

Where Does God's Love Abide?



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Worship Resources for the Creative Church - Hunger Emphasis 2019

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Sacred Seasons



Worship Tools for the Creative Church

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Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope, Inc., is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for poor and hungry

Where Does God's Love Abide?

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Art by Sally Lynn Askins

people of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. Since 1991, the group has sought out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of hunger and poverty.

Editorial Address

The Seeds of Hope ministry is housed by the community of faith at Seventh & James Baptist Church. The mailing address is: 602 James; Waco, TX 76706; 254/755-7745; seedseditor1@gmail.com; www.seedspublishers.org. Copyright © 2019.

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A Word about This Packet

We are indebted to a lot of people for their generous contributions to this packet. Our liturgical team, composed of myself, Guilherme Almeida and Erin Conaway, was joined last summer by Alec Ylitalo, pastor of the Richfield Christian Church in Waco.

During our first brainstorming session, we looked through the themes of Hunger Emphasis packets from 1998 through 2018, trying to find something we hadn't used before. We looked at our standard list of 72 passages that we have gleaned from scripture, and that emphasize our mandate to care for marginalized people.



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We decided on 1 John 3:16-18 as the theme passage. We chose “Where Does God’s Love Abide” as the overriding theme and “Loving in Truth & Action” as a subtheme for activities. We then chose Psalm 41:1-3, Acts 4:32-37, Jeremiah 22:13-16, John 6:1-8 and John 15:12-17 for the liturgy (see page 5).

The cover art was created for this packet by Sally Lynn Askins, our resident artist. The piece, which we call “Breakfast by the Sea,” is inspired by one of several murals by artist Zaqaria Shioshvili on the walls of the Beteli Center refectory in Tbilisi, Georgia. (Watch in future Seeds publications for more pieces inspired by these works.)

Almost all of the art in this packet was created by Sally Lynn over the last 10 years. We think you will enjoy seeing it highlighted in this way—and it will impress you, as it impressed us, with the wealth of art she has created for us.

The “Breakfast by the Sea” story doesn’t show up in the packet until page 20, in a guided meditation written for the Hunger Emphasis retreat on pages 18-27. This is the first time we have included anything contemplative that was this elaborate. Alec, our newest team member, pointed out that there needs to be a strong contemplative component to hunger action.

We all agreed, and we hope you can make use of the retreat. As always, we are counting on you to adapt these contents to your own needs, resources and inclinations.

We are grateful for Ellen Kuniyuki Brown, our patient and careful proofreader.

We are deeply grateful for all of you who subscribe to *Sacred Seasons*, and who make use of these gifts in your worship and work. We would love to hear about how you used them. We’d like to share your creative ideas with our other readers.

The contents of this packet are your congregation’s to use freely, and we want you to share them with others. This year, may we truly bring hope for the healing of hunger and poverty in our world.

—Gratefully,
Katie Cook, on behalf of the Seeds staff
and Council of Stewards

Theme Interpretation

Dealing with the Fear of Scarcity

by Erin Conaway

Editor's note: Erin Conaway wrote the musings below as a way of sharing ideas for a sermon to go with our Hunger Emphasis liturgy, but we are also offering it as the theme interpretation for this packet.

I think my greatest struggle with loving others in “truth and action” is the fear of scarcity. Truth and action seem to call me to give sacrificially to other people whom I see are in need all the time. And I have “the world’s goods,” but I’m sometimes afraid to share them because I worry there won’t be enough left for me or for my family. I also know that I don’t have enough to make a real difference.

This makes me think of Mother (Saint) Teresa and the work she did among the poor. Mother Teresa knew long odds. She gave her life to the poor of Calcutta. She didn’t cure leprosy. She probably didn’t see the number of preventable deaths decline during her long ministry and life among the poor. She didn’t see an economic revolution happen because of her devotion and dedication. She was a nun who had only two hands and one heart—but what are those among so many suffering people?

She is acknowledged as a saint, but we know she suffered tremendously, wondering if God was still with her as she followed her call to live among the poorest in the world and to love them. On the wall in the orphanage, Mother Teresa had enlarged and framed a poem that is often misattributed to her. It was the Ten Paradoxical Commandments, written by Kent Keith while he was a student at Harvard in the late 1960s. This is what she wanted to see, and what she wanted her children to see, when they needed a word of inspiration:

People are unreasonable, illogical, self-centered...
love them anyway.
If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish,
ulterior motives...do good anyway.
If you are successful, you win false friends and true
enemies...be successful anyway.
The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow...do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable...
be honest and frank anyway.
People love underdogs but follow only top dogs...
follow some underdog anyway.
What you spend years building may be destroyed
overnight...build anyway.
People really need help but may attack you if you
try to help...help people anyway.
If you give the world the best you have, you may
get kicked in the teeth...give the world the best
you have anyway.

One angle, for a sermon on loving in truth and action, might be to take the fear of scarcity head-on. One can tie in, with the text from 1 John, the gospel reading in John 6. Here Jesus takes what is impossibly small (five loaves and two fish) and makes it enough—even collecting the leftovers, thus showing the extravagant and abundant love of God and revealing that God is in charge of the multiplication. We are to give and love with what we have.

—Erin Conaway, a native of Midland, TX, is a member of the Sacred Seasons liturgical team and a frequent contributor to Seeds publications. He is the pastor of Seventh & James Baptist Church, where the Seeds offices are housed.



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Where Does God's Love Abide?

A Hunger Emphasis Liturgy

by Guilherme Almeida, Erin Conaway, Katie Cook & Alec Ylitalo

We know love by this: that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.
(1 John 3:16-18)

Call to Worship

One: We are called to love not just in word or speech but in truth and action.

Many: May the words of this worship transform into the actions of God's abiding love.

One: We are called to love not just in heart and mind but with hands and feet.

Many: May the wrenching of our hearts inspire us to help meet the needs of all God's children.

One: We are called to love like Christ, by laying down our lives for another.

Many: May God's abiding love overflow into the world through such sacrifices.

Hymn

God of Day and God of Darkness

WORDS: Marty Haugen

MUSIC: *The Sacred Harp*, 1844

BEACH SPRING – 8.7.8.7.D

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Jeremiah 22:13-16

Responsive Reading from the Psalms

One: Happy are those who consider the poor;

Many: The Lord delivers them in the day of trouble.

One: The Lord protects them and keeps them alive; they are called happy in the land.

Many: You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.

One: The Lord sustains them on their sickbed;

Many: In their illness you heal all their infirmities.

(from Psalm 41:1-3)

Meditation of Preparation

When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed.
—Mother Teresa

Hymn

"God of Great and God of Small"

WORDS and MUSIC: Natalie Sleeth

Glory to God No. 19

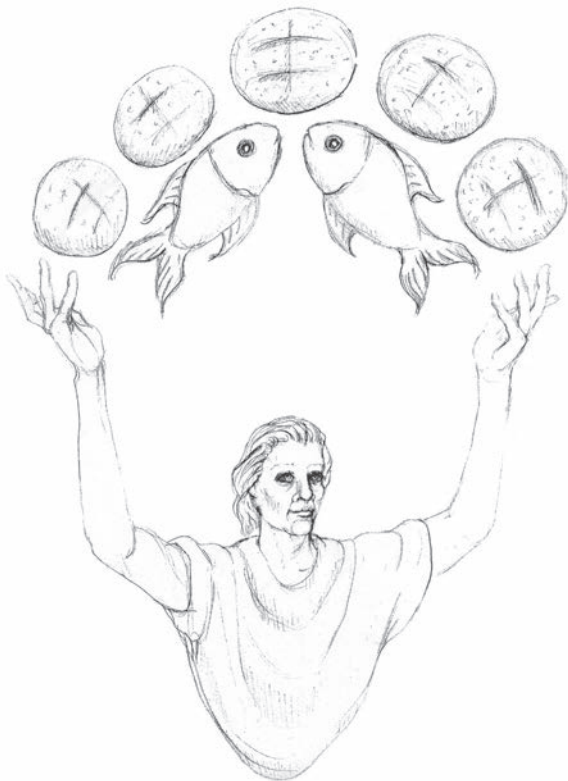
Reading from the Epistles

1 John 3:16-18

Hymn

"Oye, Señor"

WORDS & MUSIC: Maritza Dixon & Betty Hernandez (Mexico/Panama)



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Gospel Reading

John 6:1-14 or John 15:12-17

Sermon

See the Theme Interpretation on page 4.

Invitation to the Table

God calls us to love one another—specifically, intrusively, in truth, and with our actions. God’s love for us sits on beautiful display in front of us this morning in the presence of this bread and this cup. God did not love us only in theory or even simply in word or speech, but God’s love is incarnate in our world. God’s love did not stay hidden in heaven or perched behind rainbows, but came down in the person of Jesus who humbled himself and loved us so much that he washed feet, he multiplied bread, he healed the sick, he cast out demons and he died on the cross. This is love in truth and action. Along the way to that ultimate act of love, he was betrayed by one of his own. On that very night, he continued to love in truth and action when he took the bread and blessed it and broke it saying, “This is my body, for you....”

Meditation of Commitment

The fundamental vanity of the intellectual Christian [is] the belief that faith may be forged within oneself like a little spiritual pearl, which one may then present to the world as a rare treasure. In truth this encounter never happens, for this personal pearl is not simply a currency the world will find worthless, but, when exposed to the air of actual existence, a dull, ersatz thing which you yourself do not quite recognize. Faith is forged not by the mind alone but by the mind’s risky, messy encounter with the world at large. Faith is not something you have; it is something you do. Silence is the language of faith. Action — be it church or charity, politics or poetry — is the translation.

— Christian Wiman, *My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer*

Hymn of Commitment

“Would I Have Answered when You Called?”

WORDS: Herman G. Stuempfle

MUSIC: English Traditional,
English County Songs, 1893

KINGSFOLD – 8.6.8.6.

The Faith We Sing No. 2137

Benediction

As we go from this place, taking God’s abiding love with each of us to the ends of the earth, may that love multiply and manifest in every footstep, in every hand reaching out, in every piece of bread broken, in every offering from the heart, in every waking moment...that whenever and wherever we meet again we may know that we have laid down the whole of our lives for one another in this world, following the example of Christ. ■

Art by Sally Lynn Askins



This is not a story about what God can do. Nor is it a story about what God can’t do. This is, in fact, a story about what God does. There are those who get all caught up in how it was that everyone had more than enough to eat. Was it a miracle along the line of the magician who pulls out the hankie that never ends? What is a miracle along the lines of overcoming human selfishness? No, this is not a story about what God can or can’t do. It is a story about what God does. God takes what we have to give, blesses it, and uses it far beyond what we thought was possible.

...

Disciples pass through our ranks looking for anything that can be brought to Jesus. It is our duty—our responsibility and privilege—to creatively wrestle with what we need to do in order to reclaim our Christian heritage of being shapers of history. How do we dedicate all of who we are to the work of God in our world? There is nothing more important.

— John S. Ballenger, “A Little Boy, the Archbishop and Us”

And Nearly Burned the Gravy: A Short Story

by Ken Sehested

Editor's note: Ken Sehested was one of the founding Seeds editors. He left Seeds in 1984 to become the founding director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, where he served for 20 years. Ken's wife, Nancy Hastings Sehested, was the first woman among Southern Baptists to serve as a senior pastor. She served for many years at Prescott Memorial Baptist Church in Memphis, TN. They now live in Asheville, NC.

I remember the day Nancy came home, late afternoon, walked straight to the kitchen where I was cooking dinner, and said, "Well, I thought I'd heard it all. But I got a new one today!"

"What's that?" I said in a solicitous voice—as solicitous as one can be when you've got several pots on the stove at once, still pondering the leftover to-do list from my day, still wondering how I was going to manage to get my old car in for repairs tomorrow morning, still puzzled as to why the heating bill was so high this month (Do I need to do more insulating? Do we need to keep the thermostat lower? Do I need to talk to the kids again about keeping the doors firmly closed?), staring at the kitchen counter crowded with dirty dishes from breakfast and lunch and afternoon kids' snacks, and my own generous pile of pots and pans from dinner preparation—and thinking, I'm so glad I don't have to clean up tonight!

You ever have a conversation that starts something like that?

"Someone came in today to talk to me about joining the church," Nancy replied, with an earnestness in her voice that told me she was oblivious to my distractions, all the while thinking to myself, "I hope this is a short story."

(And, by the way guys, it's true: women really can't read your mind! Like it or not, you are going to have to talk.)

Fortunately, Nancy's stories are almost always interesting.

"Well, you know, I gave her my standard grilling: Why do you want to join this church? And she said the most amazing thing!"

I knew that was my cue for prompting, so without missing a beat I turned off one burner, turned on another, stirring the gravy all the while, wondering to myself "Where did that pepper mill go?" but I also managed to say, "What did she say?"

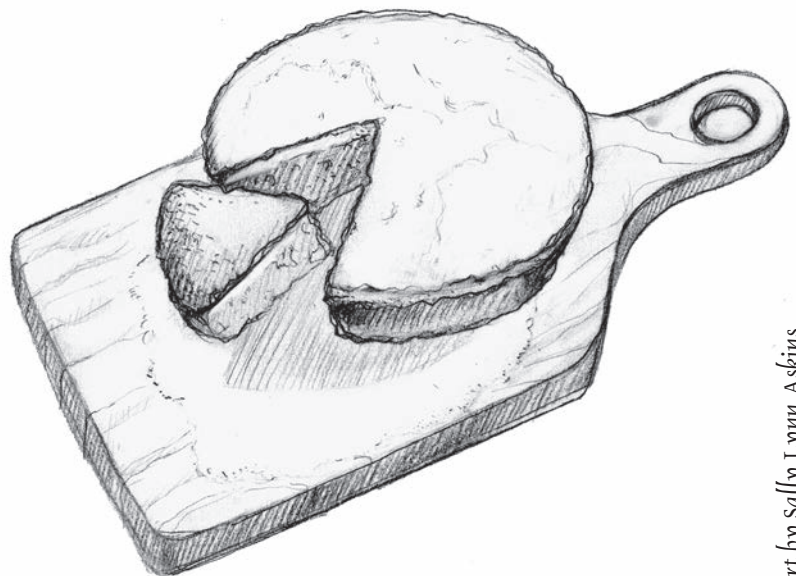
"This woman said she wanted to join because she wanted to learn how to love, and she thinks our church is the place she can learn that.

"In all my life, I've never heard that. Most people talk about what the church can do for them, how the church can meet their needs, give them all the love they deserve, be a place of support, find new friends, offer programs for their children—whatever. You know, the whole services-rendered-for-offerings-paid thing.

"I about fell out of my chair!" she continued. "Someone who actually wants to put her hands on the plow."

"Whoa!" I warbled, eyebrows cocked, mouth agape. And nearly burned the gravy.

— *This story first appeared in Ken's blog, Prayer&Politiks, and is used with permission.*



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings

Only he who loves can be sure that he is still in contact with the truth, which is in fact too absolute to be grasped by his mind. Hence, he who holds to the gospel truth is afraid that he may lose the truth by a failure of love, not by a failure of knowledge.

—Thomas Merton

A quote overheard by John Michael Longworth, a Lutheran pastor in Rutland, Vermont: "Christ shows up in the damndest of places. Literally. And in every sense of that word."

The body of Christ should live out, for all to see, the meaning of being trustworthy stewards of God's creation. This will be seen in how we view our possessions, in our style of living, in how we respond to global economic injustice, and in how we show love for one another by sharing ourselves and what we own. If we belong to one another spiritually, then economic bonds must join us. And if we have been deeply touched by God's compassion, we will naturally feel a call to help the hurting world God so loves.

—Senator Mark O. Hatfield

When love beckons to you, follow him,
Though his ways be hard and steep.
And when his wings enfold you,
yield to him
Though the sword hidden among
his pinions may wound you.
And when he speaks to you
believe in him,
Though his voice may shatter
your dreams
as the north wind lays waste the garden.

—Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

All of life is lived in relation to other people. How often are we alone? Most every waking hour reflects how we are answering this question. It is inescapable. Some of us may live as if the other person doesn't exist. We may ignore him. We may even pretend that she is not there. But we are fooling ourselves because she does exist and if we are honest we cannot

live without her. All of us, whether we know each other or not, live in a common world. This is as good a day as any to face the truth that we cannot forever go it alone.

— R. Kirby Godsey, *Centering Our Souls*

The debris of...life continues to accumulate, the Vesuvius of the years scatters its ashes deep and much gets buried alive, but even under many layers the tell-tale heart can go on beating still. Where it beats strong, there starts pulsing out from it a kind of life that is marked by, above all things perhaps, compassion: that sometimes fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside another's skin and for knowing that there can never really be peace and joy for any until there is peace and joy finally for all.

—Frederick Buechner, *The Alphabet of Grace*

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

A Prayer for God's People

by C. J. McKeever

Dear Lord,
Please help us to remember day by day
to love all, because you love all.
Help us to love everyone,
and Lord, help us to overlook
each other's differences and imperfections
to see the good in each other.
Help us to remember that,
in order to love each other as you taught us to,
we must always be kind, generous and compassionate.
God, help us to learn how to help one another more,
and teach us to treat not only our community
as our neighbor, but the world.
Amen.

Clara Jane McKeever (or "C.J.") is 11 years old. She offered this pastoral prayer during a worship service at Seventh & James Baptist Church in Waco, TX.

Loving in Truth & Action

36 Things You & Your Kids Can Do

by Emily Benton Ryan

12 Things Kids Can Do

1. Whenever your stomach growls, pray for the 815 million people in the world who have to go to bed hungry.
2. Give one of your favorite garments to a thrift store or a clothing closet for low-income people.
3. At each meal, offer thanks for the food that you have (even if it's not your favorite) and pray that God will help you do things for people who don't have enough.
4. Try not to eat junk food.
5. Find out if there is a weekend backpack program in your community for kids who don't have food at home. If there is, ask if you can help fill the backpacks. If there isn't, write a letter to your local newspaper and ask why there isn't one.
6. Ask your parents, teacher, or Sunday-school leaders where the food you eat comes from. Why do so many people go hungry in countries that export food products to other countries?
7. Make a list of things you have and a list of things you would like to have. Talk to your parents about which of these are necessities and which are luxuries.
8. Don't eat between meals for a week.
9. Ask your parents or pastor about hunger organizations and donate some of your allowance to your favorite one.
10. Ask your children's minister what the Bible says about hungry people. Encourage him or her to spend some time teaching you and the other children about this.
11. Ask your Sunday school teacher about the country of Syria in the Bible. Find it on a map of Bible lands. Then pray for the millions of refugees who have fled from the violence in Syria, and who need food and shelter.
12. Read, with your parents, John 21:1-17. It's long, but it's an important story. Then ask

your parents to help you to answer these questions: Why do you think Jesus took Peter aside to talk to him alone? What did he ask Peter? How would you feel if Jesus asked you that? What do you think Jesus meant by "feed my sheep"?

12 Things Parents Can Do

1. Take your children grocery shopping with you. Buy extra canned foods, peanut butter or other staples for your local food pantry. Have your children pick out their favorites, so that a hungry person can enjoy the foods that they enjoy.
2. Take your children to a farmer's market and talk to them about eating healthy food grown by local farmers.
3. Have a meal that is just soup and bread or beans and tortillas. Get your kids to help you plan it.
4. Take your children with you to volunteer at a soup



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

kitchen or deliver Meals on Wheels.

5. Work with your children to organize a canned food drive at your church. Kids can motivate a congregation better than anyone.
6. Find a copy of the *Simply in Season Children's Cookbook* by Mark Beach and Julie Kauffman. Help your children learn where their food comes from.
7. Talk with your children about the people they may see standing on busy street corners holding signs.
8. Get your children to help you put toiletries or fruit and granola bars (and maybe bottles of water) in reclosable bags, and give them to the people who stand on busy street corners with signs.
9. Encourage your children to collect some of their blankets and warm clothing. Then take the kids to deliver the items at a local shelter for homeless people.
10. Help your kids write a letter of concern to Congress or the President about hungry people. Let them write or draw on a paper plate, and then fold it and put it in an envelope to mail. (Go to www.bread.org for help in wording the letter. A salad-size paper plate will go, folded once, in a small standard envelope.)
11. Teach your children about the importance of recycling.
12. Talk with your children about all the luxuries you have compared to the necessities that some lack.

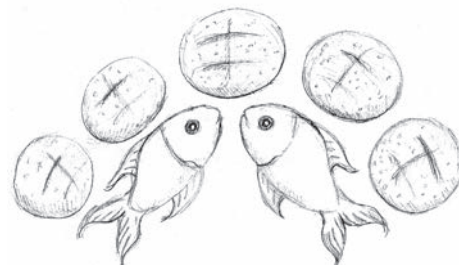
12 Things a Children's Minister Can Do

1. Find out what materials your denomination produces for children about hunger. If you need help, contact Seeds (seedseditor1@gmail.com or 254/755-7745) and we'll help you find materials that are appropriate for your church.
2. Ask your church to collect canned food for a local food pantry, and get the children to promote it.
3. Encourage your children to be involved with a UNICEF collection for Halloween.
4. Talk with the children about what it must be like to be homeless. Ask someone to dress up like a homeless person and come in and talk to the kids. Better yet, if you know a homeless or formerly homeless person, ask him or her to come and talk to them.

5. Get a list of homebound church members and ask the kids to write and decorate cards for them. Or ask them to write and decorate cards for Meals on Wheels recipients.
6. Conduct a Bible drill with the children using verses about taking care of poor people. Tell them that these verses have a theme, and ask them to guess what it is. (You can use the 40-day calendar that comes with this packet to get the references; each day includes a scripture about what God thinks of poor and marginalized people and what believers are commanded to do.)
7. During a time when your children usually have a meal together, pass out one piece of bread and a cup of water to each of them and talk with them about how hunger feels.
8. Help your children assemble relief kits for people in war zones or disaster areas. Either the Mennonite Central Committee (www.mcc.org/respond/kits) or Church World Service (www.churchworldservice.org) will tell you how.
9. Set up a church-wide recycling center and get the children to promote it with announcements and skits.
10. See if there is a CROP Hunger Walk in your community. If there is, get your children involved in walking. For more information, go to www.churchworldservice.org and click the "CROP" button. If there isn't, organize your own walk.
11. Give each child one-fourth cup (two ounces) of rice in a baggie and tell them to take it home and think about the fact that 815 million people only have this much to eat on most days.

12. Before it gets cold this winter, encourage the children to donate blankets, coats, gloves and scarves to a homeless shelter.

—Emily Ryan is the mom of Nathan and Jack, and is a grant writer for the Baptist Health Foundation of Little Rock, AR. She lives in Roanoke, VA, and is a former Seeds of Hope intern. This is an updated version of the list she compiled in 2008.



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Loving in Truth & Action

An Activity for Youth

Editor's note: This idea is inspired by Karen Peters, an educator in Decatur, GA, and a member of Oakhurst Baptist Church, where the Seeds ministry was born.

You will need enough acrylic paint (or paint that will adhere to rocks) and brushes for your number of students, as well as supplies for cleaning up. Begin by gathering rocks that have a flat side that can be painted. (If you have time, invite the youth to help you look for them.) They can be all sizes and shapes. Make sure you have enough so that the youth can each choose one that "speaks" to him or her.

Ask the students to close their eyes as you

read 1 John 3:16-19 aloud. Ask them to think about ways they can show God's love in truth and action. Then read the passage again. After that, ask the students to each choose a rock, think of a phrase or image that captures what her or she is thinking, and paint that on the rock.

After the stones have dried, find a tabletop or counter where a "rock garden" can be displayed for other congregants to see. You might want to place a Bible, opened to the 1 John passage, in the middle of the display, or ask some of the youth to create a poster that contains the passage. Ask the youth to help you arrange the display. You might want to place a colorful cloth under the rocks or add other items that give meaning to the collage.

Please use your own ideas (and those of your students) in this activity. Our readers are among the most creative people we know. You might even think of something other than rocks that might evoke the idea of loving in truth and action. —lkc

Art by Sally Lynn Askins



To us, *what matters is an individual.*
To get to love a person, we must come
in close contact with him.
We ourselves feel that *what we are doing is*
just a drop in the ocean.
But if that drop was not in the ocean,
I think the ocean will be less
because of that missing drop.
—Mother Teresa of Calcutta



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Who's Hungry in the World?

compiled by Linda Freeto

Art by Sally Lynn Askins



Today there is more than enough food produced in the world to feed everyone on the planet.

—Action Against Hunger

About 821 million people go to bed hungry every night, and one in three children in low-and middle-income countries suffers from chronic undernutrition.

—Action Against Hunger

There were an estimated 775 million undernourished people in 2014—a record low—but that number increased to 821 million in 2018.

—Action Against Hunger

Conflict is a major driver of hunger: The UN estimates that 489 million (out of 815 undernourished people in the world) and 122 million (out of 155 million stunted children in the world) live in countries affected by conflict.

—Action Against Hunger

Asia still has two-thirds of the world's hungry people.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

More than 40 percent of children in India are stunted (being too short for their age group) due to malnutrition.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

A quarter of the world's undernourished people live in the countries south of the Sahara Desert in Africa. Progress continues to be very slow in this region. In 1990, one in three people were undernourished. Today it is one in four people.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger presently are facing spiraling conflict combined with the lean-season drought...leaving more than 5.1 million people requiring urgent assistance. More than 280,000 people have fled their homes.

—World Food Programme

Armed conflict, hunger and disease are killing the children of Yemen. As many as 85,000 children have died from hunger in the country since 2015.

—Chelle Samaniego, "Who's Starving Yemen," *Seeds of Hope*

Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador have seen a steady increase of hunger and malnutrition the past several years due to poverty and violence.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq are called fragile states because long-term war and conflict have devastated systems and communities.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

More than 160,000 people in northern Syria have been forced to flee their homes.

—World Food Programme

In Syria alone, civil war has destroyed nearly every farm.

—Bread for the World, *Where Does Hunger Exist?*

In Syria, with a population of 18.4 million people, an overwhelming majority of Syrians have been impacted by the conflict that started in 2011. Seven out of 10 people in Syria are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

—Mercy Corps

In Iraq, 6.7 million people are desperately in need of humanitarian assistance. Also in Iraq, 2.3 million people are in need of water, sanitation and hygiene services.

—Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps' Palestine Mission Director, Andy Dwonch, reported "the worst escalation of violence we have seen since the 2014 Gaza War." He added, "and it is civilians who will suffer as a result."

—Mercy Corps

Women in developing countries provide the majority of the agricultural labor and they continue to account for most of the world's hungry.

—The Hunger Project

Today the majority of women in developing countries lack economic power, resulting in a higher rate of girls kept out of school, minimal access to basic health care, increased HIV/AIDS prevalence and higher maternal mortality rates.

—The Hunger Project

Half of all deaths of children under the age of five are attributable to undernutrition.

—The Hunger Project

At least 17 million children suffer from malnutrition's most extreme form—severe acute malnutrition. Severe acute malnutrition is the direct cause of death for about one million children every year.

—Action Against Hunger

Research has shown that educating women has helped cause a 43 percent reduction in child malnutrition over time, while food availability accounted for 26 percent.

—World Food Programme

When mothers are educated, they are better able to provide better nutrition and secure access to better healthcare for their children. If all mothers achieved secondary education, there would be 2.8 million fewer deaths of children under the age of five in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

—The Hunger Project

Research confirms that, in the hands of women, an increase in family income improves children's health and nutrition.

—World Food Programme

Who's Hungry in the United States?

compiled by Linda Freeto

Hunger on Campus reports that 45 percent of college students say they have faced food insecurity since January 2016. This means that nearly half of the students across the country have been without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food in the past month.

—Lillian Crager, "The Future Is Being Starved," *Fairfield Mirror*.

A survey across 34 institutions in 12 states—the broadest study of its kind—found that one in four community college students and one in five university students qualified as having very low food security, a range defined by the US Department of Agriculture as "reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake," and previously known as "food insecurity with hunger."²

—Rachel Boyle, "Hunger in Higher Education," *Hunger News & Hope*; National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, *Hunger on Campus*

Nearly 5 million senior citizens currently face hunger in the US. Only 43 percent of seniors are enrolled and receiving SNAP benefits (formerly Food Stamps). Some 63 percent of senior households served by the Feeding America network are forced to choose between food and medical care.

—Feeding America

More than 7 million seniors live on \$234 a week or less. Some 9.5 million are marginally food-insecure, 5.5 experience true food insecurity and 2.2 have very high food-insecurity.

—Meals on Wheels

Fifty-seven percent of African-American students reported food insecurity, compared to 40 percent of Non-Hispanic white students.

—*Hunger on Campus*, a study completed by the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness

Schools with majority African American and Latino students are less able to provide fresh fruit and low-fat milk portions than schools where the majority of students are white.

—*Getting to Zero Hunger by 2030: Race, Poverty and Hunger*, from the Alliance to End Hunger and Bread for the World Institute.

Only 8 percent of African Americans have a grocery store in their census (community) tracks.

—*The Grocery Gap, Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters* from Policy Link.

Love in Truth and Action: The Agape Meal

by Katie Cook

The theme of this packet is “Where Does God’s Love Abide?” In my mind, there is no better place than an Agape Meal. (After all, what does *agape* mean?) We at Seeds know of three places where this meal is lovingly served, although I am sure there are many about which we have not heard.

We are including liturgies and practices from the meals that we know, and it would seem that an overview of the ministries would be helpful. The descriptions in italics below are from “Postcards from the Agape Meal” by Jan Richardson, printed in “God’s Banquet,” the 2001 *Sacred Seasons* Hunger Emphasis packet. The scenes she describes are from the Agape Meal at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, TX.

Picture two scenes from the inner city: In one, a line of street people winds its way past some tables set up under an outdoor awning. As each person takes a dish of soup or chili, or a sandwich, along with some chips and dessert, he or she finds somewhere to perch out of the chilly wind to eat the meal—perhaps on some metal chairs set out nearby, or on the curb, or against the wall of the brick building a half block away.

In the other scene, you see men and women entering the large, well-decorated fellowship hall of a wealthy urban church. Someone is playing a medley of hymns on a grand piano as the guests enter and take their seats for a meal. The round tables are set for eight with white linen tablecloths and napkins, adorned with flowers and votive candles.

A host in an apron waits near each table, ready to serve a family-style dinner of salad, baked chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes, and homemade cobbler. Conversation buzzes as the guests greet each other warmly before the minister rises to offer a word of thanks for the meal.

What are we seeing? An all-too-familiar example of comfortable Christians from the suburbs driving past the hungry and homeless to enjoy their sumptuous annual holiday banquet at a prestigious “downtown” church?

Not this time.

The first Agape Meal at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth was served in 1995. It was inspired by the Agape Meal at Christ House, a ministry of the Church of the Saviour in Washington, DC. In more recent years, First Baptist Church in Waco, TX, began serving a monthly Agape Meal, modeled after the one in Fort Worth.

By the end of the first year at Broadway, the average number of guests each week had reached 100, and the organizers began having to ask for more volunteers to help. It seemed that finally the folks on the street had begun to believe that they were welcome, really welcome, in a “fancy” church that had been in the neighborhood for over a hundred years, yet had seemed so inaccessible. In two and one-half years, the number exceeded 200.

At Broadway, about a third of the guests stay each week for worship and communion in the chapel upstairs from the fellowship hall, although the hosts



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

are careful to avoid making them feel obligated to do so. At First Baptist in Waco, the meal is held on the last Tuesday of every month. A very brief liturgy takes place just before and again just after the meal in the large room where the meal is served. To some guests, these rituals are very important.

One young member said, "I think the moment that touches me most deeply every week is when everyone is seated and we say a short litany, acknowledging that God is the one who has given us this meal and who brings us together. At one point [the pastor] asks us to pass around the

basket of bread on the table. As we pass the bread to our neighbor, we say, 'God wants you to have this bread.'"

One night there was a new Broadway volunteer who didn't know the routine, and started to pass the bread around too early. The black man in dreadlocks sitting next to her took his headphones off and said, "Hey, you can't do that yet. You have to say, 'God wants you to have this bread.'"

Where does God's love abide? Where we love in truth and action. —lkc

Liturgy from the Agape Meal

The early church met and shared an Agape Meal. Agape is the New Testament word for the love God showed us in Christ, the love we share in Christ, and the love that is the reason for this meal.

The Gathering

ONE: Welcome to you all in the name of Christ, for this is God's house and God's table, and we are God's people. Let us rejoice and be glad, for this is the day the Lord has made.

MANY: Yes! Let us rejoice and be glad.

ONE: Do you know why we gather this evening?

MANY: Yes! We come to share a meal together.

ONE: Is that all?

MANY: No! We also come to be with one another and to share our lives as we share this meal.

ONE: And is there yet another reason for our coming together?

MANY: Yes! To express our faith and our thanksgiving.

The Sharing of the Bread

ONE: I offer to you bread: Bread that is necessary for life, Bread which comes as a gift from God, and, for Christians, Bread broken and shared as a symbol of Christ's body given for us.

MANY: What have we done to earn such a gift?

ONE: The truth is that we have not earned this bread, it is a gift from God. But what if we feel unworthy to receive this bread? Please know that everyone here is welcome to this bread, not because of our worthiness, but because God loves us and wants us to have it.

So let us pass the baskets of bread to one another and be filled with the Spirit of God.

Let us say to our neighbors: God wants you to have this bread!

The Blessing of the Meal & Lord's Prayer

ONE: Please bow your head for the prayer of blessing and then join me in saying the Lord's prayer together

(prayer of blessing)

MANY: (the Lord's prayer)

The Meal

The Time of Celebration

Songs, Sharing of Celebrations and Concerns, Scripture and Meditation

The Offering

In the early church everyone shared in common. Those who had plenty shared with those who had little. An offering basket is placed at the table for those who can contribute toward the expenses of this meal. For those who cannot contribute, we want this meal to be a gift of the church to you.

Benediction/Closing

Following the meal, all who are followers of Christ and wish to partake of communion are invited to move into the chapel to receive the Bread and Cup. Those who are interested in talking to someone about spiritual matters are encouraged to let someone at their table know.

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Communion at the Agape Meal

by David Grebel

Art by Sally Lynn Askins



Each Thursday evening, we gather at the end of the Agape Meal for communion. This is a tradition that began 24 years ago and has continued ever since. Originally intended to center at the tables during the meal, communion was moved to the end of the meal at Broadway.

It originally was held in the chapel, and over the years has been moved to several other locations, all of them outside of the room where the Agape Meal was served.

Eight years ago, we chose to place the communion elements at the front of the room as a focal point for worship. Currently anywhere from 10 to 15 people

come for communion on Thursday evening. We've served communion in a very traditional way with words of institution and then the bread and cup passed by the minister.

Recently, however, I've tried to think about a more inclusive way of serving that emphasizes the equal status of all people, including the minister. I've begun to form a circle of chairs around the communion table, inviting participants to join the circle.

We begin by asking, "Who remembers the story?" The first time we looked at each other with reluctance until one brave soul began to remind us of how Jesus gathered with his friends on the night before he died. And then another continued with the words that the bread was Jesus' life shared with all of us. And then the bread was passed around the circle and eaten together.

We did the same with the cup, beginning with "Who remembers this part of the story?" And again the cups were passed around the circle.

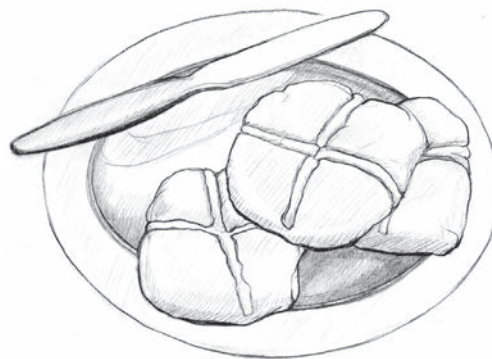
We do this every week now. We've ended with singing, with prayer or with a blessing for each other. And sometimes just with silence.

The beauty is that we are attempting to demonstrate the community that exists in Christ and the way that we can all be, in Carlyle Marney's words, priests to each other.

—David Grebel is the pastor for the Agape Meal at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, TX. He serves as Director of Extended Education at Texas Christian University and, at this writing, was a D.Min. student at Brite Divinity School.

Hospitality is not just friends having each other over on Friday evenings, but welcoming those who are in no position to host us in return. Not being able to cook is no excuse; there are many ways to share a meal with someone. Nor does the text speak of merely *sending* food to anyone. It's important that the host and the guest sit at the table together as equals, eyeball to eyeball. We can't buy off this command by sending a big check to the denominational hunger committee. The clear sign of acceptance, of recognizing others as equals, of cementing fellowship, is breaking bread together.

—Michael Usey, "Kingdom Etiquette"



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Where Does God's Love Abide?



A Hunger Emphasis Retreat
from Seeds of Hope

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Where Does God's Love Abide?

Some Notes about the Hunger Emphasis Retreat

The next seven pages contain the suggested agenda and liturgies for a Hunger Emphasis retreat. The agenda includes time for a movie (see below), a guided meditation (see page 20) and a missions activity.

The missions activity could be anything from working in a community garden to stocking shelves in a food pantry to helping to serve a meal at a soup kitchen. Three hours is probably a good amount of time for the activity itself. We have left five hours on the agenda to give time for organizing and transporting your participants.

There is also a time for commissioning of the participants during the Nones (midday) worship service, just before the group leaves for the mission activity.

What You Will Need

It would be ideal to arrange chairs in a circle. If you are able to do this, place a small table in the center

of the room, with a cloth and a Christ candle. For the communion service, you will need communion elements and dishes, as well as a bowl, pitcher and hand towels for footwashing (see page 19). If you show a movie, you will need a screen or white blank wall and a projector of some kind.

A Note about Movie Time

This time could be used for conversation or for watching a good movie. You may have an idea of your own for a movie about social justice or food justice. In case you don't, we have listed below a few suggestions.

- *Love Anyway*, a new documentary about the organization Preemptive Love. It tells the story of the Courtney family, who moved to Iraq during the height of the war to provide medical care and surgeries for children and training for local medical staff. They elected to stay there when the violence escalated, in order to help people who were suffering desperately. (www.loveanyway.com)

- *God Knows Where I Am*, a documentary based on the diary found next to the body of a homeless woman. Highly acclaimed and described as "haunting." Available on Netflix.

- *A Place at the Table*, released in 2013 but still pertinent, this documentary is an examination of the issue of hunger in America. It focuses on the plight of three individuals from different parts of the country who struggle to find adequate nutrition. Available on Prime Video.

- *The Starfish Throwers*, released in 2014, this inspiring film describes the efforts of a chef, a girl and a retired schoolteacher to feed the poor and ignite a movement in the fight against hunger. (www.thestarfishthrowers.com)

A Note about the Commissioning

We have set aside a time during Nones (see page 26) for the participants to commission one another for the mission



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activity. This can be very simple. First, divide the participants in pairs (some groups could have three if need be). Suggest that they find someone they don't know very well.

Ask them to share with their partner something that is weighing on their hearts, and then something that they feel they need in order to serve others better. Then ask them to put their hands on each other's shoulders. Ask each to say a prayer for the other and for the people they will be serving. Then you, the leader, might say a concluding prayer for the whole group.

A Note about the Gospel Reading & Interpretation

The second gospel reading in the Communion Service on page 27 includes John 13:1-20 and Mark 14:22-25. These passages could be read by one person or two. The John 13 passage, as you probably know, is about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. We suggest that you enhance this reading with the actual washing of feet.

Find two people ahead of time who feel comfortable washing one another's feet. You will need a bowl large enough to set a person's foot in it, a pitcher, and several hand towels. Before the service, fill the pitcher with warm water. As the reader begins the John 13 reading, your volunteers should go to the center of the worship space and begin.

Here's a totally optional idea: Some groups are more comfortable with footwashing than others, so it may not be ideal for your group. This could be an opportunity for all of those who are willing to have their feet washed to do so—and also to experience washing someone else's feet. Those who don't feel comfortable can simply leave their shoes on.

You could start with one or both of your volunteers going to another participant, and that participant could then take the bowl, pitcher and towels to another person, perhaps the person next to him or her. If you want both of them to do this, you will need two bowls, two pitchers and more towels. It might be good to have extra pitchers in case you need to change out the water.

If you have two sets, the footwashing will take roughly half of the time. However, if your participants are not ready for this, please don't try to coerce them.

The Mark passage is about Jesus blessing the bread and cup and describing the elements. It would be effective for your reader to wait until all of the footwashing is over before beginning to read this passage.

As he or she begins to read, the communion leader should go to the table, raise and break the bread when those words are read, and then do the same as the words about the cup are read. Then the leader could issue the invitation to the table, silently or verbally.

It Matters to This One!

by Daniel John Yeary

The old man, weathered by life and hardened by age, watched with interest as a boy ran along the sea shore, picking up starfish and throwing them back into the sea. The shoreline was covered with thousands of starfish—stranded to die on the hot sands.

The seemingly tireless energy of the boy awakened the curiosity of the old man's otherwise untouchable spirit. The boy came closer to the old man, continuing his persistent rescue mission. Finally, close enough to be heard, the old man spoke: "What does it matter, son? There are thousands more you will never save." The boy, without hesitation, knelt to pick up another starfish, and tossing it into the sea, responded, "Well, it matters to this one."¹

There is something wonderful in the human heart that compels us to comb the shores of life in search of stranded starfish. Tossing even one back into the life-giving sea does, indeed, make a difference. We must believe that.

There is also that in the human spirit so cynical that we are paralyzed by the size of the task and our success-oriented psyches. Because the job is impossible and the task insurmountable, we choose to do nothing. Or we assume that the world is full of individuals who will do something.

Exercising the good and exorcising the bad is the crux of our massive crisis. There never seem to be enough spirits willing to spend their time slinging

Please see "It Matters" on page 21.

Feed My Sheep:

A Guided Meditation

What You Will Need

For this exercise, you will need a good amount of floor space. A room with couches would be ideal. You will need paper and pens for journaling and some art supplies. You will need a table in the area to display the paper, pens and art supplies. Make sure there are chairs where participants can comfortably write, draw or paint. You will also need a CD player or some other means to play contemplative music.

What You Will Do

If you have a Christ candle in the area, light it. Ask your participants to bring their pillows and lie down on bedrolls or blankets, or, if that isn't feasible, to sit as comfortably as possible. You want to minimize body aches and other physical distractions.

If possible, make sure the light is muted. Ask them to lie on their backs with their hands open, palms up, in a receptive posture. (There is a psychological reason for this; it seems to be more effective when the head is not physically above the heart.) Ask them to take several deep breaths and to picture themselves completely covered in a warm light. Then begin reading.

First, read straight through John 21:1-19 once. Explain that you are reading it the first time to allow the hearers to remember the story, and that you will read it again and ask them to imagine themselves inside the story. Below is the second reading with suggested "guidings."

(The story takes place on the beach by the Sea of Tiberias, also known as the Sea of Galilee, which is actually a freshwater lake. This is after the risen Jesus has shown himself to his followers a number of times. Can you feel the wind coming off of the water? Can you feel the water's spray? Can you hear

the oars slipping into the water, or the waves hitting the shore?) After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. *(Do you hear the voices of the men as they haul in the nets? What else you smell? The sun is coming up. What does the sky look like?)*

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" *(Can you hear his voice? How does it sound? Where are you on the beach when he begins to speak?)* They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. *(Can you hear their voices? What does it sound like when they try to haul in the net? What does it smell like? What can you feel?)*

That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the



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Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. *(What do you think when the disciple called out? What do you think of Peter's actions? Are you jumping into the water with him?)*

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. *(Can you imagine the smells and sounds of the fire and the fish cooking?)* Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." *(How does this make you feel? Do you eat with them? How does the fish taste?)* Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

(After this, Jesus goes aside with Peter. Do you follow them as they walk along the beach? Can you hear what they are saying?) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep."

He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.)

After this he said to him, "Follow me." *(Now, ask yourself these questions: Where were you during the story? Did you identify with one of the disciples? With Peter? What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Feed my sheep"? What do you think he would ask of you?)*

After this, invite the participants to stay where they are as long as they want, and then to get up and journal or do something with the art supplies to help them respond to the meditation. (They may want to remain where they are and just think. This is perfectly okay. Also, if someone falls asleep, that is perfectly okay, too.) Leave the Bible open to the John 21 passage where it is easily accessible if they want to refer to it. Tell them where you are leaving it. Start a 60- or 90-minute album of quiet classical music, and leave it playing.

Later, you will want to unpack the experience together. Just before communion would be a good time for everyone to share their thoughts. ■

It Matters, continued from page 19

starfish back into the waters of life; but the lack of available hands is no excuse for avoiding the hunger surrounding us. Not when Jesus Christ walks the shore as our companion.

When Jesus asked his disciples about the availability of food for 5,000 followers, he received excuses ranging from the economic to the impossible. But his "starfish rescue" was made from the minimal gift of five loaves and two small fish. The point is obvious: in the hands of Jesus there is a difference. Those who give their gifts for his purpose make a difference, no matter how small the gift.

Nothing we do for Jesus is ever done in vain. Jesus did not say, "Satisfy my sheep," or even, "Protect my sheep." He instructed us to feed them.

In my imagination, I have always pictured the lad whose lunch was multiplied, running home and bursting through the door shouting, "Hey, Mom! Guess what me and Jesus did today!"

Such is the spirit of those who know that it does, for certain, "matter to this one." Saving starfish or feeding Christ's sheep, it is what we must do. It does matter.

—At this writing, Daniel John Yeary is pastor of the University Baptist Church in Coral Gables, FL. This article was printed in the January 1992 Sprouts edition of Seeds Magazine.

1. This illustration was inspired by "The Star Thrower," by Loren Eiseley.

Where Does God's Love Abide?

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

We know love by this, that Christ laid down his life for us— and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

—1 John 3:16-18

Suggested Agenda

Friday

- 6:00 p.m. *Arrive at venue, settle in*
- 7:30 p.m. *Supper*
- 8:00 p.m. *Vespers*
- 9:00 p.m. *Introduction to theme*
Movie (see page 18)
- 11:00 p.m. *Compline*

Saturday

- TBA *Breakfast*
- 9:30 a.m. *Matins*
- 10:00 a.m. *Guided meditation (see page 20)*
- 12:00 p.m. *Lunch*
- 12:30 pm *Nones/Commissioning*
for mission project (see page 18)
- 1:00 pm *Leave for missions activity*
- 6:00 pm *Return, supper*
- 7:00 pm *Closing Communion*

This retreat was created by Guilherme Almeida, Erin Conaway, Katie Cook and Alec Ylitalo.

Vespers

I have two enemies in all the world,
Two twins, inseparably pooled:
The hunger of the hungry and the fullness of the full.
—Marina Tsvetaeva

Musical Invocation

“Jesus, Walk Beside Me”
Celebrating Grace Hymnal No. 398
WORDS: Mary R. Bittner
MUSIC: Anna Laura Page
BEULAH – 6.6.5.6.6.5.7.8.6

Scripture

Jeremiah 22:13-17

Evening Litany:

One: Unrighteousness and injustice are the world’s foundation,
Many: We have failed to set our foundation upon the rock.

One: Oppression and violence we have built upon that weak foundation,
Many: We have failed to build upon the cornerstone of faith.

One: Let us tear down what the world has established,
Many: And start anew with the plans God has laid out for us.

Scripture

John 15:12-17

Musical Benediction

“God Is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him”
The Hymnal 1982 No. 379
WORDS: Timothy Rees, alt.
MUSIC: Cyril Vincent Taylor
ABBOT’S LEIGH – 8.7.8.7.D

“Where is bread?” the call is rising;
Millions cry who must be fed.
God, your answer seems surprising:
“You, my Church, you give them bread.”
Bread to fill each hungry spirit,
Bread for hungry stomachs, too!
Give us bread and help us share it.
Richly blest, may we serve you.

From the hymn *Where is Bread?* by Caroline Winfrey Gillett

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Compline

I went inside my heart to see how it was.
Something there makes me hear the whole world weeping.
—Rumi

Musical Invocation

“O God beyond All Praising”
Celebrating Grace Hymnal No. 366
WORDS: Michael Perry
MUSIC: Gustav Holst
THAXTED, alt. – 13.13.13.13.13.13

Scripture

Deuteronomy 15:8-11

Late Night Litany

One: We hear our neighbors’ cries and the rumbles of hunger all around us,
Many: You call us to heed those cries, you call us to feed your sheep.

One: We witness how hardening of hearts and greed has corrupted your creation,
Many: You call us to open our hearts and our hands, you call us to mend the wounds that humanity has caused.

One: We are each but one set of hands, one source of action,
Many: You call us to unite those hands, unite those actions, unite those hearts, multiplying help for the helpless and hope for the hopeless beyond what we can imagine.

Scripture

Romans 12:9-21

Musical Benediction

“O Christ, You Are both Light and Day”
The Hymnal 1982 No. 41
WORDS: Latin, 6th Century; Charles P. Price
MUSIC: David Hurd
COMPLINE – Long Meter

Let us have love and more love; a love that conquers all foes,
a love that sweeps away all barriers,
a love that aboundeth in charity,
a large-heartedness, tolerance, forgiveness, and noble striving,
a love that triumphs over all obstacles.

—Abdul Bahae

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Matins

A religious awakening which does not awaken the sleeper to love has roused him in vain.

Jessamyn West, *The Quaker Reader*

Musical Invocation

“In the Lord I’ll Be ever Thankful”

Sing! A New Creation No. 220

WORDS: The Community of Taizé

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier

Scripture

Isaiah 61:1-4

Morning Litany

One: The Spirit of the Lord fell fresh upon Isaiah and sent him out on a mission of love and proclamation.

Many: Holy Spirit, fall fresh on me.

One: Share the good news of God’s great work in the world as you tenderly bind up the brokenhearted, courageously proclaim liberty to prisoners of all types of chains, provide for those who mourn, and declare the year of Jubilee when we will finally look after one another more than our possessions.

Many: Holy Spirit, anoint me beyond my hesitations and fill me with your love.

One: Your hands belong to the Spirit, your voice belongs to the Spirit, your feet belong to the Spirit: go in love to heal and to proclaim.

Many: We humbly receive this mantle, today and in all of our days to come.

Scripture

Mark 10:17-21

Musical Benediction

“Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast like Seed upon the Ground”

The Hymnal 1982 No. 588

WORDS: John Cawood, alt.

MUSIC: Roy Henry Johnson

CALL STREET – Common Meter

O God of abundance, you feed us every day.
Rise in us now, make us into your bread,
that we may share your gifts with a hungry world, and
join in love with all people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
—From the morning prayer at the St. Gregory’s food
pantry in San Francisco.
In *Take This Bread* by Sara Miles.

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Nones

Child, when do you think is the time to love
somebody the most; when they done good and made things easy
for everybody? Well then, you ain't through learning—because that
ain't the time at all. It's when he's at his lowest and can't believe in
hisself 'cause the world done whipped him so.
—Lorraine Hansberry, from *Raisin in the Sun*

Musical Invocation

“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”

WORDS: Fred Kaan (1970)

MUSIC: Jamaican Folk Tune, adapt. Doreen Potter (1925-1980)

TUNE: LINSTEAD 8.8.8.8. refrain 5.5.5.3.

Lift Up Your Hearts No. 830 or *Glory to God* No. 526

Scripture

Micah 6:6-8

Litany of Courage

One: It is a question asked by the prophets of old, the shepherds called to the manger, and by worshippers throughout time and around the globe: with what shall I come before the Lord?

Many: We cannot see that we have any gifts worthy of your attention, O God.

One: Thousands of rams or rivers of oil would never be enough, and we look in our hands and realize we do not even bring a single ram or a bottle of oil.

Many: Our sins are anvils and our offerings are feathers.

One: But you call us to a deeper offering: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you.

Many: We confess that the effort to bring rams and oil might be easier than what you truly desire. Give us courage to do justice, open hearts to love kindness, and the humility and assurance that we do indeed walk with you, gracious and holy one.

Scripture

Luke 12:16-21

Commissioning

(See page 18.)

Musical Benediction

“How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord”

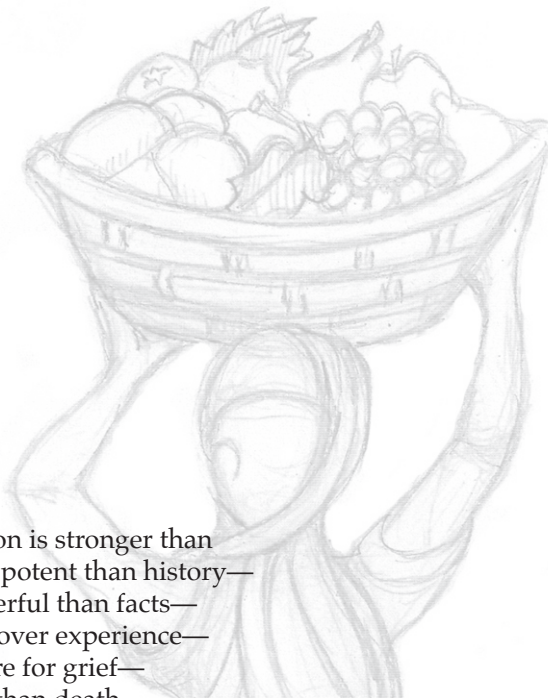
WORDS: Fred Pratt Green (1981)

MUSIC: B. F. White (1844)

TUNE: REPTON 8.6.8.6.6.6.

Lift Up Your Hearts No. 856
or *Glory to God* No. 432

I believe that imagination is stronger than
knowledge—myth is more potent than history—
dreams are more powerful than facts—
hope always triumphs over experience—
laughter is the cure for grief—
love is stronger than death.
—Robert Fulghum



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Holy Communion



O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love...
—From the Prayer for Peace
attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Prelude

“O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

WORDS: Charles Wesley

MUSIC: Carl G. Glazer, arr. Teresa Wilhelmi

Found in *More Hymns Light Jazz-Style* – Word Music (2000)

Scripture

Isaiah 64:17-25

First Gospel Reading

Luke 4:16b-21

Second Gospel Reading & Interpretation

John 13:1-20; Mark 14: 22-25

(See page 19.)

Hymn

O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

Celebrating Grace Hymnal No. 438

WORDS: Samuel Trevor Francis, alt.

MUSIC: Thomas J. Williams

EBENEZER – 8.7.8.7.D

Communion

Music for Communion

“Wondrous”

MUSIC: WONDROUS LOVE, *Southern Harmony*, 1835 – arr. Chris de Silva

Found in *Colours 2, Music for Solo Piano* – GIA (2018)

Passing the Peace

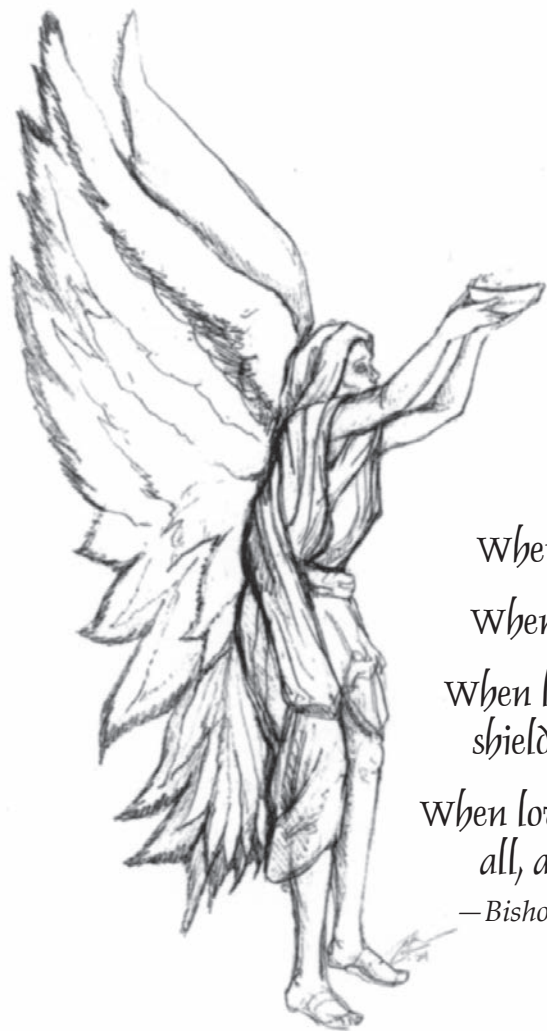
In the upper room, Jesus is saying to his disciples, I give you myself. He washes their feet and then he says, “My body is about to be crushed.

Take and eat this; take my body into your selves. You will now be my body—you who will soon abandon me to my fate. My blood is about to be spilled. Take and drink this; take my blood into yourselves. You will now be my lifeblood, to bring life to the world.”

—Michael Flahive

Art by Sally Lynn Askins

Benediction



Art by Sally Lynn Askins

When Love Is the Way

When love is the way, then no child will go to bed hungry in this world ever again.

When love is the way, poverty will become history.

When love is the way, the earth will be a sanctuary.

When love is the way, we will lay down our swords and shields, down by the riverside, to study war no more.

When love is the way, we know that God is the source of us all, and we are brothers and sisters, children of God.

—Bishop Michael Curry, presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church