A Word from VA Synod Hunger Team

Hunger and food insecurity continue to plague our communities, country, and the world. Recent changes in federal policies have made accessing funds for hunger and nutrition programs more difficult. Rising food prices, especially eggs, a traditionally cheap source of protein, have made it difficult for some our more vulnerable community members to make ends meet. Hunger on college campuses is a real concern for many. Budget cutbacks were recently voted for in congress. Your representatives have not yet planned for how the budget will be spent. Now is your chance to let them know where you want your tax dollars to go.

Jesus said, "Whatever you do for the least of these you do for me." We do Christ's work when we act with and for people affected by hunger and poverty.

God teaches us, through the prophets, that we are not to withhold nourishment from anyone (Nehemiah 5:1-13; Isaiah 58:6-10; Zechariah 7:8-10), not to harden our hearts, but to give and accompany one another with an open hand and an open heart (Deuteronomy 15:10). In the Gospels, Jesus invites potential disciples to "follow" him, making it clear that discipleship entails actions of solidarity and service (Matthew 20:26-28).

Jesus urges us to act on God's behalf and order our lives together so that all people have the necessities of life (Matthew 25:35-40) and are able to flourish. We continue Christ's work when we "go and do likewise" (Luke 10:32-38).

Sometimes feeding the hungry is not enough; we also need to address the root causes of hunger.

Writing or calling your elected representatives is a way to speak up for those who have no voice, or whose voice is not heard. Bread for the World, an ecumenical organization for advocacy has created an easy way for congregations to participate in advocacy. An offering of letters from your congregation can make a difference in the lives of people here and abroad. This year's focus of letter writing will be on the Farm Bill which includes money for emergency nutrition programs (SNAP) and basic childhood nutrition (WIC), college hunger and insecurity, and global nutrition.

You can find easy to use letters and resources here: https://www.bread.org/offering-letters.