

ACTION GUIDE *for* CONGREGATIONS



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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Advent resources

After a year when neighborhoods across the United States have lived in fear and increasing economic hardship, ELCA World Hunger invites you to spend Advent with your neighbors. Strengthen your neighborhoods, make new neighbors, see your longtime neighbors in new ways, and expand your understanding of who neighbors can be. While you're at it, why not sprinkle in some joy?

Inspired by Mary's Magnificat, ELCA World Hunger's Advent theme is **"Filled With Good Things,"** an invitation for all of us to strengthen our relationships with our neighbors by sharing our abundance. This year's Advent resources provide tools for your community to celebrate those you are connected to, near and far, and to strengthen your bonds.

The **Advent calendar** and accompanying **coloring kit** focus you and your household on action with and for your neighborhoods. Each entry in the calendar is an opportunity to reflect, learn or be generous. The coloring kit is an opportunity to decorate your hearth and home with a vibrant community celebrating the ways God has gifted us to one another.

The **devotional** provides reflections on neighborliness for the four Sundays in Advent, which can be read individually or in a group study. Each entry guides you through ways to strengthen your community.

Finally, this year's Advent resources again provide guidance for Stocking the Streets bags, a way to walk with our unhoused neighbors. Combined with the ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts catalog, the bags will equip your congregation to foster new neighborly relationships locally and throughout the global church.

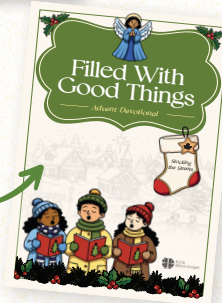
calendar



coloring
kit

Do-it-Yourself
Winter Holiday
Scene

devotional

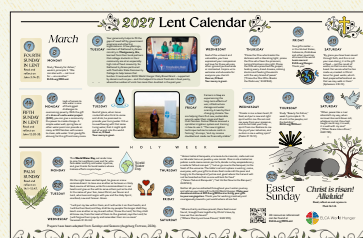
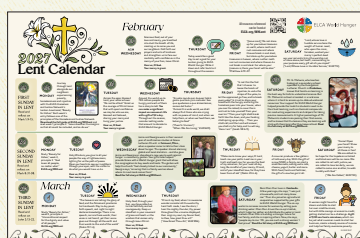


Download resources for free at
ELCA.org/WHAdvent
or scan the QR code.

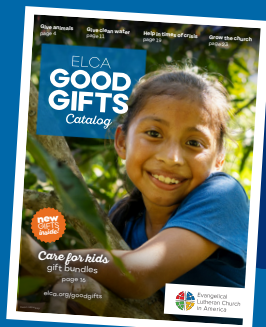


New Lent Calendar

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



ELCA GOOD GIFTS *Catalog*



Rethink gift-giving with ELCA Good Gifts

On average, people in the United States spend more than \$900 a year on Christmas gifts. Yet when we think about the best gifts we have given or received, often what makes them memorable is not the gift itself but the story behind it.

ELCA Good Gifts enable you to purchase a gift in honor of a loved one and support real projects from a variety of ELCA ministries — including ELCA World Hunger.

ELCA Good Gifts are a fun, interactive way to support ELCA World Hunger and other ministries. Spread the word in your congregation and invite people to join you in this joyful way to give! With more than 70 options, your members are sure to find gifts that inspire them to help people in need.

Popular ELCA Good Gift!

Abundant community

Your congregation can raise funds for an entire community. This bundle includes chickens, a goat, bees, fruit trees, seeds, agricultural tools and training, and more.

Visit ELCA.org/GoodGifts to learn more.

Abundant community

\$1,020



Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth

Goat

\$50



Sean Hawkey/Life on Earth

**new
gift!**

Rooster and a
flock of chicks

\$25



Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth

Care for kids



**new
gift!**

Sponsor a classroom

\$3,050



Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth

**new
gift!**

Healthy beginnings

\$1,825





Fundraising posters

Order a poster to raise awareness of 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 a Good Gifts catalog.

Prepare for Christmas

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.

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 to 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.



Visit **store.ELCA.org** to order Christmas cards and assorted ornaments.

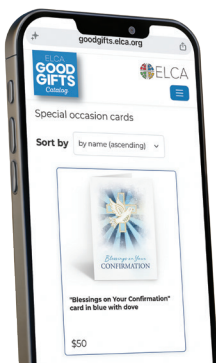


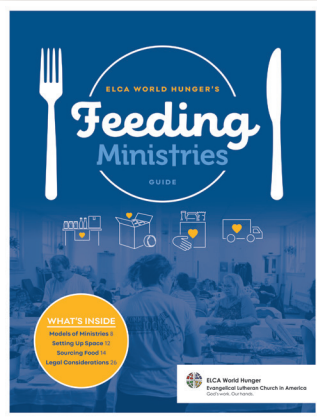
ELCA Good Gifts cards for every occasion

Check out the new ELCA Good Gifts occasion cards that give donors an opportunity to turn birthdays, baptisms, confirmations and moments of caring or gratitude into something more than words on paper. Each card represents a meaningful gift given in someone's honor, and you can choose from several gift-amount options that all benefit ELCA Where Needed Most.

When you give an ELCA Good Gift in honor of a friend or loved one, you can send a card to tell them about it.

Visit **ELCA.org/GoodGifts** to give online and to 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.





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.

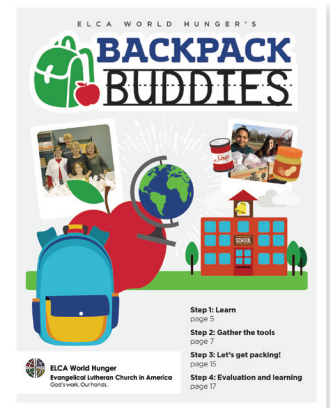
 Order our free how-to guide at **store.ELCA.org**.



Pack food for kids

With this guide, your congregation can start a "Backpack Buddies" program to pack bags of food for children in your community who need nutritious meals. It includes instructions on working with local schools, gathering volunteers and resources, and delivering the backpacks to families.

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

What is a hunger leader?

Learn more about being a hunger leader in your community with this online course. From it, you will gain a deeper understanding of the role hunger leaders play in ELCA World Hunger's mission to end hunger at its root causes and will see yourself in this call to support, network and organize around antipoverty ministry.



Hunger Leader 101: What is a Hunger Leader?

START COURSE



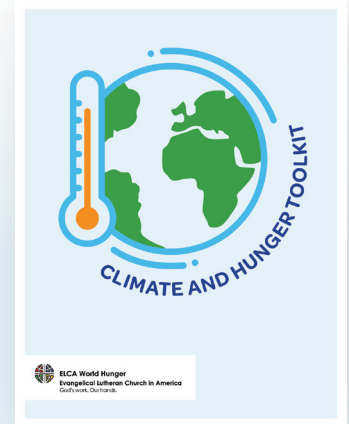
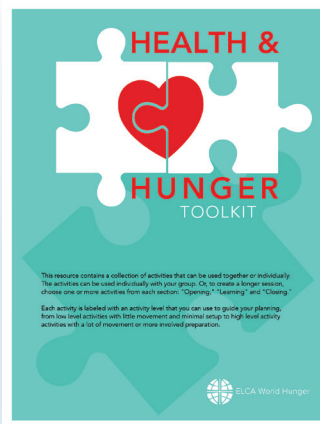
Sign up for free!

Hunger tool kits

The "Climate and Hunger" and "Health and Hunger" tool kits feature a variety of activities to teach your group about how these two topics impact hunger. The tool kits include necessary materials for activities and discussions, as well as additional resources.



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



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**.



INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES AND TRIBAL RELATIONS

Practice land acknowledgements

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 it. The ELCA's Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations unit offers a guide with language for land acknowledgments in bulletins, church signage, worship and online events.



Visit **ELCA.org/Indigenous** to learn more about the Truth and Healing Movement and find other resources.



Commit to gender justice

Forgive Us and Transform Us
for the Life of the World

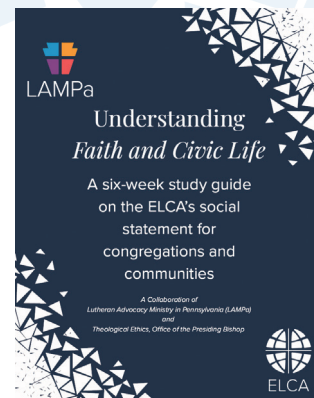
As the ELCA, we are called in the 2019 social statement *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* to dismantle patriarchy and uplift people of all genders. In "Forgive Us and Transform Us for the Life of the World," learn more about faith-based gender justice through stories, essays and art created by ELCA members.



Download or order for free at **store.ELCA.org**.

Engage in social issues

A study guide entitled "Understanding *Faith and Civic Life*" has been developed by Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) in collaboration with the Theological Ethics unit in the ELCA's Office of the Presiding Bishop.



This study guide provides a starting point for conversation about the new ELCA social statement *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All* (2025).

This six-week curriculum guides congregations and faith communities through important parts of the social statement, which include: its theological grounding, God's call to civic participation, the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the relationship between church and state, and select contemporary issues. Both the statement and the study equip this church to engage in an active civic life for the sake of the well-being of all.



Download the guide for free at **resources.ELCA.org** under the "Faith and Society" category.

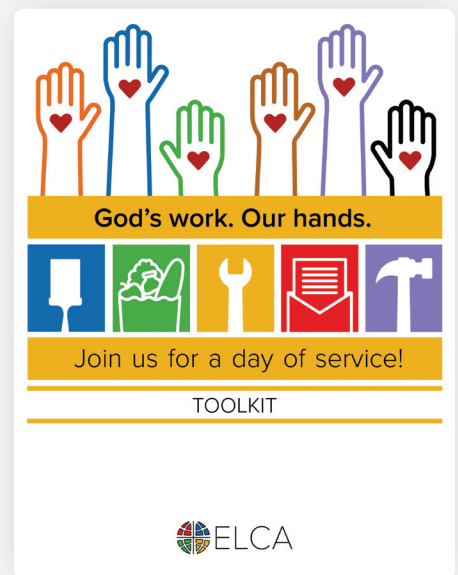


God's work. Our hands.

"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.
- ✓ Host a community food drive.
- ✓ Pack meals for low-income families.
- ✓ Participate in craftivism.



Prepare your congregation for disaster

Lutheran Disaster Response is dedicated to making disaster education accessible by developing a series of courses that cover a range of subjects, such as the disaster cycle, disaster case management and psychological first aid. These free, self-paced courses, some of which are available in Spanish, teach participants about responding to a disaster before one impacts their community. The platform also includes a guide for From Crisis to Community, an immersion experience that simulates disaster recovery, as well as other resources on disaster response.



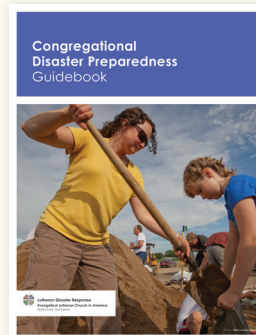
Just in Time
Training:
Responding to
Disasters



Sign up for free



Download the guide for free at **ELCA.org/disaster/resources** under the "General" subcategory.



Before a disaster strikes, ensure that your congregation is ready for it. Through this guide, learn about 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.



WHAT IS THE MIGRANT JOURNEY?

The migrant journey is an interactive experience to learn about the factors driving people to flee their homes and seek refuge in the Americas. As people go through the journey, they learn why children and families are fleeing from their homes and the obstacles they face finding protection in other countries, including the United States.

The migrant journey is an experience that congregations (or any other group) can use to learn more about the perilous journey that children and families are making every day.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SET UP A MIGRANT JOURNEY EXPERIENCE:

- Materials and space:**
- The printed descriptions of the characters for each section.
 - Space with room for five stations. An example is shown on the next page. The migrant journey is most effective when small groups of participants can walk from one location to another. But it is also effective in a large room where only the characters go.
 - If possible, use pictures at each station. You will need pictures representing:
 - Central American countries
 - Cameroon, Venezuela, Colombia, and the Darien Gap
 - Mexico
 - the U.S.-Mexico border
 - a U.S. community

Staff:

- One guide to take people through the migrant journey per every 15 people. Ideally, this person has a basic knowledge of the challenges in migrating to the Americas.

We recommend setting up groups of 15 people to go through the migrant journey together and address the number of guides accordingly. Participants can learn more at ELCA/AMMPARO or ELCA Advocacy.

Experience a migrant's journey

The AMMPARO Migrant Journey 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 Migrant Journey guide for free at **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** under the "Sanctuary" subcategory.



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.

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.



Lutheran
Disaster Response

Relief today. Resilience tomorrow.

Lutheran Disaster Response, a ministry of the ELCA, provides support for communities recovering from devastating floodwaters by responding to urgent needs, providing emotional and spiritual care, and supporting cleanup and long-term recovery.

We are church together, and together we can reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in their time of need.



Scan the QR code to give today.

Floods are one of the most common disasters in the United States. Your generosity supports survivors on the long road to recovery.



Download free worship resources at [ELCA.org/disaster/resources](https://elca.org/disaster/resources) under the "Worship Resources" subcategory.

Special dates to consider



World Food Day

Friday, Oct. 16, 2026

Join ELCA World Hunger and people around the world in raising awareness and taking action toward food security for all.



World Water Day

Monday, March 22, 2027

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



World Health Day

Wednesday, April 7, 2027

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



World Refugee Day

Sunday, June 20, 2027

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



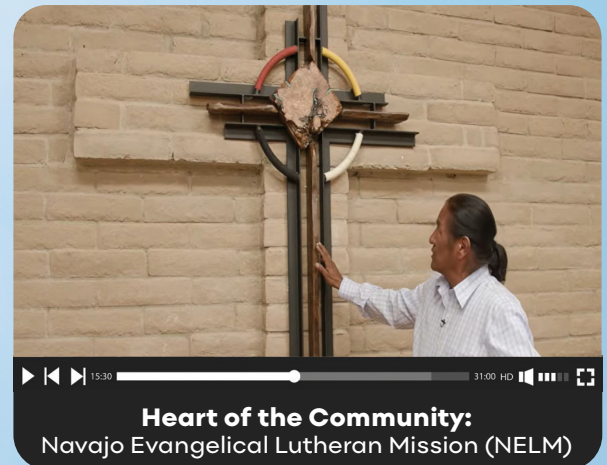
International Day of Peace

Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2027

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

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](https://www.youtube.com/ELCA) or [Vimeo.com/ELCA](https://www.vimeo.com/ELCA).



ADVOCACY

Striving for Justice and Peace



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

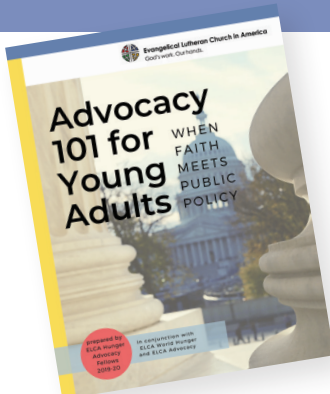
Get started with advocacy

Eager to get involved in advocacy but unsure where to start? In the "ELCA Advocacy 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.



Participate in craftivism

Craftivism is a form of activism that employs traditional crafts as mediums for social and political change. It can help hands and hearts advance peace and justice through creative expression. With your congregation, create art that is representative of your values. Find project planning tips in this resource.



"Advocacy 101 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 that 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.

TAKE ACTION

At the **ELCA Action Center**, you will find information on issues being debated by federal elected officials, along with reflections from ELCA social teaching and stories from ELCA congregations and ministries that inform ELCA priorities. Take your experiences and reflections to the next step through this tool, which will send your message directly to your elected officials.



Sign up for Action Alerts at ELCA.org/advocacy/signup.



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 will get the opportunity to learn more about the significance of livestock and to collect change to purchase ELCA Good Gifts on their own or with the congregation.



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



Vacation Bible School programs



COMING SOON!

"Pass the Salt!"

This coming January, ELCA World Hunger invites your congregation to make stronger neighborhoods with our "Pass the Salt!" Vacation Bible School curriculum. This program encourages you to celebrate the gifts God gave to you and to your neighbors just down the street. "Pass the Salt!" is also written to be used in formats other than VBS — try it as a Sunday school curriculum or an intergenerational seasonal program.



Curricula for other VBS programs, such as the bilingual **"At the Table,"** are also available!



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



Global Farm Challenge



"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.



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'S GLOBAL FARM Challenge To-Go



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.

GENERATION ZERO-HUNGER Interactive Journey



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.

Act+ 2DAY 4 TOMORROW

"They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers."
ACTS 2:42 (THE MESSAGE)



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 take part in the spiritual practice of fasting during the event, they will explore questions of faith, hunger, hope and justice together.



Order or download these youth resources for free at ELCA.org/hunger/resources under the "Hunger Education" subcategory.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

New seasonal resources!



Filled With Good Things

Inspired by Mary's Magnificat, ELCA World Hunger's Advent theme is "Filled With Good Things," an invitation for all of us to strengthen our relationships with our neighbors by sharing our abundance. This year's Advent resources provide tools for your community to celebrate those you are connected to, near and far, and to strengthen your bonds.

See page 3 for more resources.

SAVE THE DATE!

"Imagine More," the next ELCA Youth Gathering, will be held in Minneapolis, 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!

June 28–July 2, 2027



IMAGINE more