



## Food that Endures: A Food for Life Banquet

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John 6.27 – “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.”



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A Food for Life Banquet is an opportunity for your community to come together, share a meal, reflect, pray, and learn about hunger throughout the world, and connect with local and national organizations serving the hungry. It can be large and elaborate, with many participants, or small and intimate, in the context of a youth group or home church meeting.

### What are the goals of a Food for Life Banquet?

1. To educate and provide a space for open dialogue on the issue of the right to food and what is at stake for those who attend.
2. To assist the participants to experience, reflect and envision how to respond to hunger locally and globally in concrete action.
3. To connect participants with the work of the Lutheran Church globally in serving those who are hungry and in need.
4. To learn about the food and heritage of other cultures.

### How do you go about it?

Use **Food for Life** as a resource of prayers, recipes, and stories about the right to and struggle for food throughout the world. **Choose a simple menu**, prayers, and stories to read and discuss along with the shared food.

Brainstorm **whom you might invite** to take part or to represent their organization – food pantries, nutrition specialists at school, farm workers or farmers, farmers’ market organizers or Community Supported Agriculture specialists. You can include both local organizations



and national ones, such as Bread for the World, who may be able to send representatives or educators to take part.

If you are planning a larger-scale event, you can create an informal opportunity for local non-profits to set up booths and communicate needs and **partnership opportunities** for churches and individuals who attend the event.

You can **get youth involved** by asking them to create posters or other materials reflecting their understanding of hunger in the world and the ways the church is responding to it. Depending on the age and interest of the participants, you might engage in some significant research, or just look online (check out some of the websites and books in the Additional Resources in the Food for Life Accompanying Resources). Youth groups might want to become involved in a Hunger Fast or “30-hour Famine” project as a leadup to the event. Contact and involve campus ministries of local colleges.

Consider **selecting a concrete goal** so that people will be able to participate in responding to the problem. Some examples are:

- Raise money for ELCA World Hunger or for the Lutheran World Federation projects described in *Food for Life*
- Collect non-perishable food items for a local food pantry

### What do you need?

- Food – simple but with substance. Use some of the recipes in *Food for Life* to provide variety. Keep the costs low; leftovers might be shared with a homeless shelter, depending upon local food laws.
- Projector, speakers, and computer for video or powerpoint presentations if necessary
- Tables, chairs, table covers, bowls, plates, glasses, silverware, serving dishes
- Microphone and amp (depending on the room size and number of people attending)
- Posters with hunger statistics posted around the space
- Posters with organizations and successes of the effort to eliminate hunger
- Prayers typed up for each table to share
- Stories from *Food for Life* copied for each table to discuss
- Recipes from *Food for Life* for the recipes used at the banquet



## Your Timeline for the Food for Life Banquet

**A month beforehand:** Collect a few friends or volunteers to be the organizing team. Share some time together looking through *Food for Life* and the *Accompanying Resources* for the reflections, prayers, and recipes you would like to use. Reserve the space in which the banquet will be held, if necessary. For a larger event, begin contacting potential speakers, educators, and local organizational representatives. If it is to be a fundraising event, set your fundraising goal and consider how to meet it – via ticket sales? Donations?

### Advertising Strategy:

- Posters posted in churches and around town and e-mailed to various churches and non-profits
- Phone calls and e-mails to non-profits & youth groups
- Facebook event
- Church bulletins (announcements)
- Article in local newspaper
- Verbalized and invite extended to local pastor cluster group(s)
- Posters and verbal invites to all campus ministries

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**Three weeks beforehand:** Choose reflections or discussion questions from the resources, or make up your own. Begin advertising and outreach if the event is to be public.



**Two weeks beforehand:** Create your script for the event from your chosen prayers, recipes, and the speakers you have contacted. Give time for informal sharing over the meal – you don't have to fill every moment with formal speeches or powerpoint presentations! Make certain you have a microphone and LCD projector (for presentations) if necessary.

**One week beforehand:** Gather the materials and food; make copies of all necessary prayers, recipes, and stories; set a time for cooking. If you are worried about some of the unfamiliar recipes, make test batches to be sure it will come out well! Choose volunteer servers, set-up people and take-down people.

**The day of:** Gather to cook together; set up tables and booths, if necessary. Serve, eat, learn, reflect, enjoy!



## SAMPLE PROGRAM OUTLINE

### On the Day:

- Cooking (beginning in the early afternoon)
- Set-up tables, chairs, etc.
- Invited representatives came to set up their booths of information
- Guests arrive and are greeted
- People mingle, drop off non-perishable items for collection, and visit with local non-profits
- Welcome and Introduction
- Prayer from *Food for Life*
- Food is served
- People eat (a given question(s) can be discussed at this time)
- On the table, people find descriptions of the recipes and stories connected with the food they are eating
- Presentations by invited speakers
- Request for donations
- Could transition into live concert, or people could wander around booths
- Closing prayer
- Clean up