Center looks at a family's needs and then works with them to set up the mortgage. Churches in the area fund the build with money and time. For families who have a veteran, Home Depot has become a major sponsor and will donate heavily toward projects like this.

—**Michael Plank**, *Spring Road Christian Church, Lanett, Alabama*

5. A team of 325 doctors and nurses in our church volunteer their time in two local clinics that provide free health care to more than 3,000 uninsured Lexington residents. We also rely on more than \$1 million in pharmaceutical donations from wholesale providers to meet the prescription demands of the patients. Our clinics have allowed us to build relationships with people whose life expectancy rates are sometimes half the national average due to very preventable illnesses.

—**Jon Weece**, *Southland Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky*

Collaborate

6. Collaboration with other community groups and agencies is a key element in breaking poverty cycles. We bring large pools of volunteers, ready access to large, multipurpose buildings, and significant experience in planning large group activities. These are “gold” to many agencies that have clinical and even financial resources, but lack manpower, event organization skills, and facilities.

—**Becky Ahlberg**, *My Safe Harbor, Anaheim, California*

7. Partner with a school in an at-risk area of your community. Adopt the school as your mission field. Sponsor their school carnival and pay for and staff the whole thing. Engage with kids as mentors.

—**Titus Benton**, *Current, A Christian Church/The 25 Group, Katy, Texas*

8. Partner with area restaurants to take their leftovers and distribute them to helping organizations. A gentleman in our church runs one such program out of our building, working with 13 local restaurants to give away hundreds of thousands of pounds of food annually.

—**Jeff Faull**, *Mount Gilead Church, Mooresville, Indiana*

9. We participate in, and helped begin, a local chapter of Interfaith Hospitality Network. More than 40 churches here give money or serve as “host” or “support” churches to provide overnight shelter for homeless families for a week at a time. We host around four times a year, turning our Sunday school rooms into bedrooms and providing volunteers, meals, and transportation to a day center where the families can look for jobs and learn life skills.

—Aaron Wymer, *Grandview Christian Church, Johnson City, Tennessee*

Give

10. Take the “25 Challenge.” Look at your bank statements and find something you spend way too much money on. Give up that something—fast food, gourmet coffee, movie dates, etc.—for 25 days and donate that money to an organization fighting poverty. (Obviously, www.the25group.org would be a great choice.)

—Titus Benton

11. Learn to live frugally that you might share abundantly with others. Living frugally will look different in different situations, but just as God has provided abundantly for our life and health in creation, so we too should follow that example and share abundantly with ministries that are working to fight poverty in our neighborhoods and around the world.

—Chris Smith, *Englewood Christian Church/Englewood Review of Books, Indianapolis, Indiana*

12. Devote a portion of your church budget to fighting poverty locally and globally. Increase that budget 1 percent each year.

—Titus Benton

13. Learn gratitude. The most destructive forms of upward mobility are rooted in an ungrateful heart that is not content with what God has provided. As we learn to be grateful, we slowly begin to opt out of the selfish pursuit of more and find time, money, and other resources to share with those who truly need them.

—Chris Smith

14. Teach generosity. Nothing impacts hardened hearts, sinful souls, and jaded observers to Christianity like true generosity. Churchwide programs are OK, but contagious Christ followers who are on call 24-7 and able to spontaneously and lavishly give in the moment are much more powerful in the long run than any orchestrated program.

—Mike Schrage, *Good News Productions International, Joplin, Missouri*

Stay Humble

15. Confess your own poverty. We are all poor and broken creatures, and the sooner we come to grips with that reality, the better suited we will be to enter into the poverty of others.

—Chris Smith

16. As Christians, we must not approach people from any position of strength when it comes to our relationship to God. **Remember that you need grace** as much as they do.

—Becky Ahlberg

17. Shift your paradigm. When we are not prideful, we realize it's more about a hand up from me to another person than about a handout, or even worse, a hand down. I am a poor beggar giving good things to other beggars.

—Mike Schrage

Learn

18. Understand the complexity of poverty. Too many times we want to run with our gut and judge success by our gut, when that may only foster dependence.

—Mike Schrage

19. Well-intentioned Christians often assume they know what poverty-stricken families need without ever asking. We've learned **the best way to establish trust with marginalized people is to ask what they need and meet that need.** Every Monday and Tuesday night in three central Kentucky communities, teams of our volunteers go door-to-door in the most crime-ridden areas and ask the residents how they can help.

—Jon Weece

Make It Personal

20. My wife and I realized **we had to get in the game ourselves.** I couldn't just preach about it and then drive home to my suburban house. I can't lead people where I'm not willing to go. So my wife and I got involved with a Christian respite care ministry for families in need. This has given us an opportunity to connect with a little girl and her family, and we hope there will be many other opportunities in the future. We have to be intentional about building relationships with others and not just rely on church programming to get the job done.

—Rick Grover

Make a Commitment

21. We empower our parish neighborhoods to **adopt a local organization** to work with during the year. All of the small groups within a neighborhood are connected to an organization within their immediate area, and are scheduled (from our office, through our missions director) with serving days and projects over the course of the year. We want these groups to learn the value in narrowing their scope and serving just one or two places on a regular basis rather than dropping in here and there, never really building relationships or seeing long-term results.

—**Derek Sweatman**, *Christian Church Buckhead, Atlanta, Georgia*

22. Commit to keeping your church in your neighborhood indefinitely. Neighborhoods go through cycles every 50 years or so (and some cycle at faster rates). Do not abandon your neighborhood when poverty or crime levels rise or when the racial or ethnic demographics start to change. Your church's commitment to "seek the peace of its city" over the long haul will speak powerfully of the love of Christ to your neighbors. If you start to outgrow your facilities, consider planting new churches in other neighborhoods, perhaps even some that have deeper struggles with poverty than your own.

—**Chris Smith**

23. Be intentional about staffing. Every church should hire someone to design systems that mobilize and shape the church's mind-set and behavior in dealing with the poor.

—**Derek Sweatman**

24. Think generationally. This is not a "short-term missions" project; it requires a sustained and committed effort. Food at the holidays or backpacks in the fall, while kind, will not go very far in addressing the key issues: disintegrating families, which means unstable environments for women and children; poor education, which means poor employment opportunities; and a general decoupling of choices and consequences, which means a decline in personal responsibility. All of these problems will take long-term and targeted efforts.

—**Becky Ahlberg**

Think Globally

25. The Stanford University Center for Philanthropy concluded an article on **child sponsorship** by saying that if you want to transform Africa, sponsor a girl. If you really want to transform Africa, sponsor 10 girls. Any church can do this. CMF International has a wonderful child sponsorship program in the African countries of Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, and Kenya. Ten children sponsored would cost a church less than \$5,000 a year (one child would be \$460 a year). Sponsored children can attend school, which greatly enhances their chance to escape poverty.

—**Doug Priest**, *Christian Missionary Fellowship, Indianapolis, Indiana*

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information about **Christian Missionary Fellowship's Child Sponsorship program**, go to <https://give.cmfi.org/sponsor.aspx>.

Contact the missionary you support to inquire about child sponsorship opportunities. Some possibilities:

Central India Christian Mission: Go to www.indiamission.org and indiamission.org/wp-content/uploads/child-page1.pdf.

Stadia collaborates with **Compassion International** in a partnership to plant churches and sponsor children. For information, go to www.stadia.cc/2011/networks/together-with-compassion-international/ and www.stadia.cc/global-planting/global-planting-partnerships/.

Lifeline Christian Mission: www.lifeline.org/Make-An-Impact/Give/Sponsor-a-Child.html.

26. Microfinance programs around the world have shown that a simple loan to a poor person (who cannot get a loan from a bank due to lack of collateral and who dares not borrow from a loan shark because of the outrageous interest fees) helps him manage and escape poverty. The 3,000 people who have received loans in a microfinance program in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya, paid back their loans at the rate of 96 percent. Many have returned for larger second and third loans.

—Doug Priest

Think Locally

27. Start in your neighborhood. The causes for any particular person's situation might include things like a single-parent home, divorce, addiction, mental illness, unemployment, abuse, or poor education, and can best and most sustainably be addressed in close proximity by walking with a person over a period of time. Also, it is helpful if this sort of work is entered into as a church, as different people will have different skills to engage various kinds of situations.

—Chris Smith

28. Our youth ministry does **local mission trips** rather than going overseas or to other states. This summer our middle school group stayed in the downtown Atlanta homeless shelter for a week, working alongside the shelter's team to serve the homeless of our city. It took me ten minutes to take my son there—only five train stops away. Something seemed right about that, about a mission trip in our own town.

—Derek Sweatman

Think Holistically

29. Helping the homeless can be daunting: How do you get a job if you don't have an address? How do you navigate the system to get help? The national organization **Open Table** allows several folks to “surround” a person to help him out of homelessness. The group (table) has worked really well to help folks not only get a home, but an education, a job, and full independence.

—**Glen Elliott**, *Pantano Christian Church, Tucson, Arizona*

30. We were running the traditional food and clothing pantry, but we were duplicating services and not providing long-term, sustainable solutions. **We began working with community leaders** to assess needs and think strategically about community transformation through Jesus Christ. This is a much slower process, and it doesn't bring about the “warm fuzzies” for people who just want to drop off old clothes or canned goods and feel better about “serving the poor.” But our commitment is to develop a relational approach where people are engaged in providing solutions and not just receiving handouts.

—**Rick Grover**

31. Learn more about Community Health Evangelism, or CHE. This is a comprehensive way to help a neighborhood or village address the issue of poverty without much outside assistance. The theory is that all the resources to improve a village or neighborhood are already there; it is the lack of education and a cooperative plan that hinders movement from poverty.

—**Glen Elliott**

32. In developing countries such as India, it is easy to see the rampant poverty. As you travel on the dirt roads to the villages, it is normal to see huts and malnourished children with very little. However, as we dig deeper than the surface level, the poverty is even more evident in the chains shackling our hopes, futures, and dreams. Poverty can be related to material things, but **there are also spiritual, relational, psychological, and emotional issues.**

The church can eliminate poverty not only in the physical realm, but in the spiritual realm as well. Jesus is our prime example; he met people's needs, but always kept the end result in mind. Jesus healed people and rescued people from being outcasts and untouchables. In the process, he developed a personal relationship with them as their Savior and Lord.

—**Ajai Lall**, *Central India Christian Mission, Damoh, India*

Remember Relationships

33. Be intentional about connecting with people. A missionary to the Bedouin community told me, “Communication is to humans what water in a desert is to animals.” People are starving for relationships, and the hectic pace of our mobile era just magnifies the silence and loneliness.

—Mike Schrage

34. Become a “friendship partner” for a refugee or immigrant family, coming alongside them in their first year in the U.S. to help them adjust and learn basic skills. We do this in partnership with World Relief.

—Kirsten Strand

35. Treat people compassionately as people. One of the most unhelpful things you can do is treat a person in poverty as a project or as a problem to be fixed. Instead, treat them as a friend, walking with them and entering compassionately into their struggles. As in all friendships, be willing to teach, encourage, and care for one another.

—Chris Smith

36. Remember that relationships may precede programs. So many of the processes required to address poverty also require trusting relationships. If people believe you care about them and respect them, they are much more likely to participate in programs and opportunities and trust you to become part of their lives.

—Becky Ahlberg

Help Them Help

37. We began a parent mentor program that pays parents in low-income communities a stipend in exchange for volunteering 10 hours a week at their child’s school. It provides training and empowerment to moms (who may not speak English or have much education) that **they do have something to contribute.**

—Kirsten Strand

38. Learn the skills and passions of a person in poverty and find ways for her to use those skills to serve others. This, of course, is something we should be learning to do for all of our members and neighbors, but it is important that people in poverty understand themselves not just as receivers of others’ generosity, but as joyful contributors to the health and well-being of the church or neighborhood.

—Chris Smith

39. Find ways to include the people you want to reach in the things you want to do. For example, consider asking participants in your food pantry program actually to work in your food pantry. In return for their participation, they get additional items and they get to know your people. And provide child care for their children while they work! Or, if you invite neighborhood children to your VBS or after-school program, find ways for parents to participate, too. They can check kids in, help with refreshments or games, address postcards, etc. If parents make connections with other adults, they are more likely to support the connections their children are making.

—Becky Ahlberg

40. At Christmas, create a “gift mart” that allows parents to purchase toys for their own children. We collect thousands of donated toys and then set up the gift marts at under-resourced elementary schools and donate all the money we raise to the school. You can also do this with school supplies, winter coats, food, or anything you would give away. Make it a dignity-preserving opportunity that recognizes everyone has something to contribute.

—Kirsten Strand

Create Opportunities

41. Find ways to connect people who have jobs to fill with people who are looking for jobs. This can certainly be complicated, but get to know the people in your church or neighborhood who run businesses and what sorts of skills their work requires. If you have many people who are looking for work, imagine ways your church could start initiatives that would employ people. For example, I am familiar with churches that have started coffeehouses, farms, cleaning businesses, and a day care.

—Chris Smith

42. In an Indian tribal area, people were making *bidis* (local handmade cigarettes) simply by wrapping tobacco in leaves. This job was done mostly by women, who work 10 or more hours a day and make only one U.S. dollar! This was replaced by a significant project where they could assemble reading glasses. With only eight hours of work, they could make three times more money while helping those who could otherwise not afford to have reading glasses.

—Ajai Lall

43. We invite homeless men and women to enter a program that partners them with a local business owner who is willing to pay their rent, guide them through a recovery ministry, if necessary, and provide them with on-site job training until they can provide for themselves. More than 600 people have successfully completed the program, are gainfully employed, and are no longer dependent on government or charitable assistance.

—Jon Weece

44. Central India Christian Mission offers training to 84 of our nursing college students to be medical evangelists. Through this training, they not only receive their four-year nursing degree, but also a diploma in Christian service. As the nurses, paramedical workers, and medical technicians serve people as the hands of Christ, they also pray for them and extend the love of Christ to them during their suffering.

—**Ajai Lall**

Get Creative

45. When a church participates in a carefully planned short-term trip, its participants often desire **to help those whom they have met**. Three girls from New Hampshire did just that, and with their church's backing raised enough funds to provide shoes for all the children in a school in the slums of Kenya. Another boy shot baskets for hours on end, with sponsors supporting his activities.

—**Doug Priest**

46. Take a few rolls of quarters to a laundromat in your town. Introduce yourself to a family that looks like they may need a helping hand. Pay their washing and drying costs, and use the time in between loads to have some meaningful conversation.

—**Titus Benton**

47. Host a film festival addressing poverty and related issues, such as human trafficking or the water crisis. Advertise to your community and charge a fee for entry. Donate the proceeds to one of the causes mentioned in your films.

—**Titus Benton**

Pray

48. Commit to praying for the people you meet by name, and then become the answer to your prayer by creatively finding ways of caring for that person.

—**Ryan Hayes**

Study Together

49. We've finished a yearlong study as a congregation that began with our elders traveling to Indianapolis to meet with Englewood Christian Church and reading several books and articles (see recommended resources on p. 23). The study culminated with a 10-week focus in our small groups and Sunday school classes. Our people studied the same material and interviewed community leaders about their perceptions, strengths, and goals, and the possibilities for partnerships to serve the community.

We met personally with school administrators, police officers, other churches, and even the president of East Tennessee State University. We also invited the classes/groups to walk areas of our community with a list of questions to help them see things they may not have seen. The youth participated as well. Then we had a “listening event” where we reported our findings. From that event we identified four areas of focus for going forward, and we hired a part-time minister to lead and implement these strategies.

—Aaron Wymer

Buy Intentionally

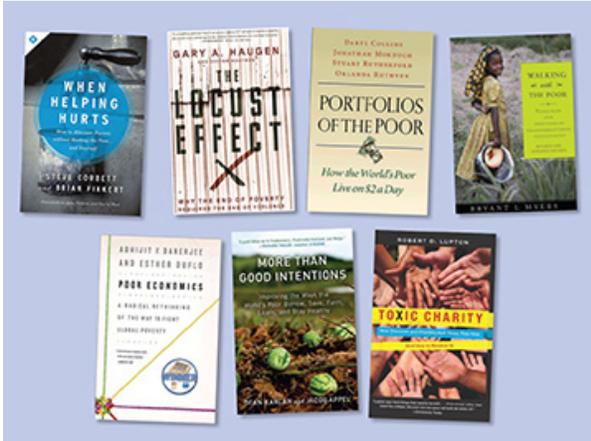
50. You can create jobs, empower workers, and fight issues like human trafficking **through your purchases**. Here are just a few of the many options:

- International Disaster Emergency Service’s Christmas Catalog offers a variety of ways to bless others at Christmas. Whether it’s a \$15 cooking pot or a \$2,500 well, you can give tangible, practical items to people in need around the world. Learn more at www.ides.org.
- byTavi is a faith-based microenterprise initiative of the Center for Global Impact. This ministry teaches women in Cambodia how to sew clothing, handbags, and other items, and pays them a fair wage for their work. Learn more at centerforglobalimpact.org/bytavi.
- Buy T-shirts, bags, and more at cleomontary.com, and 25 percent of the proceeds will go to provide food, water, health care, education, and housing for the poor in America.
- Support small-scale farmers by purchasing organic coffee, tea, chocolate, and fruit from Equal Exchange Coop (www.equalexchange.coop).

PRAY

Read . . . Discuss . . . Decide

Each of the following was recommended by at least one of the contributors to this “how-to-fight-poverty” feature:



When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself, by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody Publishers, 2009).

The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence, by Gary A. Haugen (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day, by Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, and Orlanda Ruthven (Princeton University Press, 2009).

Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development, by Bryant Myers (Orbis Books, 2011).

Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty, by Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo (PublicAffairs, 2012).

More than Good Intentions: Improving the Ways the World's Poor Borrow, Save, Farm, Learn, and Stay Healthy, by Dean Karlan and Jacob Appel (Plume, 2012).

Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help, and How to Reverse It, by Robert D. Lupton (HarperCollins, 2011).

—J.J.

© 2016 Christian Standard