

# WHAT IS CENTS-ABILITY?

Cents-Ability is a small first step in the battle against hunger and poverty. Congregations invite every member - of all ages - to contribute a few cents at every meal. This simple act is an expression of thanksgiving for what we have received. It is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus' command "You give them something to eat." When the members bring their offering to church on the appointed Sunday, all of those coins "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" as they are received and dedicated.

These small acts of faithfulness can add up: One hundred persons in a congregation will contribute \$180.00 a month at two cents a meal. That's \$2160 a year. A 30,000 member presbytery has the potential of raising over \$1.6 million dollars at a nickel a meal.

Cents-Ability originated in 1976 as "Two-Cents-A-Meal," a project begun by Presbyterian Women to involve individuals and families in a corporate response to world hunger. Over the years, presbyteries have developed similar programs entitled Pennies for Hunger, Nickel a Meal, etc. Many of these programs benefit local hunger ministries as well as the national and international projects of the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP).

The PHP has developed a series of Cents-Ability resources to help presbyteries and congregations begin and expand their hunger education and fund-raising programs. These include poster, banks, placemats, prayer table tents, suggestions and program models for using Cents-Ability in your presbytery or congregation. A Cents-Ability resource order form is available by calling 800-334-0434, visiting [www.pcusa.org/hunger](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger) or contacting your presbytery or synod Hunger Action Enabler.

*Suggestions for using Cents-Ability strategies have been compiled in response to requests from groups wanting to go the extra mile in hunger education and giving. For additional ideas contact the Presbyterian Hunger Program or your presbytery or synod Hunger Action Enabler.*

# PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM, WORKING TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER AND ELIMINATE ITS CAUSES.

For thirty-five years, the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) has provided the means for Presbyterians to respond to the crisis of hunger in the United States and around the world. Despite significant progress over these years, 800,000,000 people around the world still lack the very minimum nutritional requirements for productive lives. And in the United states, 12 million children live in households where there is not enough to eat. Presbyterian congregations continue to be at the forefront in the response to these realities.

The PHP addresses hunger through five program areas:

- Direct food relief, providing food to hungry people
- Development assistance, helping poor and hungry people help themselves
- Public policy advocacy, encouraging government programs that respond to the needs of hungry people
- Hunger education, helping the church and our neighbors understand the reality and causes of hunger
- Lifestyle integrity, encouraging Christians to live their lives in ways that share God's bountiful provision

For more information on the PHP order:

*What is The Presbyterian Hunger Program?* PDS# 74-360-01-304

*Till the World Is Fed* video PDS# 74-360-99-323

*Presbyterian Hunger Program Resource List* PDS# 74-360-00-300

Order PDS items by calling 800 324-2612



PDS #74360-01-331

*The Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian World Service, and Self-Development of People are supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing offering.*

Presbyterian Hunger Program  
of the PC(USA)

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(800) 334-0434, (502) 569-5818  
[www.pcusa.org/hunger](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger)



# A STRATEGY FOR RAISING HUNGER AWARENESS

# HOW to GET involved!

## BEGINNING STEPS

### For a Presbytery:

- Assign a committee or task force to plan and promote your Cents-Ability program.
- Develop a plan for distribution of Cents-Ability receipts (e.g. 50% for national and international projects, 25% for congregations to keep for local projects, 25% for the presbytery's hunger action program. A small percentage of the funds may be designated for administrative expenses).
- Set goals for the first year (e.g. number of congregations participating, amount of funds raised, etc.).
- Present plans and goals to the appropriate presbytery body for approval.
- Develop a promotion plan including mailings, newsletter articles, presentations, and skits at presbytery meetings.
- Consider how the Cents-Ability program will be integrated into your Hunger Action Enabler's annual covenant.
- Send funds for national and international projects directly to the Hunger Fund (H999999) or choose specific projects from the PHP Designated Giving List.
- Develop procedures for distributing presbytery funds to hunger ministries.

Fundraising through Cents-Ability should supplement ongoing support for the One Great Hour of Sharing, other special offerings, and the general support of the PC(USA). The Presbyterian Hunger Program requests that a portion of the funds raised be contributed to the PC(USA) Hunger Fund (H-999999).

### For a Congregation

- Assign an individual or team to plan and promote your Cents-Ability program.
- Identify recipients of the offering (following presbytery plan if one exists -- e.g. 25% for local projects, 25% for presbytery projects, 50% for the Hunger Fund).
- Develop goals and plans for session approval.
- Provide banks or other containers to each household, requesting that each person contribute a specified amount per meal.
- Plan a regular (monthly?) time for receiving the offerings in worship – be sure to involve the whole congregation, especially children.
- Distribute funds according to the approved plan. Contributions to the Hunger Fund are sent through the regular receiving channels designated for Account # H999999.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

### Local Church Participation:

- Schedule church school classes focusing on hunger.
- Plan “minutes for mission” on Cents-Ability Sundays.
- Invite the presbytery's Hunger Action Enabler for special programs.
- Interpret local, national, and international hunger ministries in your newsletter.
- Carefully coordinate Cents-Ability with annual One Great Hour of Sharing planning.

### Presbytery Participation:

- Schedule a Cents-Ability report at each meeting – congratulate congregations raising the most money – and the most per capita.
- Serve simple lunches and suppers at presbytery meetings.
- Place Cents-Ability offering boxes on meal tables.
- Plan a hunger-focused worship service.
- Display PHP interpretation and education materials at all meetings.
- Plan a presbytery mission trip focusing on hunger and poverty ministries.



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