



2011 Memphis Conference

United Methodist Church

Lenten World Hunger Offering

Let us love... in truth and action

“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 to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” |John 3:17-18 NRSV

February, 1, 2011

Dear Pastors of the Memphis Conference,

The child above, the face of our campaign, was photographed by a member of a Memphis Conference Volunteers in Mission (VIM) team that traveled to Haiti in 2010. Notice the child is holding a Frisbee as a plate for his rice. What you can’t see in this photo are the many other children standing around him, all hungry in the ongoing aftermath of Haiti’s January 2010 earthquake.

Hunger is real. According to most recent estimates, some 9 million children die before their fifth birthday each year around the world, and 3 million of these deaths are directly related to hunger and malnutrition.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, an estimated 16.7 million U.S. children live in food-insecure households. In 2009, the average number of food-insecure households was 14.7 percent. However, in households with children headed by a single woman, the rate was 36.6%; for a family of four with income below the official poverty line (\$21,756.00), 43.0%; in African-American households, 24.9%; and in Hispanic households, 26.9%.

Hunger also affects older people. In the U.S., some people find that their entire life savings is wiped out by medical bills. A single mother has to struggle to choose between paying the rent and utilities OR buying food. A young child struggles to concentrate in school because his diet is not nutritious or his family doesn’t have enough to eat the night before.

I am asking for the support and commitment of you and your church to help alleviate suffering from hunger in the world, and hunger in our own Memphis Conference. Please do all you can to make the 2011 Memphis Conference World Hunger Offering a success by reviewing the enclosed materials and passing them along to that person in your church who will be enthusiastically responsible for implementing this important campaign that last year raised more than \$55,000.00 for hunger relief! If your church has never or not recently participated in the Memphis Conference Lenten World Hunger Offering, I hope you will consider doing so this year.

Enclosed in this packet are a variety of materials to make it easy for you to conduct a campaign: poster, campaign idea sheet, calendar, ministry list, bulletin insert and hunger quiz (with answers). Please duplicate and revise these in any way that works for your church. On the Memphis Conference Web site at www.memphis-umc.org there are links to electronic files of all these documents.

Money raised from this campaign will be distributed to numerous local, regional, national and international organizations that work directly with alleviating hunger. The enclosed Ministry List provides more information about each recipient.

Thank you for making your congregation aware of these tremendous needs and the ministry we share as a connectional church. If you need more information, please contact me at 731-422-6558; twobirds@aeneas.net OR our Memphis Conference Communications Office at 731-664-8480; communications.mcumc@eplus.net.

In Christian love and service,

Gary Morse, Memphis Conference Advocate, World Hunger