



**ELCA World Hunger**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## Suggested Reading

Looking for a book on hunger for your reading group? Wondering how (and why!) ELCA World Hunger works to address systemic inequalities? Just wanting to dig deeper? Here are some resources that offer a variety of perspectives. Didn't find what you were looking for? Contact David Creech at [david.creech@elca.org](mailto:david.creech@elca.org).

## Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Hunger and Poverty

### Print:

Reta Halteman Finger, *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). Very nuanced discussion of the early church's practice of commensality and the role of women and widows in preparing meals. Helpful resource for a Bible study or sermon series on Acts.

Larry Hollar, ed., *Hunger for the Word: Lectionary Reflections on Food and Justice* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2004). Three volumes for each of the church years that provide lectionary reflections that tie hunger and poverty issues to the Gospel and lessons for the week.

Susan Holman, ed., *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008). Collection of essays on early Christian thinking on and responses to hunger and poverty. Several interesting essays, very academic.

Leslie Hoppe, *There Shall Be No Poor among You: Poverty in the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004). Survey of biblical texts on poverty, useful for a Bible study series. Author suggests provocative conclusions that are sure to lead to conversations!

Shannon Jung, *Food for Life: The Spirituality and Ethics of Eating* (Minneapolis: Fortress: 2004). The first of three books exploring the intersections between theology and food. Accessible, straightforward, with several interesting insights.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Sharing Food: Christian Practices for Enjoyment* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006). Jung's second book looking at food and theology. Explores the many ways (some old, some new, some helpful reminders!) in which food can be shared.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Hunger and Happiness: Feeding the Hungry, Nourishing Our Souls* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 2009). The third of three books that spells out a theology of food. Jung puts forth the perhaps challenging thesis that our own happiness is directly tied to the wellbeing of others (may be a stretch for the altruist in you!).

George McGovern, Bob Dole, and Donald Messer, *Ending Hunger Now: A Challenge to Persons of Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005). Brief book that explores the Christian call to work against hunger and poverty. Each of the five chapters concludes with discussion questions making the book an excellent option for a five-part series looking at the causes of and solutions to hunger, with a clear connection to the Christian faith.

Craig Nesson, *Give Us This Day: A Lutheran Proposal for Ending World Hunger* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003). Brief (87 pages!) book that underscores the centrality of justice, especially as it relates to hunger, in the Christian tradition.

Samuel Torvend, *Luther and the Hungry Poor: Gathered Fragments* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008). Collection of Luther's comments on hunger and poverty. Academic with clear connections to contemporary issues. Several good quotes for sermons or catechism.

Web:

The June 2010 issue of the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* deals exclusively with hunger and poverty in the Christian tradition. Available at [www.elca.org/jle](http://www.elca.org/jle).

Hunger Rumbblings, the ELCA World Hunger Blog:  
[www.blogs.elca.org/hungerrumbblings](http://www.blogs.elca.org/hungerrumbblings).

### **Root Causes of and Solutions to Hunger and Poverty**

Print:

Dale Hanson Bourke, *Skeptics Guide to Global Poverty* (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007). Accessible, succinct introduction to issues related to hunger and poverty. Full of facts and figures.

Bread for the World Institute, Annual Hunger Reports. Reliable source of data and statistics about hunger and poverty. Provides rationale for many of Bread for the World's (and ELCA World Hunger's) advocacy campaigns. Reports from 2010 on include a "Christian Study Guide" for an adult education series on hunger. Available at [www.bread.org/institute/hunger-report](http://www.bread.org/institute/hunger-report).

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Helpful discussion about the root causes of poverty and effective ways to address them. Written as a response to Jeff Sachs and Bill Easterly, forging a middle way between them.

William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin, 2006). Written partly as a response to Jeffrey Sachs. Author is a former world banker, now professor at New York University. Offers a strong critique of how aid is

commonly practiced. The final chapters provide his vision for best practices in development aid.

Frances Moore Lappé, Joseph Collins, and Peter Rosset, *World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1998). Good entry-level text that debunks 12 myths about hunger, such as there is not enough food, nature is to blame and free trade is the solution. Explore each of the myths in a 12-part adult education program!

Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* (New York: Penguin, 2005). A hopeful proposal to end poverty. Explains the root causes of hunger and poverty and suggests how we ought to move forward.

Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty* (New York: Random House, 2009). Discusses the moral imperative to respond to hunger and poverty in the world. Operates out of a charity mindset. Discusses several interesting psychological and economic studies. The section “Facts about Aid” is particularly insightful.

Roger Thurow and Scott Kilman, *Enough: Why the World’s Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009). Journalists for the *Wall Street Journal* critically examine the root causes of hunger and poverty and offer suggestions for the way forward.

Web:

Aidwatchers ([www.aidwatchers.com](http://www.aidwatchers.com)), a blog run by Bill Easterly and updated regularly. Commentary on the effectiveness of aid and suggestions for improvement.

Bread for the World’s Web site ([www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)) has many excellent facts, figures and articles. There is also a link to the Bread for the World Institute and a regularly updated blog that discusses hunger issues.

The ONE campaign Web site ([www.one.org](http://www.one.org)) gives a brief synopsis of several hunger-related issues. Lots of information, including facts, figures and how to get involved.

## **Hunger Advocacy**

Print:

Arthur Simon, *The Rising of Bread for the World: An Outcry of Citizens against Hunger* (New York: Paulist, 2009). Arthur Simon’s autobiography chronicling the birth and growth of Bread for the World. Several insights on how the church can effectively engage in advocacy on behalf of those who are hungry.

John Stumme and Robert Tuttle, eds., *Church and State: Lutheran Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003). A collection of essays written by Lutheran scholars on the role of the church in public life.

Web:

Bread for the World's Web site ([www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)) provides information on current advocacy issues and offers resources to engage in effective advocacy work.

The ELCA Washington Office Web site: [www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy).

Jubilee USA ([www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org)) focuses on international debt relief. Their Web site offers facts, figures and reports on international debt and its relationship to hunger and poverty.

The ONE Campaign Web site ([www.one.org](http://www.one.org)) posts current advocacy issues and describes how you or your congregation can be more fully engaged in their campaign.

### **Environmental Issues**

Print:

Stephen Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001). Explores the connection between ecology and theology. Argument is straightforward: to be a Christian is to care for the earth. Pastoral and accessible.

Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Penguin, 2005). Not for the faint of heart! Thick, dense book that explores how societies have overused land and resources and seeks to learn from their mistakes.

Thomas Friedman, *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2008). Honest but hopeful discussion of environmental issues facing the planet. Does not always explicitly connect environmental problems to hunger.

Sallie McFague, *A New Climate for Theology: God, the World, and Global Warming* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008). Asks how our theology ought to respond to the realities of climate change. Focused on ecology generally, not just the impacts on human beings.

Web:

Earth Ministry is an ecumenical non-profit organization based in Seattle, Washington, committed to creation care. Many resources and ideas available on their Web site ([www.earthministry.org](http://www.earthministry.org)).

Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) is a grassroots movement within the ELCA, seeking to foster care for God's good creation in all expressions of our church's life. LRC is a program designed to encourage the ELCA to incorporate care for creation into its full life and mission at all levels. Their Web address is [www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org](http://www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org).

Web of Creation is the Web site designed by biblical scholar David Rhoads and hosted by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. A Hunger Education grant from ELCA World Hunger also supports the work. Many resources and educational materials are available on the Web site ([www.webofcreation.org](http://www.webofcreation.org)).

## **Modern Food Production and Distribution**

### Print:

Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007). The *New York Times* bestseller that chronicles a family's year of eating food grown seasonally and locally. In addition to facts about modern food production, the book provides several recipes and ideas for eating sustainably.

Marion Nestle, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, revised and expanded edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). Academic with detailed data and analysis.

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006). Traces the history of four meals from "field to plate." Excellent writer, many interesting facts and figures.

Paul Roberts, *The End of Food* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008). Looks at the sustainability of contemporary food production and distribution. A bit dense, but nonetheless a highly recommended introduction to issues around Western food practices.

Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004). Uses contemporary food production as a lens through which to understand social issues. Raises several important justice issues that food laborers face.

### Web:

Food First explores sustainable food practices. A wealth of information is available on their Web site, [www.foodfirst.org](http://www.foodfirst.org).

The Presbyterian Hunger Program has a particular focus on food production in the United States. Visit their Web site at [www.pcusa.org/hunger](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger) (while you're there, check out their blog, Food and Faith!).

## **Simple Living**

### Print:

Anne Basye, *Sustaining Simplicity: A Journal* (Chicago: ELCA, 2007). Records a year of living simply, asking questions about faith, money and abundance. Full of practical ideas to simplify your life.

William Cavanaugh, *Being Consumed: Economics and Christian Desire* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008). Brief theological exploration of the free market, consumerism, globalization and scarcity. The four chapters are ideal for a four-part series on living faithfully in a market economy.

Shannon Daley Harris and Jeffrey Keenan, with Karen Speerstra, *Our Day to End Poverty: 24 Ways You Can Make a Difference* (San Francisco: Berrett-Joehler Publishers, Inc., 2007.) Title says it all! Offers several (actually many more than 24!) concrete ideas to be engaged in anti-hunger work.

Kevin Salwen and Hannah Salwen, *The Power of Half: One Family's Decision to Stop Taking and Start Giving Back* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010). Tells the story of one family's work to cut their possessions by half and to give the savings to development. Well written with several insightful questions about aid, development and our role in making the world a better place.

Arthur Simon, *How Much is Enough? Hungering for God in an Affluent Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003). Biblical and theological reflections on affluence. Short chapters ideal for reflective devotional reading.

Web:

Alternatives for Simple Living: [www.simpleliving.org](http://www.simpleliving.org)

The companion Web site to *Sustaining Simplicity* contains many additional reading selections, learning activities, and links all exploring what it means to live simply. Visit <http://archive.elca.org/hunger/resources/simple/leader-guide.html>.

## **Health and Hunger**

Print:

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2005). Explores some perplexing historical questions such as "Why did some nations flourish, while others faltered?" His answer? Guns, germs and steel. This book puts malaria in perspective as one of those "germs" that influenced the course of history. (A greater emphasis on malaria can be found in the three-part PBS miniseries by the same name.)

Musa W. Dube, *HIV/AIDS and the Curriculum: Methods of Integrating HIV/AIDS in Theological Programmes* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2003)

James Cross Giblin, *The Boy Who Saved Cleveland* (for grades 3-6) (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2006). A fictional book for young readers that is based on a true story, this book recounts the experiences of young Seth Doan. The book portrays the realities of malaria infection from the vantage point of a child.

Sonia Shah, *The Fever: How Malaria has Ruled Humankind for 500,000 Years* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010). An investigative report on the adaptable and devastating disease. Shah explores the historical impact of malaria on our global society, and critiques our contemporary response to it.

Jonny Steinberg, *Three-Letter Plague: A Young Man's Journey Through a Great Epidemic* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008)

James L.A. Webb Jr., *Humanity's Burden: A Global History of Malaria (Studies in Environment and History)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Webb studied history, epidemiology and African studies at Johns Hopkins University, and teaches in those disciplines at Colby College in Maine. His book explores the history of malaria with insights from the social and natural sciences.